

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

PURPOSE:

West Virginia University is committed to preventing workplace violence and maintaining a safe work environment. In order to provide a safe and healthful work environment for its employees, customers, students and visitors the University expects employees to follow rules of conduct that will protect the interests and safety of all employees and the University.

West Virginia University encourages employees to bring their disputes or differences with other employees or customers to the attention of their supervisors or the Division of Human Resources before the situation escalates into potential violence.

WHO IS COVERED:

All employees, including those in faculty, classified staff, non-classified, graduate assistant, student workers, work-study, temporary and part-time positions.

DEFINITION:

Violent conduct, actions, or behavior directed to other university employees, customers, students, members of the public or university property that occurs during the course of an employees' duties or on the basis of work-related issues during off-duty hours is prohibited. This includes actions, both verbal and physical, that threatens, harasses, coerces, or inflicts harm.

EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITY:

All university employees should be treated with courtesy and respect at all times. Employees are expected to refrain from fighting, horseplay, or other conduct that may be dangerous to others. University employees are prohibited from bringing firearms, weapons, and other dangerous or hazardous devices or substances on or into University property without proper authorization (cross reference Deadly Weapons/Destructive Devices, WVU-PS-2).

All university employees should immediately report any incidents of potentially threatening, harmful or criminal behavior of employees, customers, or visitors that may affect the safety or security of other University employees or property to their immediate supervisor or other supervisory personnel as appropriate. Suspicious individuals or activities should also be reported as soon as possible to a supervisor.

In emergency situations the Department of Public Safety should be contacted at 9-911 or 293-3136.

Employees who fail to report such occurrences may be subject to disciplinary action.

UNIVERSITY RESPONSIBILITY:

The proper University officials will promptly and thoroughly investigate all reports of threats, actual violence, and suspicious individuals or activities. The identity of the individual making the report will be kept confidential, except where there is a legitimate need for others to be made aware of the information.

A University committee consisting of representative(s) from the following: Department of Public Safety and Transportation, Division of Human Resources, General Counsel's Office, Environmental Health and Safety, Faculty and Staff Assistance Program and Student Affairs, may meet to assess, evaluate, and act on reported acts or threats of violence in accordance with Board of Trustees and University policies and appropriate federal, state and local laws.

CONSEQUENCES FOR VIOLENT BEHAVIOR:

Any employee who is determined to be responsible for threats, or actual violence, directed against another employee, customer, or University property or who creates an atmosphere where others feel unsafe will be subject to disciplinary action.

Such actions may be considered gross misconduct and subject to immediate dismissal in accordance with University policy. Such actions may also lead to criminal or civil charges where appropriate.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Additional information or questions regarding this policy can be obtained by contacting the Employee Relations Unit in the Division of Human Resources at 293-5700x5 or the Department of Public Safety at 293-3136. Questions regarding disciplinary action should be directed to the Employee Relations Unit in the Division of Human Resources at 293-5700x5.

EFFECTIVE DATE: August 1, 1999