



# Campus and Workplace Violence<sup>1</sup> Prevention

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## SECTION I - Policy

SUNYIT is committed to providing a safe learning and work environment for the college community. The College will respond promptly to threats, acts of violence and acts of aggression by employees, students and/or members of the public against employees and members of the campus community. This document sets forth standards for all members of the campus community and guidelines for reasonable precautions. The accompanying procedures outline response to threats or violence, should they occur in the workplace.

### Prohibited Conduct

- A. SUNYIT will not tolerate any act or threat of violence made on college property, or while in work status.
- B. No person may engage in violent conduct or make threats of violence, implied or direct, on college property or in connection with SUNYIT business. This includes but is not limited to:
  - 1. The use of force with the intent to cause harm, e.g. physical attacks, any unwanted contact such as hitting, fighting, pushing, or throwing objects;
  - 2. Behavior that diminishes the dignity of others through sexual, racial, religious or ethnic harassment;
  - 3. Acts or threats which are intended to intimidate, harass, threaten, bully, coerce, or cause fear of harm whether directly or indirectly;
  - 4. Acts or threats made directly or indirectly by oral or written words, gestures or symbols that communicate a direct or indirect threat of physical or mental harm.
- C. No person, except Police Officers in the line of duty, may carry, possess, or use any dangerous weapon on college property or SUNYIT buildings or facilities without permission of the campus President.

### Workplace Violence Legal Obligation: Advisory Team

- A. The President will establish a Workplace Violence Advisory Team. This team will assist the President to:

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<sup>1</sup> For what constitutes Workplace Violence see the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health's (NIOSH) definition in NYS Department of Labor Division of Safety and Health's, Workplace Violence Prevention Requirements for NYS Public Employers at <http://www.labor.state.ny.us/workerprotection/safetyhealth/doc/Workplace%20Violence%20FlyerNov3.doc>

1. perform a risk evaluation<sup>2</sup> of the workplace to determine the presence of factors or situations that might place employees at risk of workplace violence;
  2. assess the campus' readiness for dealing with workplace violence;
  3. facilitate appropriate responses to reported incidents of workplace violence;
  4. assess the potential problem of workplace violence;
  5. evaluate incidents to prevent future occurrences;
  6. utilize prevention, intervention, and interviewing techniques in responding to workplace violence;
  7. develop workplace violence prevention tools (such as pamphlets and guidelines) to assist in recognizing and preventing workplace violence on campus; and
  8. arrange regularly scheduled workplace violence prevention training sessions for employees
- B. The team should include representatives from University Police, Human Resources, Counseling Services, Environmental Health and Safety, faculty, students, and others as deemed appropriate by the President.

### **Workplace Violence Prevention Program**

- A. The campus shall develop and implement a written workplace violence prevention program<sup>3</sup> for its workplaces that includes the following:
1. a definition of workplace violence;
  2. commitment to zero tolerance of workplace violence;
  3. techniques on how to recognize and avoid workplace violence situations;
  4. identification of the high risk occupations;
  5. the importance of reporting all workplace violence incidents and the procedure to do so;
  6. investigations of incidents by the employer; and
  7. employee assistance.

### **Information and Training for Employees**

- A. SUNYIT shall make the written workplace violence prevention program available, upon request, to its employees and their designated representatives.
- B. At the time of employees' initial assignment and annually thereafter, the college shall provide its employees with the following information and training on the risks of violence in their workplace(s):

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<sup>2</sup> For a description of a risk evaluation see the NYS Department of Labor Division of Safety and Health's, Workplace Violence Prevention Requirements for NYS Public Employers at <http://www.labor.state.ny.us/workerprotection/safetyhealth/doc/Workplace%20Violence%20FlyerNov3.doc>

<sup>3</sup> From the New York State Department of Labor Division of Safety and Health's, Workplace Violence Prevention Requirements for New York State Public Employers at <http://www.labor.state.ny.us/workerprotection/safetyhealth/doc/Workplace%20Violence%20FlyerNov3.doc>

1. be informed of the requirements of NYS Labor Law § 27-b;
2. the risk factors in their workplace(s);
3. the location and availability of the written workplace violence prevention program; and
4. training sessions that outline:
  - a. the measures employees can take to protect themselves from such risks, including specific procedures the college has implemented to protect employees and
  - b. the details of the written workplace violence prevention program developed by the SUNYIT.

### **Retaliation**

Retaliatory action against anyone acting in good faith who has made a complaint of workplace violence, who has reported witnessing workplace violence, or who has been involved in reporting, investigating, or responding to workplace violence is a violation of this policy. Those found responsible for retaliatory action will be subject to discipline up to and including termination.

## **SECTION II - Process**

Incidents of violence, threats of violence, or observations of violence in the college community are not to be ignored by any member of the SUNYIT community. Workplace violence should promptly be reported to the appropriate SUNYIT official (see below). Additionally, all members of the college community are encouraged to report behavior they reasonably believe poses a potential for workplace violence in order to maintain a safe working and learning environment.

### **Reporting Procedures**

- A. Any person experiencing or witnessing imminent danger or personal injury or violence involving weapons or actual violence should call the University Police at 792-7105 or 111 immediately.
- B. Any person who is the subject of a suspected violation of the Workplace Violence Prevention Policy involving violence without weapons or personal injury, or is a witness to such suspected violation, should report the incident to his or her supervisor, or in lieu thereof, to University Police.
- C. Employees and students are expected to report any threat or act of violence that they have witnessed, received, or have been informed of, to University Police and
  1. if an employee is involved, also notify the supervisor or manager; or
  2. if a student is involved, also notify the Vice President for Student Affairs, Enrollment Management, & Development.

D. Every threat must be reported.

E. Any individual who makes a substantial threat, exhibits threatening behavior or engages in violent acts on college property shall be subject to removal from the premises as quickly as safety permits, pending the outcome of an investigation, and/or civil or criminal prosecution as appropriate.

## Employees

A. All employees are responsible for helping to maintain a safe work and educational environment and are urged to take reasonable precautions to prevent violence and other unsafe conditions in the workplace and report indicators of increased risk of violent behavior including but not limited to the following examples:

### Precautions:

- In response to telephone inquiries, do not release information about coworkers' schedules, home telephone numbers, or other personal information.
- In the event of suspicious conduct, request the credentials of any stranger who enters your office to do repair or other service work. If necessary, verify the work request with the building manager.
- Never leave money, credit card travel documents or any thing else of value in an unlocked desk or cabinet.
- If something is stolen, report it immediately to University Police.

### Indicators<sup>4</sup>:

- Direct or veiled threats of harm;
- Intimidating, belligerent, harassing, bullying, or other inappropriate and aggressive behavior;
- Numerous conflicts with supervisors and other employees;
- Bringing a weapon to the workplace, brandishing a weapon in the workplace, making inappropriate references to guns, or fascination with weapons;
- Statements showing fascination with incidents of workplace violence, statements indicating approval of the use of violence to resolve a problem, or statements indicating identification with perpetrators of workplace homicides;
- Statements indicating desperation (over family, financial, and other personal problems) to the point of contemplating suicide;
- Drug/alcohol abuse; and
- Extreme changes in behavior.

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<sup>4</sup> Identified by the FBI's National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime, Profiling and Behavioral Assessment Unit) in *Dealing with Workplace Violence: A Guide for Agency Planners* by the United States Office of Personnel Management, Workforce Relations, February 1998

- B. Employees and students are expected to notify University Police whenever an order of protection is granted which mentions SUNYIT property, or involves a SUNYIT employee, or a person working at or attending SUNYIT, and provide a copy of the order. Appropriate efforts will be made to protect the privacy and sensitivity of the information provided. Employees should also notify their supervisor.
- C. Victims of domestic violence who believe the violence may extend into the college community, students or employees who believe that domestic or other personal matters may result in their being subject to violence extending into the workplace, are encouraged to notify their supervisor, or the University Police. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible.
- D. All employees have an obligation to report any incidents of violence and/or inappropriate conduct or behavior to their supervisor or University Police immediately.
- E. Any employee or representative of employees who believes that a serious violation of a workplace violence protection program exists or that an imminent danger exists shall bring such matter to the attention of a supervisor in the form of a written notice. If, following a written notice, the matter has not been resolved and the employee or representative still believes that a violation of a workplace violence prevention program remains, or that an imminent danger exists, the employee or representative should submit the complaint to the appropriate vice president.

## **Students**

- A. Students are expected to adhere to the rules set forth in the Code of Conduct for Students.
- B. Students are expected to report any threat or act of violence that they have witnessed, received, or have been informed of, to University Police and
  - 1. If a student is involved, notify the Vice President for Student Affairs, Enrollment Management, & Development.
  - 2. If an employee is involved in a complaint involving a student, the employee should notify the supervisor or manager.

## **Supervisors**

- A. Each dean, director, department chairperson, executive officer, administrator, or other person with supervisory responsibility (hereinafter “supervisor”) is responsible within his/her area of jurisdiction for the implementation of this policy.
- B. Supervisors are required to contact the University Police immediately in the event of imminent or actual violence involving weapons or potential physical injuries.

- C. Supervisors must report to the University Police any complaint of workplace violence made to him/her and any other incidents of workplace violence of which he/she becomes aware or reasonably believes to exist. Supervisors are expected to inform their immediate supervisor promptly about any complaints, acts, or threats of violence even if the situation has been addressed and resolved. After having reported such complaint or incident to the University Police and immediate supervisor, the supervisor should keep it confidential and disclose it only as necessary during the investigation process and/or subsequent proceedings.
- D. Every supervisor is obligated to report any knowledge of such conduct to the Office of Human Resources immediately. Failure of a supervisor to investigate and initiate appropriate action may result in administrative action including possible discipline.

### University Police

- A. University Police is responsible for:
  - responding to;
  - intervening; and
  - documenting<sup>5</sup> all incidents of violence in the workplace.
- B. University Police will immediately log all incidents of workplace violence and will notify the respective supervisor of an incident with his/her employee, or notify the appropriate University official of an incident with a student.
- C. University Police will maintain an internal tracking system of all threats and incidents of violence. Annual reports will be submitted to the President detailing the number and description of workplace violence incidents, the disposition of the incidents, and recommend policy, training issues, or security procedures that were or should be implemented to maintain a safe working and learning environment.
- D. When informed, University Police will maintain a record of any Orders of Protection and will provide escort service to members of the college community within its geographical confines, when sufficient personnel are available. Such services are to be extended at the discretion of the Chief of Police or designee. Only the President, or designee, in his/her absence, can authorize escort service outside of the geographical confines of the college.

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<sup>5</sup> For recordkeeping requirements see NYS Labor Law § 27-a. Safety and health standards for public employees.

## Office of Human Resources

- A. The Office of Human Resources (HR) is responsible for:
- assisting the Chief of Police and supervisors in responding to workplace violence;
  - facilitating appropriate responses to reported incidents of workplace violence;
  - notifying the University Police of workplace violence incidents reported to HR; and
  - consulting with, as necessary, counseling services to secure professional intervention.
- B. The Office of Human Resources is responsible for providing new employees or employees transferred to the University with a copy of the Workplace Violence Policy and Procedure and ensuring that employees receive appropriate training pursuant to NYS Labor Law §27b.
- C. The Office of Human Resources will also be responsible for annually disseminating this policy to all employees, as well as posting the policy throughout the campus and on the University's website, as appropriate. Every employee must sign for receipt of this policy and procedure upon publication or at orientation. Signed receipt will be placed in each employee's personnel file.