

# Workplace Violence, Policy 7.05

## Frequently Asked Questions

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The university is committed to providing an environment that is safe, secure, and free from threats and violence. The university's goal is to provide a work environment in which workplace violence is not tolerated.

### 1. Why is this policy important?

Ensuring a safe workplace contributes to a healthy campus climate for all members of the university community.

### 2. What should I do if I feel in danger?

If something has occurred on campus that causes you to fear for your personal safety, report the incident to law enforcement: [University Police](#) (9-1-1 for emergencies, 614-292-2121 for non-emergencies), [Wexner Medical Center Security](#), (9-1-1 for emergencies, 614-293-8500 for non-emergencies) or local law enforcement agency at regional campuses or off-campus.

Employees can contact their [Employee and Labor Relations](#) representative.

Students may contact the [Office of Student Conduct](#) 614-292-0748.

### 3. Does this policy apply to bullying?

No, this policy applies to threatening and/or violent behavior that causes a disruption in the work environment and leads a reasonable person to fear for their physical safety, or to physical conduct that results in harm to people or property.

The university expects all faculty, staff, and student employees to uphold the [university's shared values](#) by being respectful and collegial in the workplace. Bullying, intimidation and humiliation are uncivil, and unacceptable in the workplace. Wexner Medical Center employees must also comply with the [Wexner Medical Center Standards of Employee Conduct](#).

### 4. What can I do if I feel I am being bullied?

- Approach the other person and share your feelings about what happened. Think about this: What would you want a coworker to do if they were offended by something you said or did? Often making the other person aware of how their conduct affected you is sufficient. Few people are deliberately hurtful.
- Discuss the matter with your supervisor. Your supervisor may be able to advise you, make suggestions, or if necessary, intervene.
- If you feel you cannot discuss it with your immediate supervisor, it may be appropriate to escalate your concerns through your management chain.
- Consult with your unit's Human Resources Business Partner (HRBP), Human Resources Consultant (HRC), Employee & Labor Relations Representative, or your Ombudsperson (for faculty members) for guidance.

### 5. What if I am being harassed?

The Workplace Violence policy does not apply to harassment. Harassment is addressed under the [Non-Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct](#) policy, which encompasses impermissible conduct that is based on an individual's identification with a protected class, and which sets forth your rights and reporting options. If you are experiencing harassing conduct unrelated to being in, or being part of, a protected class, you are encouraged to follow the steps listed in Question 4 of this FAQ.

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### 6. Why do some employees have a duty to report all incidents of workplace violence?

Any human resources professional, including HRBPS, HRCs; and anyone who is a manager has an obligation to report known or suspected incidents of workplace violence. Due to their positions of authority, these individuals have always had a heightened responsibility to report incidents of workplace violence. Policy language now explicitly states what has always been their responsibility.

Anyone who experiences, observes, or believes they may be targets of workplace violence is encouraged to report. The university is committed to protecting individuals who report an incident of workplace violence from interference with making a protected disclosure and from retaliation for having made a protected disclosure. (See [Whistleblower policy, 1.40](#))

### 7. What if the person engaging in workplace violence is a vendor, contractor, or volunteer, and/or does not work for the university?

Vendors, contractors, visitors, and volunteers are expected to engage in conduct that promotes a safe university and Wexner Medical Center environment. The university will address the matter using available resources, like law enforcement, and/or the university will review their contractual terms to hold them accountable.

### 8. Can I file a *confidential* complaint??

The university recognizes the importance of confidentiality but cannot promise complete confidentiality. To the extent possible, information received in connection with the filing, investigation and resolution of allegations will be treated as confidential, except when necessary to conduct an appropriate investigation, to provide assistance and resources to complainants, to perform other appropriate university functions, or when the university is required to provide information under the law.

When requests for confidentiality arise, they will be evaluated by Employee & Labor Relations to determine whether the university can honor the request while still providing a safe environment. In addition, the university has an anonymous reporting line for individuals who do not want to disclose their identity [secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/media/en/gui/7689/index.html](https://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/media/en/gui/7689/index.html).

### 9. What is the purpose of an investigation?

The purpose of the investigation is to evaluate the allegations of workplace violence, formulate a response to address the situation, and follow up to ensure that recommended actions have been taken. The ultimate goal is to stop the behavior and prevent its reoccurrence.

### 10. What if I am being retaliated against?

The university will not tolerate retaliation in any form against any individual who makes an allegation, files a report, serves as a witness, assists a complainant, or participates in an investigation. University policy and state and federal law prohibit retaliation against an individual for reporting discrimination or harassment, or for participating in an investigation.

Retaliation is a serious violation that can subject the offender to discipline, up to and including termination of employment and/or student status, independent of the merits of the underlying allegation.

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### 11. What if I am a student employee?

The policy applies to you. If workplace violence arises involving individuals who are student employees, the situation is assessed in the context in which the violence arose.

For example, if a student employee has allegedly had an altercation with a co-worker, it will typically be investigated in the employment context, because that is where the behavior arose and had an impact on others. Depending on the finding of that investigation, there may be consequences regarding the student employee's employment. However, information about the incident will also be reviewed to determine whether the [Student Conduct Process](#) should be initiated. If the process is initiated, and a student employee is found in violation of the [Code of Student Conduct](#), disciplinary sanctions may be issued.

### 12. I am a volunteer for a university or Wexner Medical Center program, what is my role?

As a member of the university community, if you are made aware of an incident of workplace violence, you are encouraged to report to the university or the Wexner Medical Center. If you engage in violent conduct, you may be prohibited from volunteering at the university or the Wexner Medical Center.

### 13. What if I am experiencing relationship violence?

If you are experience relationship violence, you are encouraged to report it based on the [Non-Discrimination, Harassment and Sexual Misconduct policy](#).

- **What should I do if I have a protective order against someone?**

If the person is affiliated with the university or Wexner Medical Center, inform your manager, HRBP, HRC or Employee & Labor Relations. If the person is not affiliated with the university or Wexner Medical Center, you are encouraged to inform your manager, unit HRC or [Employee & Labor Relations](#).

Workplace safety plans are developed collaboratively by the employing unit, Employee Relations and/or [OSUPD/OSUWMC Security](#) in response to workplace violence or in instances when an employee feels targeted by violence. Plans may include, but are not limited to, changing work stations and telephone numbers, and providing escorts for entry to and exit from the work location.

Additionally, you may have additional rights and resources if the protective order is due to relationship violence. Refer to the Non-Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct policy for rights, options and resources.

### 14. What should I do if I observe someone who seems to be distressed or disruptive?

The Office of Academic Affairs has developed a [Guide to Assist Disruptive or Distressed Individuals](#), which provides useful information to help you assist anyone in the university community who is experiencing distress or causing a disruption. The guide also provides several other important phone numbers and helpful resources.

### 15. What training is available on these topics?

Online trainings through [Buckeye Learn](#) have been developed for staff and faculty as well as a separate training for managers.

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### 16. What are my resources?

#### General Resources:

Community Served	Scope/Purpose	Office/Agency	Contact	Confidentiality
Employees-Staff & Faculty	Provides life assistance for an array of personal, work-related, and daily living challenges for benefits-eligible employees and their family members.	Employee Assistance Program	614-292-4472 800-678-6265 (24/7 hotline) <a href="#">EAP</a>	Confidential
Students	Offers individual and group counseling and therapy to help students address personal, academic and career concerns.	Counseling and Consultation Service	614-292-5766 <a href="https://ccs.osu.edu/c">ccs.osu.edu/c</a>	Confidential
Students	Provides legal services (e.g., civil protection orders, crime victim compensation, and criminal proceedings guidance) to eligible students.	Student Legal Services	614-247-5853 <a href="https://studentlegal.osu.edu">studentlegal.osu.edu</a>	Confidential
Anyone	Provides survivor advocacy and assistance to LGBTQI survivors regarding hate and bias violence, discrimination, intimate partner violence, sexual assault, and stalking.	Buckeye Region Anti-Violence Organization (BRAVO)	866-862-7286 (toll free) <a href="https://bravo.equitashealth.org">bravo.equitashealth.org</a> / Text 614.333.1907	Confidential
Anyone	Provides 24 hour domestic violence and crises information line, temporary shelter, counseling & support groups, legal & community advocacy.	Ohio Domestic Violence Network (CHOICES)	614-224-HOME (4663) 614-781-9651 800-934-9840 800-799-SAFE National Domestic Violence Hotline (Text START to 88788) <a href="https://odvn.org/">Odvn.org/</a>	

#### Medical Resources:

Community Served	Scope/Purpose	Office/Agency	Contact	Confidentiality
Students	Outpatient facility; provides a variety of health care services.	Wilce Student Health Center	614-292-4321 <a href="https://shs.osu.edu">shs.osu.edu</a>	Confidential
Anyone	24/7 medical services.	OSU Wexner Medical Center	614-293-8333	Confidential
Anyone	24/7 medical services.	Ohio State University Hospital East	614-257-3000	Confidential
Anyone	24/7 medical emergencies.	Nearest Emergency Room	9-1-1 (emergencies)	Confidential

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### Support Resources:

Community Served	Scope/Purpose	Office/Agency	Contact	Confidentiality
Anyone	Responds to criminal conduct on campus.	University Police	614-292-2121 or 9-1-1 dps.osu.edu	Non-confidential
Anyone	Responds to criminal conduct on the main or East Wexner Medical Center locations.	Wexner Medical Center Security	614-293-8500	Non-confidential
Anyone	Responds to criminal conduct off-campus.	Columbus Police	614-645-4545 or 9-1-1 columbus.gov/police	Non-confidential
Anyone	Responds to criminal conduct off-campus, at regional campuses including Wexner Medical Center other locations; provides emergency assistance.	Local law enforcement agency	9-1-1 (emergencies)	Non-confidential