



Applies to: Faculty, staff, graduate associates, and student employees

Responsible Office

Office of Human Resources

POLICY

Issued: 03/02/1999
Revised: 05/15/2023 (minor revision)

The Ohio State 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.

Purpose of the Policy

To maintain a work environment free from workplace violence.

Definitions

Term	Definition
Deadly weapon ¹	Any instrument, device, or thing, including a firearm, designed, made, adapted, or used, for the purpose of inflicting death or serious physical injury. ²
Workplace violence	Threatening behavior and/or violent behavior that causes a disruption to the work environment and leads a reasonable person to fear for their physical safety; physical conduct that results in harm to people or property; possession of deadly weapons on university property; and/or use of university property or resources to engage in threatening or violent behavior.
Threatening behavior	Conduct which causes another person to believe that their physical safety, or the security of university property, is endangered.
Violent behavior	The use of physical force, violence, or other actions that have the capacity to inflict harm or to endanger the physical safety of another person or the property of the university.

Policy Details

- I. Scope
 - A. Conduct not tolerated by the university
 - 1. The following actions are considered to be workplace violence:
 - a. **Threatening behavior** and/or **violent behavior** that causes a disruption to the work environment and leads a reasonable person to fear for their physical safety.
 - b. Physical conduct that results in harm to people or property.
 - c. Possession of **deadly weapons** on university property.
 - i. Pursuant to [Ohio Revised Code Section 2923.1210](#), this section does not prohibit a qualifying adult (as defined in [Ohio Revised Code Section 2923.111](#)) from transporting or storing a firearm or ammunition when both of the following conditions are met:
 - (1) Each firearm and all of the ammunition remains inside the person’s privately owned motor vehicle while the person is physically present inside the motor vehicle, or each firearm and all of the ammunition is locked within the trunk, glove box, or other enclosed compartment or container within or on the personal’s privately owned motor vehicle; and
 - (2) The vehicle is in a location where it is otherwise permitted to be.

¹ This definition does not apply to Ohio State University Police Department officers or Wexner Medical Center Security officers or other employees authorized by the Department of Public Safety when, in the performance of their job duties, they possess or use a deadly weapon in accordance with Ohio law, university policies, and Department of Public Safety.

² The possession or use of knives, such as utility knives, boxcutters, and kitchen knives, that are determined by the leader of the employing unit to be necessary to perform one’s job duties, will not be considered a violation of this policy as long as they are not used to threaten or harm persons or property and are otherwise used in accordance with applicable law and university policies.



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d. Use of university property or resources to engage in threatening or violent behavior.

B. Medium

1. This policy prohibits workplace violence that occurs through any medium. Workplace violence may manifest in many evolving forms (e.g., physical, verbal, visual, online/electronic/social media, etc.).

C. Location

1. This policy prohibits workplace violence that takes place on or off university property when the behavior causes an unsafe work environment.

D. Jurisdiction

1. The university has an obligation to address allegations that this policy has been violated. The university may take any appropriate action, including informing the accused of the allegation and pursuing an investigation even in cases when the complainant is reluctant to proceed.
2. Additional conduct or behavior requirements for Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center (OSUWMC) employees can be found in the [OSUWMC Compliance Standards of Conduct](#) and the [OSUWMC Reporting Suspicious or Criminal Activity policy](#). Students are covered by the [Code of Student Conduct](#). Students acting in their capacity as graduate associates or student employees are covered by this policy.
3. Incidents of sexual misconduct, which includes domestic and dating violence and stalking, are addressed under the [Non-Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct policy](#).
4. The university's response to an allegation of workplace violence may differ if the accused is a visitor or other third-party or is not subject to the university's jurisdiction. In such cases, the university may, among other things, contact or cooperate with law enforcement.

II. Duty to Report

A. Anyone who experiences, observes, or believes they may be targets of workplace violence are encouraged to report allegations of workplace violence to:

1. Their human resources business partner (HRBP), human resources consultant (HRC), or manager;
2. Their Employee or Labor Relations (ELR) representative;
3. The University Anonymous Reporting Line; and/or
4. The Ohio State University Police Department (OSUPD)/Ohio State Wexner Medical Center Security (OSUWMCS).

B. Each of the following individuals are required to report allegations of workplace violence as described in Procedure I. They should report immediately when they become aware of information that would lead a reasonable person to believe that workplace violence has occurred.

1. HRBPs
2. HRCs
3. Anyone who supervises faculty, staff, students, or volunteers

C. Action may be taken when an individual fails to fulfill their duty to report. Action may include:

1. Corrective action when a staff member is involved or
2. Referral pursuant to [Faculty Rule 3335-5-04](#) when a faculty member is involved.

III. Confidentiality

A. The university recognizes the importance of 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, including Ohio's public records law.

IV. Retaliation

A. 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.



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- B. Retaliation is a serious violation that can result in discipline up to and including termination of employment, independent of the merits of the underlying investigation.

PROCEDURE

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- I. Reporting or Making a Complaint
 - A. In the event of imminent danger of workplace violence, or upon becoming aware of information that would lead a reasonable person to believe that workplace violence has occurred, HRBPs, HRCs and anyone who supervises faculty, staff, students, or volunteers have a duty to report as follows:
 - 1. Notify OSUPD, OSUWMCS, or 911 (regional campuses should contact the appropriate law enforcement agency);
 - 2. Seek assistance for persons needing care; and
 - 3. Contact [ELR](#) to request guidance and assistance.
 - B. In the event of imminent danger of workplace violence, individuals who do not have a duty to report are encouraged to follow the steps outlined in I.A.
 - C. Individuals without a duty to report who have experienced, observed, or believe they may be targets of workplace violence are encouraged to make a report to:
 - 1. Their HRBP, HRC, or manager;
 - 2. [ELR](#);
 - 3. [University Anonymous Reporting Line](#); and/or
 - 4. [OSUPD/OSUWMCS](#)
- II. Evaluating or Responding to Workplace Violence
 - A. HRBPs, HRCs, and anyone who supervises faculty, staff, students, or volunteers must do the following:
 - 1. Be alert to possible signs of violence and document their observations.
 - a. Documentation should include, the nature of the threat, duration of risk, likelihood that harm will occur, and a record of information from all involved employees or witnesses.
 - 2. Report the incident to ELR and provide the documentation to ELR.
 - B. ELR will:
 - 1. Promptly investigate pursuant to the [Employee and Labor Relations Investigation Standards](#);
 - 2. When appropriate, recommend appropriate corrective action, or referral pursuant to [Faculty Rule 3335-5-04](#) when a faculty member is involved, based upon the results of an investigation; and
 - 3. Evaluate/process requests for corrective action.
- III. Crisis Assessment Team (CAT)
 - A. The CAT may be convened by an ELR representative within OHR to:
 - 1. Assess, manage, and provide consultation on incidents involving imminent danger, violence, or other situations as determined by ELR;
 - 2. Determine appropriate actions to assist the affected unit; and
 - 3. Develop and implement action plans.
 - B. The CAT is facilitated by an ELR representative within OHR and consists of representatives from ELR, OSUPD, OSUWMCS, Ohio State Employee Assistance Program, Office of Legal Affairs, the employing unit, and other units when appropriate, such as the Office of Academic Affairs or Office of Student Life.
- IV. Creating Workplace Safety Plans
 - A. Workplace safety plans are to be collaboratively developed by the employing unit, ELR, and/or OSUPD/OSUWMCS in response to workplace violence or in instances when an employee feels targeted by



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violence. Plans may include, and are not limited to, changing work stations and telephone numbers, and escort for entry to and exit from the work location.

V. Consequences of Policy Violations

A. Individuals found to engage in behavior in violation of this policy may:

1. Be required to seek and successfully complete training, assessment, counseling, treatment, and/or referrals; and/or
2. Be subject to corrective action, up to and including termination, in accordance with university policies or rules.

B. Criminal charges may also be filed, as appropriate.

Responsibilities

Position or Office	Responsibilities
Crisis Assessment Team (CAT)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assess, manage, and provide consultation on incidents involving imminent danger, violence, or other situations as determined by ELR. 2. Determine appropriate action to assist the affected unit. 3. Develop and implement an action plan.
HRBPs, HRCs, and anyone supervising faculty, staff, students, or volunteers	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In event of imminent danger of workplace violence or when become aware of information that would lead a reasonable person to believe that workplace violence has occurred: notify OSUPD, OSUWMCS, or 911 (regional campuses contact appropriate law enforcement agency) immediately; seek assistance for persons needing care; and contact ELR for guidance. 2. Be alert to possible signs of violence, document observations, and report the incident and provide document to ELR. 3. Respect the confidentiality of all parties to the extent possible.
Employee and Labor Relations (ELR)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promptly investigate reports of workplace violence pursuant to the Employee and Labor Relations Investigation Standards. 2. Recommend appropriate corrective action for staff, or referral pursuant to Rule 3335-5-04 for faculty. 3. Convene and facilitate CAT as needed. 4. Develop workplace safety plans in collaboration with employing unit and OSUPD/OSUWMCS as set forth in the policy. 5. Respect the confidentiality of all parties to the extent possible.
Employing unit	Develop workplace safety plans in collaboration with employing unit and ERL as set forth in the policy.
OSUPD/OSUWMCS	Develop workplace safety plans in collaboration with ERL and OSUPD/OSUWMCS as set forth in the policy.

Resources

Governance Documents

- Code of Student Conduct, trustees.osu.edu/bylaws-and-rules/code
- Employee and Labor Relations Investigation Standards, hr.osu.edu/wp-content/uploads/elr-investigation-standards.pdf
- Faculty Rule 3335-5-04, trustees.osu.edu/bylaws-and-rules/3335-5
- Non-Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct policy, go.osu.edu/non-discrimination-policy
- Ohio Revised Code 2923.1210, codes.ohio.gov/ohio-revised-code/section-2923.1210
- Ohio Revised Code 2923.111, codes.ohio.gov/ohio-revised-code/section-2923.111
- OSUWMC Compliance Standards of Conduct, onesource.osumc.edu/departments/Compliance/Documents/Standards%20of%20Employee%20Conduct/Standards%20of%20Employee%20Conduct.pdf
- OSUWMC Reporting Suspicious or Criminal Activity 04-18 (Med Center Employees Only), osumc.policytech.com/dotNet/documents/?docid=73913
- Whistleblower 1.40 policy, hr.osu.edu/policy/policy140.pdf



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Additional Resources and Training

- Crisis Assessment Team (CAT) Factors, hr.osu.edu/wp-content/uploads/policy705-cat.pdf
- How to Respond to an Active Aggressor Situation, dps.osu.edu/active-aggressor
- Ohio State Employee Health, wexnermedical.osu.edu/locations/mccampbell-outpatient-care/employee-health
- University Anonymous Reporting Line, ohio-state.ethicspoint.com
- Workplace Violence Frequently Asked Questions, hr.osu.edu/wp-content/uploads/policy705-faq.pdf
- Workplace Violence Online Training, hr.osu.edu/news/2017/08/01/workplace-violence-awareness-online-learning-module

Contacts

Subject	Office	Telephone	E-mail/URL
Counseling and employee assistance	Ohio State Employee Assistance Program, OSU Health Plan	800-678-6265	hr.osu.edu/benefits/eap
Counseling for students	Counseling and Consultation Service	614-292-5766	ccs.osu.edu
Imminent danger; Columbus and regional campus police issues	Ohio State University Police Division	614-292-2121 911 OSUPD can assist with identifying appropriate local law enforcement agency for regional campuses.	dps.osu.edu/police
Imminent danger; OSUWMC security issues	Ohio State Wexner Medical Center Security	614-293-8500 911	onesource.osumc.edu/departments/Security/Pages/Contact%20Us.aspx
Legal issues	Office of Legal Affairs	614-292-0611	legal.osu.edu
Make an anonymous report	University Anonymous Reporting Line	866-294-9350	secure.ethicspoint.com
Policy questions	Employee Relations, Office of Human Resources	614-247-myHR (6947)	HRConnection@osu.edu

History

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