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## WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

### PURPOSE

Westfield State University is committed to promoting and maintaining a safe and secure environment for its employees, students and visitors. Violent behavior and threats of violence are contrary to the university's mission and are prohibited in the university workplace. The university will respond promptly to acts of violence or threats of violence.

### POLICY

No person may commit an act of violence or threaten to commit violence against any university property or employee of the university, including student employees, on campus, on any university-controlled property or at any university-sponsored event. Individuals who violate this policy may be removed from campus and are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension or termination, consistent with other university policies and collective bargaining agreements. In addition, the university may assist in pursuing civil penalties, criminal penalties, or other appropriate action against the offender.

**VIOLENCE, THREATS OF IMMINENT VIOLENCE, OR DANGEROUS OR EMERGENCY SITUATIONS SHOULD BE REPORTED IMMEDIATELY TO UNIVERSITY POLICE AT 413-572-5262 OR TO LOCAL POLICE AT 911**

For the purposes of this policy, prohibited violence/threats of violence include, but are not limited to, the following behaviors:

- Any intentional direct or indirect threat, behavior or action that suggests the infliction of physical injury or endangers a person's safety, such as sexual violence, non-sexual physical attacks (beating, stabbing, shoving, kicking, shooting, throwing of objects), domestic or dating violence, stalking, physical intimidation, or displays or uses of force that would give an employee reason to fear or expect bodily harm;
- Threats to inflict bodily harm on an employee's family, friends or associates;
- The use of gestures or symbols to communicate a direct or indirect threat of harm;
- The use of workplace resources such as phones, fax machines, email, mail or other means to threaten an employee;

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- The use of confidential university or personnel information to harm or threaten violence to an employee or employee's family, friends or associates;
  - The intentional damage, destruction or threat to damage property owned or operated by the university;
  - Disorderly conduct, such as throwing or pushing objects, punching walls or acting in a way that serves to intimidate or threaten violence;
  - The possession, display or any use of firearms, weapons, or other dangerous devices (as defined by Massachusetts law) on university property or while working for the university even if the individual is authorized by law to possess, own or carry such instruments (with the exception of law enforcement officials acting in an official capacity or other validated authorization to possess, display or use said devices on university property);
  - Situations in which an employee has obtained a protective or restraining order naming his or her workplace as a prohibited area of contact; and/or
  - Threats or acts of violence not occurring on university property involving a university employee, or persons acting in a representative capacity for the university, if the threats or acts of violence affect the legitimate interest of the university.

Prohibited conduct does not encompass lawful acts of self-defense or the defense of others.

## **PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING VIOLENCE/THREATS OF VIOLENCE**

Every university employee must take any violence or threat of violence seriously and should immediately report any conduct prohibited by this policy to the appropriate authorities listed below.

Contact university police at 413-572-5262 if you are not sure whether there is an immediate threat of violence or hostility, but are concerned that the behavior of any person may lead to violence.

### **Acts of Violence, Threats of Imminent Violence, or Dangerous or Emergency Situations:**

- University police: 413-572-5262
- Local police (911)
- Emergency phones are located across campus with emergency buttons that connect a person directly to university police.

## **Other Non-Emergency Situations:**

- Human Resources: 413-572-8277
- University police: 413-572-5262

## **RETALIATION IS PROHIBITED**

Retaliation 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 may be subject to disciplinary action.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

The prevention of workplace violence is a shared responsibility at the university. Depending on the circumstances, the university may be obligated to report incidents to external agencies. The university will fully comply with all statutory reporting obligations in all cases. Anyone having questions about such reporting is encouraged to contact Human Resources at 413-572-8277 or university police at 413-572-5262.

## **All Employees Must:**

- Make reports of violence/threats of violence in accordance with this policy.
- Report warning signs of actual or potential violence that may affect the workplace as soon as possible to university police, your manager or supervisor, or Human Resources.

## **Managers and Supervisors Must:**

- Contact university police with concerns about possible violence/threats of violence.

## **Managers and Supervisors Should:**

- Be alert to behaviors or attitudes that may indicate violent behavior, such as:
  - recent changes in behavior, appearance, or demeanor;
  - work or personal crisis;
  - withdrawal from normal activities or contacts;
  - substance abuse;
  - threats or references to violence or self-harm;
  - possession of or alarming fascination with weapons; and/or

- expressions of being wronged, humiliated, or degraded.

## **Human Resources Must:**

- Collaborate with department chairs/heads and administrative area supervisors to implement this policy.
- Review reports of potential workplace violence affecting employees, consult other campus personnel as appropriate, and recommend appropriate responses.
- Oversee disciplinary action against employees who have violated the policy.
- Coordinate preventive measures to encourage a safe and secure workplace.
- Assist victims of workplace violence to obtain support resources.
- Notify university police of threats of violence reported to Human Resources.
- Take appropriate steps to protect those who report threatening behavior from retaliation.

## **University Police Must:**

- Respond to reports of workplace violence and emergency situations and coordinate with other law enforcement agencies.
- Advise and coordinate with Human Resources and other campus personnel on appropriate responses to threats of workplace violence.
- Work with Human Resources and campus personnel to develop and implement safety plans.
- Take appropriate steps to protect those who report threatening behavior from retaliation.

## **SUPPORT FOR EMPLOYEES AFFECTED BY VIOLENCE**

When managing situations of workplace violence or potential workplace violence, the needs of the employee and the employee's supervisor should be known and respected. The university will endeavor to make adjustments to the work environment to assist the employee who is a victim of workplace violence to perform the essential duties of his or her position.

## **RESOURCES**

Employees facing personal situations that involve violence or the potential for violence are encouraged to seek confidential counseling and assistance through one of the following resources:

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## **LifeScope Employee Assistance Program**

(800) 828-6025 or [www.LifeScopeEAP.com](http://www.LifeScopeEAP.com)

Username: Westfield State University / Password: guest

## **Domestic Violence Service Providers in Western Massachusetts**

**In emergency situations, call 911. HOTLINES are 24 hour and confidential**

### **New Beginnings (YWCA)**

Location: Westfield, Huntington

Huntington Office: 413-667-8784

Westfield Office: 413-562-5739

Westfield HOTLINE: 413-562-1920

HOTLINE: 800-479-6245

Website: [www.ywca.org](http://www.ywca.org)

### **YWCA Western Massachusetts**

Location: Springfield

HOTLINE TTY/Voice: 800-796-8711

HOTLINE TTY/Voice: 413-733-7100

Spanish Language Assault HOTLINE: 800-223-5001

Website: <http://www.yvworks.org/services.php>

**Services:** Domestic violence program, 24 hour confidential hotline, sexual assault/rape crisis program, emergency domestic violence shelter.

### **YWCA Community Domestic Violence Services**

Location: Springfield

Address: 1 Clough Street, Springfield, MA 01118

Phone: 413-732-3121

### **Womanshelter/Compañeras**

Location: Holyoke

Outreach focus: Holyoke, Chicopee, Ludlow, Springfield, West Springfield, Westfield, Southampton, Monson, Palmer, Ware, South Hadley, Belchertown and Granby.

HOTLINE: 877-536-1628

Website: <http://www.womanshelter.org>

**Services:** Domestic violence program, emergency domestic violence shelter.

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## **Safe Passage**

Location: Northampton

HOTLINE: 888-345-5282 (toll-free)

TTY/HOTLINE: 413-586-5066

Website: <http://www.safepass.org>

**Services:** Domestic violence program, emergency domestic violence shelter.

## **Women in Transition/NELCWIT**

Location: Greenfield

HOTLINE: 413-772-0806

HOTLINE for Athol and Towns East: 888-249-0806

Website: <http://www.nelcwit.org>

**Services:** Domestic violence program, 24 hour confidential hotline, sexual assault/rape crisis program, emergency domestic violence shelter.

## **Center for Women and Community**

Location: Amherst

HOTLINE: 413 Area Toll-Free Rape Crisis: 413-545-0800

Main number/TTY: 413-577-0940

Website: <http://www.umass.edu/ewc>

**Services:** Sexual assault/rape crisis program.

## **Elizabeth Freeman Center**

Location: Pittsfield

HOTLINE/Information: 866-401-2425

Website: <http://www.elizabethfreemancenter.org>

**Services:** Domestic violence program, 24 hour confidential hotline, sexual assault/rape crisis program, emergency domestic violence shelter.

## **Multilingual HOTLINE in Massachusetts:**

Domestic Violence SafeLink - [Español](#), [Portugues](#),

HOTLINE: 1-877-785-2020

TTY: 1-877-521-2601

Website: <http://www.casamyrna.org>

## **HOTLINE support outside of Massachusetts:**

### **National Domestic Violence Hotline**

HOTLINE: 800-799-SAFE

800-799-7233

Website: [www.thehotline.org](http://www.thehotline.org)

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## For U.S. Citizens outside the country:

### **Americans Overseas Domestic Violence Crisis Center (AODVC)**

International toll free crisis line: 866-USWOMEN

HOTLINE: 866-979-6636

Website: [www.866uswomen.org](http://www.866uswomen.org)

## REVIEW

This document will be reviewed annually by the Assistant Vice President of Human Resources.