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## I. POLICY STATEMENT

The University of North Carolina System Office (UNC System) is committed to providing a workplace that is free from violence by establishing preventative measures, by holding perpetrators of violence accountable, and by providing assistance and support to victims. Violent acts, whether they are committed on-duty or off-duty, have the potential to affect the ability of all employees to perform their jobs. Any form of workplace violence as defined in this policy may form the basis for disciplinary action or other appropriate administrative action, up to and including dismissal.

## II. COVERAGE

- A. **Coverage.** This policy applies to all employees and their interactions with visitors, vendors, and other employees.
- B. **Violations.** It is a violation of this policy to:
  - 1. Engage in workplace violence as defined in this policy;
  - 2. Possess, use, or threaten to use an unauthorized weapon during a time covered by this policy; and/or
  - 3. Misuse workplace authority in such a way that it violates this policy.
- C. **On- and Off-Duty Conduct.** This policy applies both to the conduct of an employee while functioning in the course and scope of employment and to off-duty violent conduct that has a potential adverse impact on an employee's ability to perform assigned duties and responsibilities. For off-duty violent conduct to warrant disciplinary or related administrative action, management, in consultation with UNC System Human Resources and with Campus Safety and Emergency Operations, must demonstrate a significant correlation between the off-duty behavior and the potential adverse impact to the UNC System.

## III. DEFINITIONS

**Workplace violence** includes, but is not limited to: intimidation, bullying, stalking, threats, physical attack, property damage, or domestic and family violence. This includes acts of violence committed by or against University employees. Such incidents may also involve students, clients, visitors or vendors.

<b>Bullying</b>	Unwanted offensive and malicious behavior that undermines an individual or group through persistently negative attacks. The behavior generally includes an element of vindictiveness, and is intended to undermine, patronize, humiliate, intimidate or demean the recipient.
<b>Interpersonal Violence</b>	Interpersonal violence (also commonly referred to as intimate partner violence, dating violence, domestic violence, and relationship violence), can encompass a broad range of abusive behavior committed by a person who is or has been:



	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In a romantic or intimate relationship with the reporting party (of the same or different sex);</li> <li>2. The reporting party's spouse or partner (of the same or different sex);</li> <li>3. The reporting party's family member; or</li> <li>4. The reporting party's cohabitant or household member, including a roommate.</li> </ol> <p>Whether there was such a relationship will be gauged by its length, type, and frequency of interaction. Interpersonal violence includes physical, sexual, emotional, economic, or psychological actions or threats of actions that a reasonable person in similar circumstances and with similar identities would find intimidating, frightening, terrorizing, or threatening. Such behaviors may include threats of violence to one's self, one's family member, or one's pet.</p>
<b>Intimidation</b>	Unwarranted behavior intended to frighten, coerce, or induce duress.
<b>Physical Attack</b>	Unwanted or hostile physical contact including but not limited to hitting, fighting, shoving, restraining, or throwing objects.
<b>Property Damage</b>	Intentional damage to property, including property owned by the University or by employees, students, clients, visitors or vendors.
<b>Stalking</b>	<p>Stalking is a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to feel fear.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A course of conduct is a pattern of behavior composed of two or more acts over a period of time.</li> <li>2. For purposes of this definition, as reasonable person is considered to be a person in similar circumstances.</li> </ol> <p>Stalking may involve physical violence or the fear of physical violence and may include behavior such as harassing or pestering an individual (in person, in writing, by telephone or by electronic format) or following or spying on an individual, which may alarm the individual or cause them distress.</p>
<b>Threat</b>	An expression of intent to cause physical or mental harm. An expression constitutes a threat without regard to whether the party communicating the threat has the present ability to carry out the threat and without regard to whether the expression is contingent, conditional, or future.
<b>Weapons</b>	Any object that may be used to intimidate, attack, or injure another person or to damage property. Objects understood to have a primary function as a weapon are not allowed on University property unless expressly authorized under this policy or under State law (N.C.G.S. §14-269.2).
<b>Workplace</b>	Any location at which the employee is on-duty or any location at which the employee is representing or understood to be representing the UNC System.



#### IV. THREAT ASSESSMENT AND PREVENTION COORDINATION

- A. **Threat Assessment.** The UNC System Threat Assessment and Response Team (START) will assess and respond to immediate and potential acts of workplace violence. START includes representatives from Human Resources, Campus Safety and Emergency Operations, and Legal Affairs, and also may include representatives from other divisions as necessary.
- B. **Prevention Coordinator.** The Employee Relations and Equal Opportunity Program Manager (ER/EO Manager) in Human Resources serves as the workplace violence prevention coordinator.
- C. **Policy Communication.** All employees will receive information on the workplace violence prevention program at new employee orientation, including procedures for reporting violations of this policy. Current employees will receive policy communications at least annually.

#### V. EMPLOYEE PROTECTIONS AND STAFF DEBRIEFINGS

- A. **Employee Protections.** The UNC System Office will make reasonable efforts to protect employees affected by workplace violence, including domestic and family violence, by offering all available security measures described below, as needed:
  - 1. **Flexible Schedules and Work Conditions.** Management may grant flexible work schedules or accommodate requests to adjust work locations or conditions in order to enhance employee safety whenever possible and appropriate. This may include short-term adjustments to reporting relationships.
  - 2. **Leave.** Management may also grant use of available leave or leave without pay for medical, court, or counseling appointments related to the violence event(s). Employees may also apply Family and Medical Leave and/or Family Illness Leave, if eligible.
  - 3. **Employee Assistance Program (EAP):** Affected employees are encouraged to use pertinent services offered through the EAP.
  - 4. **Confidential Referrals.** For privacy reasons, Human Resources may refer affected employees to local police departments, crisis centers, and/or the EAP for off-duty domestic/family violence incidents without involving or notifying the employee's department management.
- B. **Staff Debriefings.** Human Resources may provide or coordinate critical incident stress debriefings, generally facilitated through an EAP counselor, for employees who have been affected by a workplace violence or other traumatic event.

#### VI. REPORTING AND RECORDKEEPING

- A. **Confidentiality.** The UNC System Office must address all reports of workplace violence. All reports will be handled in a confidential manner, with information released on a need-to-know basis. Although anonymity cannot be guaranteed, managers and administrators are expected to be sensitive and responsive to fears from the reporting employee of reprisal.
- B. **Reporting Procedures.** The reporting requirements for workplace violence events vary depending on the immediacy and severity of the event.
  - 1. **Immediate Threats.** For immediate threats, seek shelter and contact public safety (911), then, when safe to do so, follow up with the Employee Engagement & Equal Opportunity Unit (919-445-0491).



2. **Non-Immediate Threats.** For non-immediate threats, staff should contact the Employee Engagement & Equal Opportunity Unit (919-445-0491), which will determine, based on the situation described, if the event warrants further review by the START.
3. **Threats of Self-Harm.** For concerns that a colleague may be suicidal or seeking self-harm, contact public safety (911) if there is concern of an immediate threat, then follow up with the Employee Engagement & Equal Opportunity Unit (919-445-0491).
- C. **Management Obligation to Report.** All UNC System Office employees who hold supervisory responsibilities are required to report incidents or allegations of workplace violence to Human Resources within two (2) calendar days of becoming aware of an allegation.
- D. **Non-Supervisory Employees Encouraged to Report.** Although non-supervisory employees are not required by this policy to report alleged incidents of workplace violence, they are encouraged to do so.
- E. **Recordkeeping.** Once an incident has been reported, the ER/EO Manager will complete an incident report and coordinate as needed next steps for the internal review of the incident. The ER/EO Manager will maintain a record of all reported workplace violence incidents.

## VII. INVESTIGATION AND SANCTIONS

- A. **Investigation.** The Employee Engagement & Equal Opportunity Unit, in conjunction with Campus Safety and Emergency Operations, will investigate alleged incidents as warranted. Human Resources may require management in the affected department(s) to perform or participate in the investigation. Involved employees may be placed on appropriate administrative leave during the investigation period to address safety concerns.
- B. **Decision-Making.** The ER/EO Manager will review the investigation findings with appropriate UNC System Office management and recommend to the Vice President for Human Resources what additional steps, if warranted, are to be taken to address and resolve the issue. The Vice President, in consultation appropriate management shall decide the course of action.
- C. **Sanctions for Prohibited Actions.** A violation of this policy shall be considered unacceptable personal conduct as provided in the policies applicable to the employee's appointment type and subject to appropriate disciplinary or related administrative action, up to and including dismissal.
- D. **Sanctions for False Reports.** Deliberately false or misleading claims of violence that appear to have been filed with the intention to harass, that appear to be frivolous, or that appear to be an abuse of the workplace violence reporting process, will be considered instances of unacceptable personal conduct and subject to appropriate disciplinary or related administrative action, up to and including dismissal.
- E. **Sanctions for Retaliation.** This policy prohibits retaliation against any employee who in good faith reports a possible violation of this policy. Any action of retaliation will be considered an instance of unacceptable personal conduct and subject to appropriate disciplinary or related administrative action, up to and including dismissal.