



UNIVERSITY POLICY

HUMAN RESOURCES POLICIES

Number: 307

Subject: Workplace Violence Policy

Covered Individuals: UIU Employees

Covered Campus Locations: All Locations

Effective Date: January 2015

Last Revision: August 31, 2018

PURPOSE: To provide and encourage a safe environment and workplace for all University employees free from violence and conducive to a productive working environment.

POLICY: Upper Iowa University is concerned with and committed to providing safety for University employees. We refuse to tolerate violence in the workplace and will make every effort to prevent violent incidents from occurring. All personnel actions are reviewed to ensure Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) compliance.

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1. Responsibility

- a. Administrators and supervisors are responsible for informing employees of this policy and for its enforcement.
- b. All employees must adhere to work practices designed to make the workplace more secure and must not engage in verbal threats or take physical actions which create a security and safety hazard for others in the workplace.
- c. All employees are responsible for using safe work practices, for following directives, policies and procedures, and for assisting in maintaining a safe and secure work environment.

2. Definition

- a. Workplace violence is any physical or non-physical act that results in threatened or actual harm to a person or threatened or actual damage to property. It includes any threatening words or actions whether verbal or non-verbal which creates in the mind of any reasonable person the belief that there will be immediate or future harm to any person or property.
- b. Workplace violence typically falls within the three levels outlined below:
 - Verbal aggression, which includes but is not limited to constant refusal to cooperate, spreading rumors to harm others, being aggressively argumentative, and being belligerent towards others.
 - Unreasonable behavior, which includes but is not limited to refusing to obey organizational policies and procedures, sabotaging equipment and/or stealing property for revenge, sending sexual or violent notes to co-workers or administrators.
 - Physical acts, which include but are not limited to suicidal gestures, physical fights, intentional destruction of University property or another's property or equipment or any substantial threat to destroy property or equipment, and commission of murder, rape, or arson.
- c. Other examples of what would normally be considered workplace violence include, but are not limited to the following occurring in the work setting:
 - intimidating, threatening, or hostile statements, actions, or gestures
 - verbal threats or abuse
 - obscene and/or harassing phone calls
 - bullying
 - stalking
 - bomb threats
 - unlawful possession of a weapon
 - threatening comments regarding, or in reference to, violent events and/or behavior
 - throwing objects and things regardless of whether or not a person is the target
 - any other act or behavior that is judged offensive or inappropriate and violent in the workplace or on campus

3. Enforcement of Policy Violations

- a. Employees who commit threatening or violent acts may be removed from the workplace, and may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination, criminal prosecution, or both.
- b. Any disciplinary action initiated as a result of a workplace violence incident is not appealable.

4. Preventive Measures

- a. By taking preventive measures, all employees can reduce the risk of workplace violence.
- b. Examples of preventive measures are as follows:
 - inform employees that there is zero tolerance of workplace violence
 - encourage employees to report incidents
 - evaluate departmental employee selection process
 - communicate work safety with employees on a regular basis
 - establish a professional work environment
 - examine security as well as emergency procedures
 - be familiar with work location and any crime problems in or near the area
 - know your coworkers; know who works at what time and who can be of help during emergencies
 - be especially careful when going to your car
 - be cautious of suspicious persons entering your work area
 - never get into an elevator if you are uncomfortable with a person in the elevator

5. Response Procedures

The specific response depends upon the applicable category outlined below. The suggested actions by category are:

- a. Violence Has Occurred – Call 5372 for Fayette Campus Security or 911 for law enforcement and emergency services as needed. Evaluate the likelihood of additional violence, warn other potential victims, inform victims of available medical services, cooperate with law enforcement, and coordinate employee and media communications through the Office of Communications and Marketing.
- b. Immediate Threat Exists – Employees should not put themselves or anyone else at risk when a threat of imminent danger has been identified. If the situation does not defuse and come under control by eliminating all threat of danger and violence, call 5372 for Fayette Campus Security or 911 for law enforcement assistance, assess danger to employees and public, warn potential targets, and take reasonable actions.
- c. Threat Made, But No Immediate Danger Apparent – Document the circumstances associated with the event including a report of information from all involved employees and witnesses. Promptly develop and implement a plan of action. The plan should include appropriate corrective/disciplinary action up to and including termination based upon assessment of the individual's actions.
- d. If there is no immediate threat made and/or no immediate danger apparent, and you feel that workplace violence behaviors exist at the University, document the circumstances associated with the event including a report of all involved employees and witnesses and

report them immediately to your supervisor or the Director of Human Resources at 563-425-5959.

- e. Another initial reporting option is Lighthouse reporting, which may be anonymous. Lighthouse may be reached on their website, which is www.lighthouse-services.com/uiu, by phone at (833) 350-0022, or by email at reports@lighthouse-services.com (UIU must be identified in the email). This report may be filed on an anonymous basis, but because investigators are unable to interview anonymous reporters, it may be more difficult to evaluate the credibility of the allegations and, therefore, less likely to permit an investigation to be initiated, continued or successfully completed.

6. Retaliation

No individual who, in good faith, reports workplace violence and/or a violation of law or University policy shall suffer harassment, retaliation or adverse employment, and/or academic or educational consequences on the basis of that good faith report.

This commitment to preventing retaliation does not preclude the University from addressing performance or behavioral issues with employees as appropriate.

Individuals who knowingly give false or misleading information or make a false report of violation, are not entitled to the protections of this policy, and shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

CONTACTS

Acting as the policy owner, the Office of Human Resources is responsible for answering questions regarding the application of this policy.

SANCTIONS

N/A

HISTORY

- January 2015
 - Procedure was put into place.
- September 11, 2018
 - Change to Policy and Revision Recommended by UPC
- September 12, 2018
 - Approved by President's Council