



Lehigh University Human Resources Policy

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Revisions:
Applicability: All Staff Members

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAM POLICY

Purpose:

Policy on creating a work environment of respect and safety free from intimidation, threats, and acts of violence

Policy:

Introduction

Lehigh's goal is to create a work environment of respect and safety that is free from intimidation, threats, and acts of violence. All employees, including supervisors and temporary employees, should be treated with courtesy and respect at all times.

All Lehigh University employees will participate in promoting a safe work environment by:

1. Refraining from engaging in verbal or non-verbal conduct which is violent, threatening, or intimidating
2. Refraining from fighting, "horseplay," or other conduct that may be dangerous to others
3. Participating in training programs and in-service activities, e.g. how to recognize and prevent violence, how to report incidents, etc.
4. Participating in the Workplace Violence Prevention Program via suggestions or complaints
5. Reporting incidents of workplace violence accurately and promptly to their supervisor (if the incident involves their supervisor, employees should report directly to Human Resources)
6. Enabling Lehigh University to assist in honoring any Protection From Abuse (PFA) by, indicating their place of employment on the PFA, registering the PFA with the county courthouse in the county in which they work and in the county in which they reside, and by keeping a copy of the PFA on their person and providing a copy to their immediate supervisor.

Training, Education and Reporting

Under the direction of Human Resources, all new employees, at orientations, and all current staff, annually, will be educated on the *Workplace Violence Prevention Program*, including, but not limited to, the following areas:

1. The general requirements of the Program

2. Identifying risk factors and categories of workplace violence
3. Recognizing impending violence
4. Responding appropriately to diffuse escalating agitation, threatening behavior, or criminal intent
5. Providing safe methods of restraint and escape
6. Responding appropriately to obtain needed assistance.

Lehigh encourages employees to bring their disputes or differences with other employees to the attention of their supervisors or the Human Resources Office before the situation escalates into potential violence. Lehigh will assist in the resolution of employee disputes and will not discipline employees for raising such concerns.

Any individual who believes he or she has been subjected to, has observed, or has knowledge of actual or potential workplace violence should notify the University Police, their supervisor, the Human Resources Office, or the University's Risk Management Office.

If any imminent physical threat or danger exists, employees should contact University Police at extension 84200.

Emergency Phone Numbers:

University Police — Extension 84200
Risk Management — Extension 84251
Human Resources — Extension 83897
Employee Assistance Program — 800-395-1616

Any Unacceptable Behaviors

While this list of unacceptable behaviors is comprehensive, it is not limited to, the following:

- Intimidating, threatening, or hostile statements or actions; ranting speech
- Profanity or obscene language or gestures
- Jokes or offensive comments including comments regarding, or references to, violent events and/or behaviors
- Physical abuse or attack, waving fists, pushing, stalking, bullying, hazing, unjust exercise of power or authority
- Inappropriate touching
- Vandalism, arson, sabotage
- Throwing things, destroying property
- The use or carrying of weapons of any kind onto property utilized for University programs
- Any act or behavior (slamming doors, for example) that is judged inappropriate in the workplace by a supervisor.

Discipline

Verbal or non-verbal conduct which is violent, threatening, or intimidating will not be tolerated in workplaces at Lehigh University; if an internal investigation concludes that an employee has engaged in such conduct, the employee will be subject to prompt disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment and may also be subject to criminal penalties.

Suspicious Individuals and Activities

All suspicious individuals or activities should also be reported as soon as possible to a supervisor. Do not place yourself in peril. If you see or hear a commotion or disturbance near your workstation, do not

try to intercede or see what is happening. Lehigh will promptly and thoroughly investigate all reports of threats of (or actual) violence and of suspicious individuals or activities. The identity of the individual making a report will be protected as much as is practical. In order to maintain workplace safety and the integrity of its investigation, Lehigh may suspend employees, either with or without pay, pending investigation.

Post-Incident Response

Staff members involved in workplace violence incidents will be afforded prompt physical treatment and psychological evaluation whenever an assault takes place, regardless of the severity. Local EAP services may be utilized where appropriate.

Recordkeeping

Accurate records of incidents will be kept and reviewed in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the program and identify trends in order to develop methods of prevention and control.

- Incident reports will be filled out for all incidents of workplace violence.
- Entries will be made on the OSHA 200 log under the same rules that apply to any other workplace illness or injury sustained by an employee.

Workplace Risk Assessment

Annually, using the [Worksite Risk Assessment Tool](#), Human Resources will assess the vulnerability of various worksites by:

- Examining physical locations for existing or potential hazards for violence
- Reviewing incident reports and complaints to identify patterns of violence and trends
- Identifying high risk factors such as employee populations, location, etc.
- Interacting with staff to identify risks to safety
- Providing copies of the completed risk assessment tool to various departments.

Keywords: Guns, Violence