

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

PURPOSE AND GOAL

It is Langston University's policy to promote a safe environment for its students and employees. The University is committed to working with its employees and students to maintain an environment free from violence, threats of violence, harassment, intimidation, and other disruptive behavior. While this kind of conduct is not pervasive at the University, no institution is immune. Disruptive behavior at one time or another will affect every institution.

Violence, threats, harassment, intimidation, and other disruptive behavior at the University will not be tolerated. All reports of incidents will be taken seriously and dealt with accordingly. Such behavior can include oral or written statements, gestures, or expressions that communicate a direct or indirect threat of Physical harm. Individuals who commit such acts may be removed from the premises and may be subject to disciplinary action, criminal penalties, or both.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all situations involving violence, threats, harassment, intimidation and other disruptive behavior that maybe engaged in by faculty, staff, or students (full- time or part-time, permanent or temporary) on the Langston, Oklahoma City, Tinker Air Force Base and Tulsa campuses.

RESPONSIBILITY

The interpretation and administration of this policy is the responsibility of Langston University's Professional Counseling Center. The Professional Counseling Center is assisted in the Policy on Workplace Violence interpretation and administration by the Security Office, Human Resources Department, and an appointed body called the Crisis Management Team.

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Langston University, in support of its Policy on Workplace Violence, has initiated an Employee Assistance Program (EAP). An employee who displays a tendency or propensity to engage in violent, abusive, or threatening behavior or who otherwise engages in behavior that the University, in its sole discretion, deems offensive or inappropriate will be referred to the EAP for counseling or other appropriate treatment. Said employees may also be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge. (Copies of the University's EAP Policy are on file in the Human Resources Department).

DUTY TO WARN

In furtherance of its Policy on Workplace Violence, Langston University employees have a "duty to warn". A "duty to warn" refers to each employee's responsibility to notify their supervisor, the Professional Counseling Center, the Security Office, or a Human Resources representative of any workplace activity; situation; or

incident that they observe or know of that involves (or appears to involve) problematic behavior. On LU campuses in Langston, Oklahoma City, Tinker AFB, and Tulsa—“problematic behavior” may involve fellow employees, students, parents and/or other visitors to the campus. Examples of “problematic behavior” may include but are not limited to: verbally and physically aggressive behavior; threats or acts of violence; offensive acts; threatening or offensive comments or remarks; etc. Employee reports made pursuant to this policy will be held in confidence, to the maximum extent possible. Langston University will not condone or support any form of retaliation against an employee for making a report in good faith under this policy.

IN-PERSON THREATS AGAINST INDIVIDUALS AND/OR LANGSTON UNIVERSITY

The following guidelines are to be adhered to relative to Langston University’s Policy on Workplace Violence:

1. Confrontational threats while at work shall be dealt with by the supervisor and a member of the Human Resources Department through an immediate meeting with the individual(s) involved.
2. Depending on the seriousness of the threats, actions may include suspension (for gathering additional facts), written warning, or termination.
3. For employees suspended or terminated, the campus Security Office must be notified whereby an officer will retrieve the employee’s ID card and building keys. The Security Office will also escort said person(s) off campus.
4. Use of the Security Office should be engaged at any time, as it appears appropriate and necessary.
5. Further follow-up through a crisis assessment may be invoked if warranted.

OTHER THREATS AGAINST INDIVIDUALS AND/OR LANGSTON UNIVERSITY

Threats against (an) individual(s) and/or Langston University—regardless of how transmitted (written, verbally, electronically)—should be immediately reported to the LU Professional Counseling Center.

The Professional Counseling Center will immediately initiate a crisis assessment conducted by members of the Crisis Management Team along with the supervisor of the individual making threat. The Crisis Management Team—as warranted—may approach other individuals—e.g., the party against whom the threat was made and/or their supervisor. The Professional Counseling Center will also collect information from the employee or student to whom the threat was made.

Factors that will be included in a crisis assessment will center on:

1. The nature of the threat;
2. The need for immediate action;
3. The circumstances preceding the threat;

4. The assurance that the individual(s) will not be able to enter the campus (or building);
5. The nature of ongoing communication with the involved individual(s);
6. Notification of law enforcement authorities;
7. Possible legal action.

OKLAHOMA CITY, TINKER AFB, AND TULSA CAMPUSES

Hostile actions and in-person, written, or electronic threats occurring at locations other than the main campus should follow the procedures outlined below.

1. Hostile actions and threats require the senior person on site to determine the appropriateness of contacting local law enforcement agencies. The Human Resources department on the main campus should be notified immediately to help determine appropriate follow-up actions.
2. Written or electronically transmitted threats must be made known to the senior on-site manager immediately. He/she should contact the main campus Human Resources department to determine the next steps to be taken in conjunction with the crisis management team's assessment.
3. The senior manager (on site and others as deemed necessary) should record details of the incident for analysis and review by the Professional Counseling Center, LU Security Office, Human Resources Department, and local law enforcement officials, if necessary.

DOCUMENTATION

Whether on the main campus, Oklahoma City, Tinker, or Tulsa—it is critical that any material relevant to an incident be maintained until the Professional Counseling Center and/or Human Resources decides upon proper disposition. Additionally, in all

circumstances, a complete and detailed log of events will be maintained by the Human Resources Department and reviewed on an on-going and/or as-needed basis.

COMMUNICATION WITH THE NEWS MEDIA

The University President (or the president's designee) will handle all communications with the press and other news media about a violent workplace incident. The University's legal counsel will be consulted by the President as required. All other employees who receive inquiries from the press should direct them to the Vice President for Student Affairs.

POLICY STATEMENT

Serious threats or acts of intimidation (i.e., statements or physical acts which put a reasonable person in fear of harm to him/herself or another), and acts of violence, with or without the presence of a weapon, will not be tolerated at LU. Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action, including possible suspension, termination, and/or the filing of criminal charges.

All employees, regardless of position with the University, shall immediately report acts of violence and/or serious threats (which a reasonable person would consider potentially dangerous) made against them or witnessed by them. Such reports may be made to the employee's immediate supervisor. When/if the immediate supervisor receives a report regarding threats or violent episodes he/she shall advise the Professional Counseling Center, Human Resources Department and/or the Security Office.

Employees should also feel free to report concerns about unusual or threatening behavior, even though such behavior is not perceived as a direct threat or an immediately dangerous situation when the employee, in good faith, is fearful for their continued safety or the safety of others. Reportable situations include those of co-workers, students, and visitors to the campus.

Reports made as authorized in this policy may be in oral or written form. If in oral form, said reports shall be followed by a written report as soon as it is reasonably possible.

The University will not tolerate retaliation against employees making good faith reports as provided for in this policy, even where the concerns prove ultimately to have been in error. The University will also not tolerate intentionally false reports made with the intent of wrongfully discrediting another.

Supervisors, etc., receiving reports of acts of violence, serious threats, or good faith concerns about unusual or threatening behavior shall take all appropriate steps to eliminate potentially dangerous occurrences—including but not limited to

contacting the Security Office. He/she shall also forward a written report describing the threatening situation to the Human Resources Department. The Human Resources Department will in turn share copies of the report with the Crisis Management Team.

Nothing in this policy relieves a supervisor or manager from taking immediate action when the safety or security of employees is threatened and time is critical. Such action may include notification of the Security Office, suspension, or the temporary physical separation of employees in the work place. Similarly, this policy does not replace routine management actions such as counseling, reprimands, or changes in work assignments. This policy is intended for those cases of continuing inappropriate actions or threats where normal management and personnel actions have been ineffective and the possibility of violence is such that police and others need to be involved.

Following a serious threat or an act of violence in the work place, employees, witnesses, and families often suffer from stress-related ailments such as depression, anger, headaches, and continued fear. Langston University, through a group identified as the Crisis Management Team, will provide debriefing teams, counseling, and support as needed to those affected. These actions, provided within a 24 to 72 hour period following a traumatic event, will help minimize the impact of an incident and prevent further violence. The University's Professional Counseling Center and EAP Coordinator shall have oversight responsibility for the Crisis Management Team's activities where counseling is involved.

PROCEDURES

The following procedures will be followed in the event of workplace serious threats or violence:

- a) The Crisis Management Team, consisting of the Director of Human Resources (with Director of Human Resources serving in an advisory capacity), the Director of the Professional Counseling Center, the Director of the Security Office, University Physician, and other administrators selected by the University President, will review all reports generated relative to this policy.
- b) When reports are received, Crisis management Team members will review them, gather additional information as needed, and develop a plan of action which may include specific suggestions to the immediate supervisor, recommendation for counseling, EAP intervention, and/or legal action. Crisis Management Team members in coordination with an affected area's chief operating supervisor/manager will follow-up to assure implementation of the team's recommendations. Decisions and actions that directly affect an accused employee will be taken in compliance with existing laws and applicable policies of the University. The Crisis Management Team will also monitor to ensure initiation of protective measures to guard against reoccurrence in the same unit.

- c) LU understands the sensitivity of the information provided and/or alleged in such reports as it pertains to employees' reputations, rights to privacy, and confidentiality. Therefore, appropriate procedures will be followed to corroborate or dispel the accusations and limit the dissemination of reports to an "as need-to-know basis."

Should a report prove to be false, or actions misinterpreted as threats of violence, the continued acceptance and effectiveness of the accused employee is essential. The Crisis Management Team will balance the safety and security of students and employees against the need for confidentiality of information. Legal guidance will be obtained when necessary.

- d) All levels of management at LU will be familiar with this policy. All reports of possible violent behavior, intimidation, or serious threats should be forwarded to the chairperson of the Crisis Management Team (who is also the Director of the Professional Counseling Center).
- e) The University, through LU Human Resources Department and the LU Security Office, will make available training directed at violence in the work place for all levels of employees at LU. This training shall be provided annually.
- f) The Crisis Management team will also provide timely reports of threats and violent episodes to the University's Vice President for Student Affairs. Annual Reports of the team's activities will also be provided to the President