
Procedure: Workplace Violence Prevention
Procedures

Reference No.: 5.20

Authority: College President

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Revised:

The purpose of these procedures is to address the issue of potential workplace violence in our campus community, to prevent workplace violence from occurring to the fullest extent possible, and to set forth procedures to be followed should such violence occur.

1. Commitment

SUNY Broome Community College is committed to promoting a safe and secure academic environment and workplace to support its mission. All members of the College community – faculty, staff, and students – are expected to take part in maintaining a working and learning environment free from violence, from threats of violence, harassment, intimidation or coercion.

SUNY Broome Community College prohibits workplace violence, threats of violence, intimidation, harassment, coercion, or other threatening behavior towards people or property. Complaints of workplace violence will be given the serious attention they deserve. Persons who violate this commitment may be removed from College property and are subject to disciplinary and/or personnel action up to and including termination consistent with College policies, rules and collective bargaining agreements, and/or referral to law enforcement authorities for criminal prosecution.

It is the intent of this commitment to ensure that faculty, staff, students and visitors to the campus are not threatened by any employee's actions or conduct.

2. Scope

In accordance with NYS Labor Law Section 27-b SUNY Broome Community College and its employees are responsible for complying with this program to maintain a workplace as safe from violence as reasonably possible.

3. Definitions

Workplace means any location away from an employee's residence, permanent or temporary, where s/he performs any work-related duty in the course of his/her employment by the College.

Workplace violence refers to a range of inappropriate behaviors, specific or non-specific threats, verbal abuse, or physical assault occurring in the work setting. It may be verbal, psychological or physical intimidation, threats of violence, actual assault or other violence, or any other behavior that causes others to feel threatened, frightened or unsafe.

Threat means any verbal or physical conduct that threatens personal safety or property, or that reasonably could be interpreted as intent to cause harm.

Examples of prohibited workplace violence behaviors include, but are not limited to, the following:

- A. bullying
- B. sexual harassment
- C. following or stalking
- D. obscene or threatening phone calls, notes or e-mail
- E. an intimidating presence
- F. any unwanted physical contact such as pushing, hitting, throwing objects
- G. verbal abuse including swearing or shouting
- H. offensive comments regarding violent events and/or behaviors
- I. violating an order of protection or restraining order
- J. bomb threats
- K. carrying, possessing, or using weapons of any kind on college property unless properly authorized.

4. Responsibility

President – The President of the College shall be responsible for implementing these procedures. The responsibility includes distribution of these procedures to members of the college community, ensuring appropriate investigation and follow-up of reported incidents of workplace violence, assuring that administrators, managers

and supervisors are aware of their responsibilities under these procedures through internal communication and training.

Campus Safety & Security Office – The Campus Safety & Security Office has performed a risk assessment of the workplace to determine the presence of factors or situations that might place employees at risk of workplace violence. Records review identified that employees have been harassed by irate students/clients and that assault/harassment has occurred among employees. Inspection of the workplace identified issues including shrubbery and landscaping, uncontrolled access to campus buildings including private work areas, inadequate lighting, furniture placement in client service areas that can impede employees' exit in case of confrontation, and the presence of desktop objects that could be used as weapons (i.e., scissors, staplers, file racks, etc.).

Based on its review of work performed by employees, Campus Safety & Security identified the following which might place workers at risk of occupational assault incidents: exchange of money with the public, working alone or in small numbers, working late at night or early morning hours, guarding valuable property or possessions, working in community settings, and insufficient security staffing levels. Campus Safety & Security will recommend methods for the College to reduce or eliminate the risk of workplace violence focusing on the following: implementation of advanced security systems such as panic alarms, video surveillance and access measures as well as changes to landscaping and lighting, use of ID badges and visitor/contractor sign-in, and increased safety and security staffing.

The Campus Safety & Security Office is responsible for responding to, intervening in, and documenting all incidents of violence in the workplace. The Campus Safety & Security Office will immediately log all incidents of workplace violence and will notify the respective supervisor of an incident with his/her employee, or notify the Office of Student Affairs of an incident with a student. All officers shall be knowledgeable of when law enforcement action may be appropriate.

Campus Safety & Security will maintain an internal tracking system of all threats and incidents of workplace violence. Annual reports will be submitted to the President (at the same time as the report noted below) detailing the number and description of incidents, the disposition of these incidents, policy recommendations, training issues and security procedures that have been or should be implemented to maintain a safe working and learning environment. Incidents will be reported consistent with the reporting requirements of Article 129A Subsection 6433 of the NYS Education Law (Regulation by Colleges of Conduct on Campuses and Other College Property for Educational Purposes).

Officers will be trained in and participate in training in workplace violence awareness and prevention, non-violent crisis intervention, conflict management, and dispute resolution. Officers will work closely with Human Resources when the possibility of

workplace violence is heightened, as well as on the appropriate responses to workplace violence incidents within SUNY policies, rules and procedures, and applicable labor agreements, including appropriate disciplinary action up to and including termination.

When informed, Campus Safety & Security will maintain a record of any orders of protection or restraining orders for faculty, staff, and students listing college locations as protected areas. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible concerning such orders.

Supervisors – Each dean, director, department chairperson, administrator, or other person with supervisory responsibility (hereinafter “supervisor”) is responsible within his/her area of jurisdiction for implementing these procedures. Supervisors must report to Campus Safety & Security any complaint of workplace violence made to them and any other incidents of workplace violence of which they become aware or reasonably believe to exist. Supervisors are expected to inform their immediate supervisor promptly about any complaints, acts, or threats of violence even if the situation has been addressed or resolved. The reporting supervisor should then keep the matter confidential without further disclosure, except as necessary during the investigation process and/or subsequent proceedings.

PLEASE NOTE: Threats or assaults that require immediate attention should be reported to Emergency Services/Broome Communications. Dial 9-911 from any campus office phone or 911 from any pay phone (pay phones do not require coins to call 911).

Faculty and Staff – An employee who is threatened with or experiences workplace violence, or is aware of such should notify his/her supervisor. Faculty and staff who are advised or are aware that a student has been involved in a workplace violence incident must report this to Campus Safety & Security and the Office of Student Affairs.

PLEASE NOTE: Threats or assaults that require immediate attention should be reported to Emergency Services/Broome Communications. Dial 9-911 from any campus office phone or 911 from any pay phone (pay phones do not require coins to call 911).

Employees who have obtained orders of protection or restraining orders are expected to notify their supervisors and Campus Safety & Security of any orders that list college locations as protected areas.

Victims of domestic violence who believe that the violence may extend into the workplace are encouraged to notify their supervisor and Campus Safety & Security. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible.

Human Resources Office – The Human Resources Office is responsible for assisting Campus Safety & Security and supervisors in responding to workplace violence, facilitating appropriate responses to reported incidents, and notifying Campus Safety & Security of workplace violence incidents reported to it. Human Resources will also be responsible for disseminating workplace violence prevention procedures (as well as information regarding available Employee Assistance Program services) to all employees at the time of hire and annually thereafter, as well as posting the procedures on the college website.

Students – Students who witness violence, learn of threats, or are victims of violence by employees, students or others should report the incident immediately to Campus Safety & Security. Students will be provided with workplace violence awareness information (including information regarding available counseling services) upon registration each year.

Public Affairs Office – All communications to the college community and beyond regarding incidents of workplace violence will be made by the Public Affairs Office after consultation with the President, or his/her designee, and in conjunction with Campus Safety & Security.

5. Information and Training for Employees

The College will make the written workplace violence prevention procedures available, upon request, to its employees and their designated representatives. At the time of initial hire and annually thereafter the College will provide its employees information and training including the risk factors in their workplace, and the location and availability of the written procedures for workplace violence prevention. Training sessions will outline the measures employees can take to protect themselves from such risks, identify procedures the College has implemented to protect employees, as well as details of the written workplace violence prevention program the College has developed.

6. Retaliation

It is a violation of these procedures to retaliate 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. Those found responsible for retaliatory action will be subject to discipline up to and including termination.

7. False Reports

Anyone who makes a false report or complaint of workplace violence will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment and/or referral to external authorities as appropriate. Campus Safety & Security can and will file charges in the case of a false report.

8. Confidentiality

The College will maintain confidentiality in investigations of workplace violence to the extent possible. The College will act on the basis of anonymous complaints where it has a reasonable basis to believe that there has been violation of these procedures and that the safety and well being of member of the College community would be served.