

**UNIVERSITY MANAGEMENT LETTER 01-04
WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAM**

August, 2001

(Supersedes University Management Letter 99-03)

This Workplace Violence Prevention Program is integral to Humboldt State University's efforts to maintain a safe working environment. In addition to this program, Humboldt State University has adopted a Zero Tolerance for Campus Violence policy (Appendix A) and established a Crisis Consultation Team (described in Appendix B).

RESPONSIBILITY

The Chief of University Police has authority and overall responsibility for implementing the provisions of the Workplace Violence Prevention Program. All managers and supervisors are responsible for implementing and maintaining this program in their work areas and for answering employee questions about it.

COMPLIANCE

All faculty and staff are responsible for using safe work practices, for following all directives, policies, and procedures, and for assisting in maintaining a safe and secure work environment. This includes the reporting of security risks and cooperating in any investigation that may result. Retaliatory action of any kind by an employee of the University against any other employee of the University as a result of that person's informing appropriate personnel of security risks, cooperating in an investigation, or other participation in this program is prohibited and may be regarded as the basis for disciplinary action.

COMMUNICATION AND TRAINING

Training and information on workplace security and safe work practices will be provided periodically. New employee orientation will include information on workplace security policies and procedures. A copy of this Workplace Violence Prevention Program is available from each vice president, dean, director, and the University Police Department.

ASSESSMENT

Cal-OSHA has defined three categories of workplace violence. In Type I workplace violence, an individual who has no legitimate business relationship to the workplace enters the workplace in order to commit a criminal act. In Type II, the individual who perpetrates the violence is either the recipient, or the object, of a service provided by a

department or employee. In Type III, the individual has some employment-related involvement with the affected workplace and may be a current or former employee or some other person who has a dispute involving an employee. An important first step in the prevention of violence in the workplace is an assessment by each campus office or department to identify workplace security issues and potential vulnerability to each of these three categories of violence.

There are a number of factors that have been shown to contribute to the risk of violence in the workplace, including the following: exchange of money; performing University Police functions; working alone at night and during early morning hours; working with patients, clients, customers, or students known or suspected to have a history of violence; availability of valued items, e.g., money and/or jewelry; employees, including former employees, with a history of assaults or who exhibit belligerent, intimidating, or threatening behavior to others; availability of prescription drugs; employees who have been the object of belligerent, intimidating, or threatening behavior from family members or significant others.

If any indicators of violence have been identified in the workplace, the Chief of University Police should be notified at the earliest possible time.

The risk of workplace violence can be minimized by the careful observation of behavior. The Association of Threat Assessment Professionals recognizes three degrees or levels of behavior that may be symptomatic of workplace violence. The first includes verbal abuse, excessive use of profanity, consistently argumentative interactions, inappropriate sexual comments, instigating harmful rumors, expressing suicidal thoughts, and frequent displays of anger.

The second includes expressing a desire or intent to harm others, open disobedience of policies and/or procedures, vandalizing or stealing property for revenge, feeling persecuted by others, sending sexual or violent notes to others, making suicidal threats or gestures, and consistently acting out anger.

The third includes minor physical assaults such as spitting, hitting, fighting; major physical assaults such as murder, rape, etc.; major destruction of property; attempting/committing suicide; and armed robbery.¹

While no one can ever guarantee a workplace free from violence, early intervention and assertive supervision are key components of a successful violence prevention program, and those who serve in supervisory or management positions, whether temporary, full-time or part-time, are critical players in the prevention of violence in the workplace. All faculty and staff, as well as supervisors and managers, must be aware of personnel activities and must act responsibly at the first sign of inappropriate conduct. Intervention at the first level (outlined above) may prevent escalation to physical violence.

¹ Kraemer, Glen. E. 1999. Legal Dimensions of Workplace Violence: Prevention and Investigation. 5pp. In: *J.C. Lane Jr. (Ed.), Ninth Annual Threat Management Conference, July 13-16*. Association of Threat Assessment Professionals, Los Angeles.

CORRECTION OR REDUCTION OF POTENTIAL RISK

The University Police Department should be consulted for recommended measures, including periodic inspections, with a view toward correcting or reducing potential security risks. These inspections consist of identification and evaluation of workplace security risks and changes in employee workplace practices.

The Workplace Violence Prevention Program is documented via records of University workplace security inspections, including the name(s) of person(s) conducting the inspection, the unsafe conditions and work practices that have been identified, and the action taken to correct those identified unsafe conditions and work practices; and documentation of security training for University employees, including the employee's name or other identifier, training dates, type(s) of training, and training providers. Inspection records and training documentation are maintained for three years.

APPENDIX B

SUBJECT: HUMBOLDT STATE UNIVERSITY CRISIS CONSULTATION TEAM

The Humboldt State University Crisis Consultation Team is charged with coordinating University response to potentially violent situations on the Humboldt State University campus community which involve students, staff, and/or faculty members collectively, individually, or any combination thereof.

FUNCTIONS

1. At the request of any Crisis Consultation Team member, to consult with appropriate persons on the crisis at hand and serve as a communication link between/among individuals and offices by communicating relevant information on a “need to know” basis.
2. To make recommendations to the President on response to crisis situations.
3. To document and retain records of meetings, events, and recommendations, and following the crisis, to ensure debriefing of the team and appropriate others.
4. To work with the Director of University Advancement in the timely provision of information to the media and others as appropriate.
5. Under the direction of the Emergency Operations Center Director, to assist with crisis management during and following a major emergency/disaster.

MEMBERSHIP

The Crisis Consultation Team reports directly to the President through the Executive Assistant to the President. Meetings may be called by any member. Members are:

- Chief of University Police
- Special Assistant to the Vice President for Faculty Affairs (Faculty Personnel Services)
- Director, Human Resources
- Staff Psychologist
- Assistant to the Vice President for Student Affairs
- Executive Assistant to the President
- Others as identified by the core membership (above), on a per-case basis, dependent upon the circumstances and person(s) involved.

Also issued as Executive Memorandum P99-9

Distribution: All Faculty and Staff