

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Purpose

Frostburg State University is committed to maintaining a work environment that is as free as possible from acts or threats of violence, intimidation, harassment, and other inappropriate behavior that threatens or frightens members of our campus community. The safety and security of Frostburg State University staff, faculty, students and visitors are of vital importance.

Policy

Violent or threatening behavior directed at staff, faculty, students, visitors, oneself, or property will not be tolerated at Frostburg State University. This policy applies to any acts of violence or threats made on FSU property, at FSU events, or under other circumstances that may negatively affect FSU's ability to conduct business. Included in this prohibition are such acts or threats of violence whether made directly or indirectly, by words, gestures, or symbols that infringe on the University's right or obligation to provide a safe workplace for its employees, students and visitors.

All employees are responsible for maintaining a safe work environment. This policy not only covers incidents involving coworkers but also incidents involving individuals outside the University perpetrating violence against University employees. FSU will not only respond appropriately to all reported incidents, but will take necessary steps to address any and all inappropriate behavior before it escalates to a violent or threatening situation. FSU administration will support all members of the campus community in their efforts to deal with violent and potentially violent situations.

Incident and Pre-Incident Procedures

Any member of the University community observing behavior that is in violation of the workplace violence policy, or that could reasonably be interpreted as a precursor to an act of violence or intimidation, shall make an immediate report to University Police. In cases of imminent danger, University Police will intervene. When time and circumstances permit, the supervisor of the employee-victim and/or employee-perpetrator, the Director of Human Resources and the Chief of University Police will make a threat assessment and report to the Chief of Staff.

Prohibited Behaviors

Frostburg State University defines violence as follows and prohibits:

- a. The use of physical force with the intent to commit harm;
- b. Acts or threats in any manner or form, which are intended to harass, intimidate, coerce, or cause fear of harm;
- c. Acts or threats of violence made directly or indirectly by words, gestures or symbols;
- d. Property crimes that would reasonably be anticipated to have the effect of intimidating or causing fear of harm.

Employees and visitors may not possess, carry, or store firearms or any dangerous weapon as defined in the Maryland Criminal Code Title 4, Section 101, on University property, to include privately owned vehicles parked on University grounds. This restriction shall not apply to University approved weapons carried by police officers in the performance of their duties, tools that are used by employees in the performance of work duties, sporting equipment when used for its intended purpose, weapons used for educational demonstration or theatrical purposes as part of the University curriculum, or otherwise legal items such as a small penknife or pocketknife carried or possessed without the intent of injuring, threatening or intimidating others.

University Premises

For the purposes of this policy, the workplace and University premises are defined as:

- a. The physical premises of Frostburg State University in Frostburg, Maryland, as well as any other premises owned or controlled by Frostburg State University;
- b. Such other properties that may be rented or leased by Frostburg State University;
- c. Motor vehicles that are owned or leased by Frostburg State University;
- d. Locations to which an employee is assigned in the performance of his or her duties, e.g., an athletic venue at another institution;
- e. Extensions of the physical workplace in the case of incidents that begin on campus and proceed off-premises, e.g., stalking.

Action in Response to Violence, Abusive or Threatening Behavior

During or immediately after any incident, University Police will be called to establish order and control the area.

A post-incident team consisting of the Director of Media Relations, Chief of University Police, Director of Human Resources, and Director of Counseling Services shall ensure that proper attention is given to medical, law enforcement, counseling, employment and public relations issues. If a student is involved, the post-incident team shall include a senior representative of the Student and Educational Services Office.

The Chief of University Police will prepare a workplace violence report on or about January 1 of each year. The report will enumerate the number of workplace violence incidents in the previous year and make recommendations as appropriate.

Sanctions

Violation of this policy by any employee will result in disciplinary action that may result in termination of employment and/or criminal prosecution. Violations by groups or individuals who are neither employees nor students will result in restriction from university property and/or criminal prosecution.

Preventive Measures

Workplace violence training shall be offered annually through the Human Resource Office. This will include but not be limited to awareness, recognizing high risk behavior of coworkers, avoidance, action to take to prevent, conflict resolution, reporting, and related issues.

Appropriate administrators and campus police shall conduct periodic inspections of the campus, walking through all areas during daylight and night-time hours, to determine if current safety measures, including but not limited to street lights, blue lights and telephones are adequate or if additional safety measures need to be added.

Prior to entering locations where they may feel threatened or unsafe, an employee will notify his/her supervisor or University police. Housekeeping or maintenance staff called out during evening and night-time hours to address problems in a residence hall will check-in at campus police headquarters. University police shall notify Residence Life to ensure that a Resident Assistant is on hand to accompany the employee.

The University will provide information and give assistance to employees who are victims of domestic violence and will develop procedures regarding confidentiality and safety for affected employees.

When provided by the University, identification badges will be properly displayed by employees.

Pre- and Post-Employment Screening

The Human Resources Office will ensure that employment reference checks of prospective employees are conducted. A criminal background check of candidates to whom an offer of employment may be extended will be conducted. In certain circumstances and with cause, Human Resources will conduct a criminal background check of any employee thought to pose a threat of violence.

Revised: July 2011