

UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON
MANUAL OF ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

SECTION: Public Safety
AREA: Fire and Life Safety

Number: 07.02.03

SUBJECT: Violence on Campus

I. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This document describes the University of Houston's (university) facilities and identifies university resources and programs to deal with such eventualities. The explicit goals of this document and the programs it describes are to protect people and property, reduce fear and stress, maintain the workplace and classroom as a productive and safe environment, and establish a consistent process for responding to violence or behavior of concern and managing incidents of violence or behavior of concern at the University of Houston.

This document also defines and describes the processes to be followed in responding to threats of violence and managing incidents of threatened violence. It applies to all facilities of the University of Houston and all faculty, staff, students, visitors, and contractors who are on the university's campus. This document also applies to incidents involving university employees or students at other locations when they are participating in a university-sponsored activity.

Alleged incidents involving sexual misconduct, domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking as defined in the [Sexual Misconduct Policy](#) will be handled in accordance with the [Sexual Misconduct Policy \(SAM 01.D.08\)](#), as well as by the UH Police Department (UHPD), as appropriate.

II. POLICY

The University of Houston seeks to provide a safe environment for learning and work. In pursuit of that goal, university administration finds violence and threats of violence unacceptable. To foster a safe and supportive working/learning environment, the university provides police services and intervention, and—where it is deemed appropriate—counseling, training, and education about violence and prevention of violence for employees and students. Please see [MAPP 13.01.02](#) for the mechanisms and offices through which these services are provided to students, staff, faculty, and visitors.

The policy of the University of Houston System and its universities is to ensure equal opportunity in all its educational programs and activities, and all terms and conditions of employment without regard to age, race, color, disability, religion, national origin, ethnicity, military status, genetic information, sex (including gender and pregnancy), sexual orientation, gender identity or status, or gender expression, except where such a distinction is required by law. For the UH System's Official Non-Discrimination Statement, see [SAM 01.D.05 – Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination Statement](#).

III. DEFINITIONS

A. **Threat** – An intent and ability to inflict physical or other types of harm on any person or self or on property. Threats may be oral, written, or physical and typically fall into three categories: Direct, Conditional, or Veiled.

1. Direct Threat – Threats again a specific target, sometimes describing methods for committing violence.
 2. Conditional Threat – Threats that are contingent upon a certain set of circumstances (often uses the “if” term).
 3. Veiled Threat – Threats that are vague and subject to multiple interpretations.
- B. Violence and Behaviors of Concern – Includes, but is not limited to, verbal or non-verbal behavior that can be construed as intimidating, threatening or hostile, physical or verbal abuse, harassment, stalking, vandalism, arson, sabotage, use of weapons, unlawful possession of weapons on university property, the threat of any of the above, or any other act inconsistent with this policy.

IV. POLICY PROVISIONS

- A. It is a violation of the law, and of this policy, to intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly cause physical harm to another person; to intentionally or knowingly threaten someone else with physical injury, or to touch another person in a way the individual knew would be considered offensive or provocative. [[Texas Penal Code Section 22.01](#)]
- B. The University of Houston will not tolerate physical or non-physical acts of violence or behaviors of concern. All alleged violations of this policy will be promptly reviewed to determine whether further investigation is necessary.

This policy also prohibits all firearms and other weapons defined as prohibited by the Texas Penal Code on property owned or occupied by the university, except as permitted by the [Texas Labor Code, Chapter 52, Subchapter G](#) and [Texas Government Code, Chapter 411, Subchapter H](#).

- C. University administration will provide policy services and take other action, as appropriate, to address campus violence and other behaviors of concern. The University will also make counseling, training, and education regarding violence, threats of violence, and violence prevention available to managers, employees, and students.

University offices with primary roles in responding to matters of campus violence include:

- Office of the Provost
- Dean of Students' Office
- Division of Student Affairs (DSA)
- Administration and Finance (A&F)
- Human Resources (HR)
- Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)
- Office of General Counsel (OGC)
- University of Houston Police Department (UHPD)

- D. The following teams may coordinate the assessment of any situation where there is a concern for risk of potential threat or violence and/or provide additional assessment of situations to determine if further resources and actions are needed.

1. Threat of Violence Advisory Team (TOVAT) – A team representing the appropriate offices of those listed in Section IV.C that will convene quickly at the discretion of the Chief of Police or designee to provide direction in response to acts or communications constituting threats of violence. This team may assist in determining:
 - The existence of a serious threat;
 - The need for counseling and/or training;
 - Recommendations concerning continued employment/enrollment.
2. UH Care Team – A team representing the appropriate offices from those listed in Section IV.C and others that will convene quickly in response to an incident report or other information presented regarding students of concern. See [MAPP 13.01.02](#) for more information on the UH Care Team.
3. Trauma Resolution Team (TRT) – A team directed by the assigned staff person from CAPS to provide referrals for counseling resources for individuals who experience trauma resulting from acts of threat or violence at the university.

- E. The UH Police Department (UHPD) should be kept informed of acts of violence and potential violence at the university. Every employee or student who is contacted about, or has knowledge of, a threat of violence or a violent act at the university or while on university business should immediately contact the UH Police Department, who will respond in accordance with this document, as well as the Police Department policies and procedures.

The Police Department will promptly submit incidents reports to the Dean of Students' Office, as appropriate, in all cases involving students.

V. PROCEDURES

The University of Houston responds to real, threatened, and potential acts of violence or behaviors of concern through the following means.

- A. Protection – UHPD's objective is to provide a safe and protected environment for people and property at the University of Houston. In addition to law enforcement services, the department provides police escorts, surveillance, vehicle assistance, and handicapped assistance to employees, students, and visitors; crime prevention programs; and money transfers.
- B. Education and Training – CAPS and/or Human Resources, in consultation with UH Care Team and/or TOVAT, as appropriate, will periodically provide training programs and individual counseling to employees and students on violence-related subjects – prevention of and response to violence and threat of violence, stress management, and conflict resolution dealing with difficult people.
- C. Prevention – The university services described in this document seek to prevent acts of violence at the university through training and intervention.
- D. Intervention and Crisis Management – Through UH Care Team and/or the TOVAT, intervention and crisis management services will be provided when threats of actual violence or behaviors of concern occur at the university.

- E. Follow-Up – The TRT will be available to provide support to employees and students following acts of violence at the university.
- F. Investigations – Suspected criminal conduct prohibited by this policy will be investigated by the UH Police Department. Conduct that may also be a violation of the [Sexual Misconduct Policy \(SAM 01.D.08\)](#) will also be investigated by the Office of Equal Opportunity Services (EOS). Human Resources will investigate matters involving employees who are alleged to have committed violent acts or engaged in behavior in violation of this policy. The Dean of Students' Office will investigate matters involving students who are alleged to have committed violent acts or engaged in behavior in violation of this policy.

VI. THREATS OF VIOLENCE

- A. Immediate Threats or Acts – A university employee, student, or visitor experiencing or aware of a threat or act of violence should immediately contact the UH Police Department by calling 911 or 713-743-3333.

Even if in doubt about the urgency or the threat of violence, the UH Police Department should still be contacted, and the Chief of Police or designee will determine whether to immediately assemble the UH Care Team or TOVAT.

- B. Less Immediate Threats – When an employee or student is faced with or aware of a situation in which a less immediate threat of violence may exist, the matter should be referred immediately to the appropriate responsible office. It is always an appropriate option to contact the Police Department to ensure that the matter is not an immediate threat.

If the less immediate threat of violence involves:

- Faculty – Contact the Office of the Provost.
- Staff – Contact Human Resources.
- Students – Contact the Dean of Students and/or complete an [Incident Reporting Form](#).

Depending upon the situation, any of these offices may submit a request to the Chief of Police or designee, who will determine whether UH Care Team or the TOVAT will be immediately assembled to assess the problem.

- C. UH Care Team – When a department, employee, student or other individual has information about a student exhibiting concerning behavior, the matter can be reported online (<https://www.uh.edu/cart/>) with an [Incident Reporting Form](#).

VII. SANCTIONS FOR THREATS AND ACTS OF VIOLENCE AND OTHER CONCERNING BEHAVIOR AT THE UNIVERSITY

Violations of this policy will result in sanctions, up to and including termination of employment, expulsion from the university, and/or criminal charges. The determination of the appropriate sanctions and the appeal of any sanctions will be handled by the responsible office under the applicable policy:

- Dean of Students' Office for Students under the [Student Handbook](#);

- Human Resources for UH Staff under applicable [Manual of Administrative Policies and Procedures \(MAPPs\)](#); and
- Office of the Provost for UH Faculty under the [Faculty Handbook](#).

Visitors may be escorted off campus, barred from campus and any other campus in the University of Houston System (UHS), and/or subject to criminal charges.

VIII. REVIEW AND RESPONSIBILITY

Responsible Party: Chief of Police
Review: Every five years

IX. APPROVAL

 / Raymond Bartlett /
Senior Vice President for Administration and Finance

 / Renu Khator /
President

Date of President's Approval: March 29, 2024