



## RUTGERS POLICY

**Section:** 60.1.13

**Section Title:** Universitywide Human Resources Policies and Procedures

**Policy Name:** Workplace Violence Policy

**Formerly Book:** 6.4.16

**Approval Authority:** Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration

**Responsible Executive:** Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration

**Responsible Office:** University Human Resources

**Originally Issued:** 4/27/2001

**Revisions:** 8/1/2006; 7/24/2008

**Errors or Changes?** Contact: [policies@hr.rutgers.edu](mailto:policies@hr.rutgers.edu)

**1. Policy Statement**

Rutgers University prohibits workplace violence.

**2. Reason for Policy**

To address the issue of workplace violence in our community.

**3. Who Should Read This Policy**

All members of the Rutgers University community

**4. Related Documents**

University Code of Student Conduct

**5. Contacts**

University Human Resources: 848-932-3020

Rutgers University Police Departments:

New Brunswick: 732-932-7211

Newark: 973-353-5581

Camden: 856-225-6009

## **6. Policy**

### **60.1.13 UNIVERSITY POLICY PROHIBITING WORKPLACE VIOLENCE**

#### **A. Preamble**

Rutgers University is committed to fostering an academic, work, and living environment that promotes the achievement of its mission of teaching, research, and service. To accomplish this goal, student employees, faculty, and staff are expected to behave in a fashion that promotes a community free from violence, threats of violence, harassment, intimidation, and disruptive behavior of a violent or intimidating nature. In a national culture that is becoming increasingly more violent, the issue of workplace violence has received attention across the country. While this type of conduct is not pervasive at the University, no workplace is immune. This policy, therefore, was written to address the issue of workplace violence in our community.

#### **B. Policy**

Rutgers University prohibits workplace violence. Specifically, the University will respond promptly and in accordance with this policy to violence, threats of violence, harassment, intimidation, or disruptive behavior of a threatening nature towards people or property. Complaints involving workplace violence will be given the serious attention they deserve. Individuals who violate this policy may be removed from Rutgers property and are subject to disciplinary and/or personnel action up to, and including, termination and/or criminal prosecution.<sup>1</sup>

#### **C. Scope**

This Policy applies to all areas of University operations and programs and to University facilities and off-campus locations where University business is conducted. It applies to all University employees, including student employees, with respect to conduct that arises out of their employment status, as well as to the conduct of all vendors, contractors, subcontractors, consultants, and others who do business with the University. It also applies to other persons not affiliated with the University such as former employees, customers, and visitors. Complaints of workplace violence committed by employees or others covered by this Policy will be addressed in accordance with this Policy.<sup>2</sup>

#### **D. Definition**

Workplace violence is defined as any actual or threatening behavior of a violent nature, as understood by a reasonable person, exhibited by faculty, staff, student employees, or others within the scope of this Policy. Examples of workplace violence include, but are not limited to:

1. Intentional physical contact for the purpose of causing harm (such as slapping, punching, striking, shoving, or otherwise physically attacking a person).
2. Menacing or threatening behavior (such as throwing objects, waving fists, damaging property, stalking, or otherwise acting in an aggressive manner; or, using oral or written statements specifically intended to frighten, coerce, or cause distress) where such behavior would be interpreted by a reasonable person as being evidence of intent to cause physical harm to individuals or property.

---

<sup>1</sup> The review and imposition of discipline, in this Policy, will continue to be in accordance with University policies, practices, and collectively negotiated agreements.

<sup>2</sup> Complaints about the behavior of students that do not arise out of their employment status are adjudicated through the University Code of Student Conduct.

3. Possessing any firearm, imitation firearm,<sup>3</sup> or any components which can readily be assembled into a firearm or other weapon, as defined by the Laws of New Jersey, without specific written authorization from the Division of Public Safety, irrespective of whether the individual possesses a valid permit to carry the firearm or a valid firearms purchaser identification card.

## **E. Reporting Workplace Violence**

### **1. General Reporting Responsibilities**

Any member of the University community who has been subject to workplace violence or who has witnessed workplace violence should promptly notify the appropriate university official (see section E.3). Additionally, employees are encouraged to report behavior that they reasonably believe poses a potential for workplace violence as defined above. It is imperative that all University employees take this responsibility seriously.

### **2. Reporting Imminent or Actual Violence**

Any person experiencing or witnessing imminent or actual violence involving weapons or potential injuries should call the Rutgers University Police Department (RUPD) emergency number or the appropriate law enforcement agency.

### **3. Reporting Acts of Violence Not Involving Weapons or Injuries to Persons**

Any person who is the subject of, or witness to, a suspected violation of this policy should report the incident to his or her supervisor<sup>4</sup> or, in lieu thereof, to the appropriate Designated University Representative listed below:

Camden: Associate Chancellor for Administration and Finance

Newark: Associate Chancellor

New Brunswick: Office of Labor Relations

### **4. Law Enforcement Agencies**

All individuals who believe a crime has been committed against them have the right, and are encouraged, to report the incident to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

### **5. False Reports**

Employees who intentionally file false reports pertaining to workplace violence will be subject to disciplinary action up to, and including, termination.

## **F. Responsibilities of Members of the University Community**

### **1. Designated University Representatives**

Designated University Representatives are responsible for assisting supervisors in responding to workplace violence; facilitating appropriate responses to reported incidents of workplace violence; notifying the RUPD and Workplace Violence Consultation Team (WVCT described below); consulting as necessary with the Faculty and Staff Assistance Program and/or Occupational Health Department to secure professional intervention; and maintaining records of reports of workplace violence.

---

<sup>3</sup> The artistic or pedagogical use of a weapon may be permitted by requesting permission from the Division of Public Safety.

<sup>4</sup> The term "supervisor" in this Policy, means the person to whom a faculty member, staff member, or student employee reports. This could be an immediate supervisor, department supervisor, department head, or chairperson.

2. Employees

- (a) Employees should report workplace violence, as defined above, regardless of the relationship of the employee to the person believed to have engaged in workplace violence, to their supervisor. Recurring or persistent workplace violence that an employee reasonably believes is not being addressed satisfactorily, or violence that is, or has been, perpetrated by the employee's supervisor, should be brought to the attention of the Designated University Representative as defined in section E.3.
- (b) Employees who have obtained restraining orders are expected to notify their supervisors and the RUPD of any orders that list Rutgers locations as protected areas.
- (c) Domestic violence victims who believe the violence may extend into the workplace, or employees who believe they may be subjected to violence extending into the workplace, are encouraged to notify their supervisor, or the RUPD. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible.

3. Supervisors

- (a) All Rutgers supervisors and department heads, including department chairs, deans, program directors, and managers, who are notified of a suspected violation of this policy, are required to respond in accordance with this policy in a fair and timely manner. Further, supervisors are required to report the suspected violation to the appropriate Designated University Representative.
- (b) Supervisors are required to contact the RUPD in the event of imminent or actual violence involving weapons or potential injuries.
- (c) Supervisors are expected to inform their immediate supervisor promptly about any acts or threats of violence even if the situation has been addressed and resolved.

4. Students

- (a) Students who witness violence or learn of threats of violence by employees should report the incident directly to the RUPD. If there is no imminent danger, students should report threatening incidents by employees or others to the dean of their college, and/or to the RUPD.
- (b) Students who also serve in the capacity of an employee should follow the procedures outlined in section F.2 of this Policy.

5. Rutgers University Police Department (RUPD)

The RUPD will provide an immediate response and implement all appropriate emergency procedures as warranted by the situation including notifying the Designated University Representative. When appropriate, other law enforcement agencies will be notified.

6. Workplace Violence Consultation Team (WVCT)<sup>5</sup>

Convened, as necessary, by the Designated University Representative, the WVCT is responsible for coordinating University resources and providing supervision for implementation of this policy. The WVCT also is available, as needed, for workplace violence prevention, crisis intervention, and post-incident debriefing.

7. University Communications

University announcements to both the University community and outside agencies pertaining to incidents of workplace violence will be made through the Department of University Relations or its designated representative(s).

**G. Confidentiality**

The University shall maintain the confidentiality of investigations to the extent possible within the requirements of conducting reasonable investigations while ensuring the safety of members of the University community. The University will act on the basis of anonymous complaints where it has a reasonable basis to believe that there has been a violation of this Policy and that the safety and well-being of members of the University community would be served by such action.

**H. Retaliation**

Retaliatory action 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 the reporting of, investigating or responding to workplace violence is a violation of this Workplace Violence Policy. It is also a violation of this Policy to take adverse action against an employee solely on account of his/her being an actual or potential victim of workplace violence. Those found responsible for retaliatory action will be subject to discipline up to, and including, termination.

**I. Education**

1. Workplace Violence Education Committee

The Designated University Representatives will establish a Workplace Violence Education Committee to develop and implement training sessions to inform employees of the University's Workplace Violence Policy and to raise awareness about workplace violence.

2. Professional Development

Professional Development opportunities are available at Rutgers and elsewhere concerning conflict and stress management, communication skills, and related topics. Employees are encouraged to take advantage of these opportunities to learn effective ways to prevent and respond to workplace violence.

---

<sup>5</sup> The WVCT may include representatives from the following offices: Office of Labor Relations, Division of Public Safety, Rutgers Environmental Health and Safety, Department of Risk Management and Insurance, Office of the Vice President and General Counsel, campus human resources office, Faculty and Staff Assistance Program, Occupational Health Department, and others as needed, depending on the situation, as deemed appropriate by the Designated University Representative.