

UNIVERSITY POLICY

Policy Name:	Policy Prohibiting Workplace Violence				
Section #:	60.1.13	Section Title:	Human Resources: Universitywide HR Policies & Procedures	Formerly Book:	6.4.16
Approval Authority:	Senior Vice President for Human Resources and Organizational Effectiveness		Adopted:	4/7/2001	Reviewed: 08/14/2020
Responsible Executive:	Senior Vice President for Human Resources and Organizational Effectiveness		Revised:	08/01/2006; 07/24/2008; 07/01/2013; 10/10/2013; 11/06/2013; 07/05/2016; 08/14/2020	
Responsible Office:	University Human Resources		Contact:	policies@hr.rutgers.edu	

1. Policy Statement

Rutgers University prohibits workplace violence or threats of 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. Resources

- [Discrimination, Harassment, Workplace Violence, Sexual Misconduct, and Retaliation Complaint Process: Complaints Against University Employees and Third Parties](#)
- [University Policy 60.1.12: Policy Prohibiting Discrimination and Harassment](#)
- [University Policy 60.1.16: Conscientious Employee Protection Policy](#)
- [Third Parties Resources Supplement](#)
- [Office of Employment Equity Formal Complaint Form](#)
- [University Policy 60.1.33: Title IX Policy and Grievance Procedures](#)
- [University Policy 10.2.11, Code of Student Conduct](#)
- [Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences \(RBHS\) Students Rights, Responsibilities and Disciplinary Procedures](#)
- [University Student Life Policy Against Verbal Assault, Harassment, Intimidation, Bullying and Defamation](#)

All policies are subject to amendment. Please refer to the Rutgers University Policy Library website (policies.rutgers.edu) for the official, most recent version.

- [University Human Resources](#): 848-932-3020
- [Office of Employment Equity](#): 848-932-3973; employmentequity@hr.rutgers.edu
- [Office of Student Conduct](#)
 - New Brunswick: 848-932-9414, conduct@echo.rutgers.edu
 - Newark: 973-353- 5022
 - Camden: 856-225-6050, deanofstudents@camden.rutgers.edu
- [Rutgers University Police Departments](#):
 - New Brunswick: 732-932-7211
 - Newark: 973-353-5111
 - Camden: 856-225-6111
 - Health Sciences-Newark: 973-972-4491

5. Definitions

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 or behavior 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 or coerce behavior from individuals.
3. Possessing any firearm, imitation firearm,¹ 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 Department of Public Safety, irrespective of whether the individual possesses a valid permit to carry the firearm or a valid firearms purchaser identification card.

6. The Policy

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

¹ The artistic or pedagogical use of a weapon may be permitted by requesting permission from the Division of Public Safety.

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 legal action up to, and including, termination of employment and/or criminal prosecution.²

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.³

D. Reporting Workplace Violence

1. General Reporting Responsibilities

Any member of the University community who has been subject to workplace violence or threats of violence or who has witnessed workplace violence should promptly notify the appropriate university official (see sections D.2. and D.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,⁴ to the Office of Labor Relations, or to the Office of Employment Equity.

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

Knowingly making a material misstatement of fact may subject the complainant to discipline. Anyone who believes that he or she has been the subject of a false complaint may meet with the Director of the Office of Employment Equity to discuss the allegations. The filing of a

² The review and imposition of discipline in this Policy will continue to be in accordance with University policies, practices, and collectively negotiated agreements.

³ Complaints about the behavior of students that do not arise out of their employment status are adjudicated through the University Code of Student Conduct.

⁴ 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.

complaint that does not result in a finding of prohibited conduct is not alone evidence of the intent to file a false complaint.

E. Responsibilities of Members of the University Community

1. Designation of University Offices and Employees

Throughout this Policy, the University office and/or employee(s) who will typically perform certain roles or duties are identified. However, the University may designate other University offices or employees to perform any roles or duties described in this Policy where necessary to effectuate this Policy.

2. Office of Labor Relations (“OLR”)

The Office of Labor Relations is responsible for assisting supervisors in responding to workplace violence; facilitating appropriate responses to reported incidents of workplace violence; notifying the RUPD if necessary; and consulting as necessary with the Faculty and Staff Assistance Program and/or Occupational Health Department to secure professional intervention.

3. Office of Employment Equity (“OEE”)

The Office of Employment Equity is responsible for assisting supervisors in responding to workplace violence; facilitating appropriate responses to reported incidents of workplace violence; notifying the RUPD if necessary; and consulting as necessary with the Faculty and Staff Assistance Program and/or Occupational Health Department to secure professional intervention. Additionally, the Office of Employment Equity is responsible for investigating and/or supervising the investigation of complaints of workplace violence; notifying the appropriate supervisor of the outcome of any workplace violence investigation; and maintaining records of reports of workplace violence.

4. 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, to the Office of Labor Relations, or to the Office of Employment Equity.
- 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. Victims of domestic violence 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.

5. 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 report the suspected violation to the Office of Labor Relations or the Office of Employment Equity in a timely manner. Further, supervisors are required to inform victims of workplace violence about their opportunity to file an incident report form under this Policy.
- 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.

6. 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 Office of Labor Relations, the Office of Employment Equity, a dean of students, and/or to the RUPD.
- b. Students who also serve in the capacity of an employee should follow the procedures outlined in section E.4 of this Policy.

7. 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 Office of Labor Relations or Office of Employment Equity. When appropriate, other law enforcement agencies will be notified.

8. Workplace Violence Consultation Team (WVCT)⁵

Convened, as necessary, by the Office of Labor Relations, the WVCT is available for workplace violence prevention, crisis intervention, and post-incident debriefing.

9. 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 Communications and Marketing or its designated representative(s).

F. 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.

Any manager, supervisor, or other employee who violates confidentiality related to a complaint or resulting investigation of workplace violence may be subject to appropriate sanctions.

G. 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 Policy Prohibiting Workplace Violence. 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.

⁵ The WVCT may include representatives from the following offices: Office of Employment Equity; Office of Labor Relations; Department of Public Safety; Rutgers Environmental Health and Safety; Department of Risk Management and Insurance; Office of the Senior Vice President and General Counsel; Academic Affairs; the Human Resources Office at Rutgers University–New Brunswick, Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences, Rutgers University–Newark, or Rutgers University–Camden; Faculty and Staff Assistance Program; Occupational Health Department; and others as needed, depending on the situation, as deemed appropriate by the Office of Labor Relations.