

# **SUNY Cobleskill**

## **Workplace Violence Prevention Policy**

### **Policy**

SUNY Cobleskill is committed to providing a safe work environment for all employees. The University will respond promptly to threats, acts of violence, and acts of aggressions by employees or against employees by coworkers, members of the public or others. This document sets forth standards for employee conduct and guidelines for reasonable precautions. The accompanying procedure outlines response to threats or violence should they occur in the workplace.

### **Prohibited Conduct**

- A. The University will not tolerate any act or threat of violence made in the workplace, on University property, or while in work status.
- B. No person may engage in violent conduct or make threats of violence, implied or direct, on University property or in connection with University business. This includes but is not limited to:
  - 1. The use of force with intent to cause harm, e.g. physical attacks, any unwanted contact such as hitting, fighting, pushing, or throwing objects;
  - 2. Behavior that diminishes the dignity of others through sexual, racial, religious or ethnic harassment;
  - 3. Acts or threats which are intended to intimidate, harass, threaten, bully, coerce, or cause fear of harm whether directly or indirectly;
  - 4. Acts or threats made directly or indirectly by oral or written words, gestures or symbols that communicate a direct or indirect threat of physical or mental harm.
- C. No person, without legal authority, may carry, possess or use any dangerous weapon on University property or in University buildings or facilities.

### **Workplace Violence Advisory Team**

- A. The President will establish a Workplace Violence Advisory Team. This Team, working with the Campus Personal Safety Committee, will assist the President to:

1. perform a risk evaluation of the workplace to determine the presence of factors or situations that might place employees at risk of workplace violence;
  2. assess the campus' readiness for dealing with workplace violence;
  3. facilitate appropriate responses to reported incidents of workplace violence;
  4. assess the potential problem of workplace violence;
  5. evaluate incidents to prevent future occurrences;
  6. utilize prevention, intervention, and interviewing techniques in responding to workplace violence;
  7. develop workplace violence prevention tools (such as pamphlets, guidelines and handbooks) to assist in recognizing and preventing workplace violence on campus; and
  8. arrange regularly scheduled workplace violence prevention training sessions for employees.
- B. It is recommended that this team include representatives from University Police, human resources, labor relations, counseling services, occupational health and safety, legal and others, including faculty, staff and students, as deemed appropriate by the President.
- C. In lieu of establishing the Workplace Violence Advisory Team, a President may opt to expand the Campus Personal Safety Committee with representatives from these areas recommended above to address workplace violence issues at the campus and perform the functions outlined.

### **Workplace violence prevention program**

- A. The campus shall develop and implement a written workplace violence prevention program for its workplaces that includes the following:
1. a definition of workplace violence;
  2. commitment to zero tolerance of workplace violence;
  3. techniques on how to recognize and avoid workplace violence situations;
  4. identification of the high risk occupations;
  5. the importance of reporting all workplace violence incidents and procedures to do so;
  6. investigations of incidents by the employer; and
  7. employee assistance.

## **Information and training for employees**

- A. The University shall make the written workplace violence prevention program available, upon request, to its employees and their designated representatives.
- B. At the time of employees' initial assignment and annually thereafter, the University shall provide its employees with the following information and training on risks of violence in their workplace(s):
  - 1. be informed of the requirements of NYS Labor Law sec. 27-b;
  - 2. the risk factors in their workplace(s);
  - 3. the location and availability of the written workplace violence prevention program; and
  - 4. training sessions that outline;
    - a. the measures employees can take to protect themselves from such risks, including specific procedures the University has implemented to protect employees and
    - b. the details of the written workplace violence prevention program developed by the University.

## **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 reporting, investigating, or responding to workplace violence is a violation of this policy. Those found responsible for retaliatory action will be subject to discipline up to and including termination.