

LAURENTIAN UNIVERSITY VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE

A. MISSION STATEMENT

Laurentian University promotes the highest possible level of safety and security in all of its activities both on and off campus.

Accordingly, all have the right to carry out their activities in a secure environment, without being subjected to verbal or physical intimidation or threats.

B. POLICY

It is Laurentian University's policy to promote a safe environment for its members. The University is committed to working with its members to maintain an environment free from violence, threats of violence, stalking, intimidation, and other disruptive behaviors. While this kind of conduct is not pervasive in our University, no institution is immune.

Violence, threats, stalking, intimidation, and other disruptive behaviors within our environment will not be tolerated; that is, all reports of such incidents will be taken seriously and will be dealt with appropriately. Such behavior can include oral or written statements, gestures, or expressions that communicate a direct or indirect threat of physical harm. Individuals who commit such acts may be removed from the premises and may be subject to any of the following: disciplinary action, including dismissal, civil actions, and/or criminal prosecution.

C. PROCEDURES

General Roles and Responsibilities

- (1) Your responsibilities in "General":
 - (a) Any person experiencing or observing imminent violence should promptly call emergency services at 9-911 and on the first available opportunity call Security.
 - (b) Any employee who believes that they are a victim of violent behaviour has the right to report the incident to the proper law-enforcement agency.

- (2) Employee

Your responsibilities as an “employee”:

- (a) You should promptly report any acts or threats of violence to your immediate supervisor, and/or the Security Office. Such reports will be promptly and thoroughly investigated by Security.
- (b) You should promptly notify your supervisor and/or the Security Office of any restraining orders against individuals in your workplace. (E.g., Not communicate directly or indirectly with University employees or attend at or near her/his area of employment).

(3) Supervisor

The immediate supervisor:

- (a) Shall promptly respond to issues related to workplace safety.
- (b) Shall promptly contact the appropriate specialists, including Security, Police, or Health Services, in the event of a potential or actual incident.
- (c) Shall promptly inform her/his supervisor and Human Resources about any acts or threats of violence, even if the situation has been addressed.
- (d) Will promptly contact Human Resources and Security in the event he/she is advised of an existing restraining order.

(4) Human Resources

- (a) Shall promptly contact Security, when made aware of a violent act or threat of violence.

(5) Chief of Security

- (a) Consults and advises Senior Management regarding concerns about violent and potentially violent employees or others.
- (b) In the event of an act or threat of violence, promptly investigates the incident and works with management, legal counsel, and Police.

- (c) Gathers and maintains University-wide information on workplace acts or threats of violence.

(6) Security

- (a) Assists and cooperates with all law-enforcement agencies, as appropriate.

(7) Health Services

- (a) Provides confidential counseling services to any employee desiring assistance with situations relating to anger or threats or violence in the workplace.
- (b) Provides educational, emotional support, referrals and consultation to groups and individuals who are victims, observers, or otherwise adversely affected by a violent incident or threat.
- (c) Provides consultation to management on evaluating the potential for violence by individuals.
- (d) Provides initial assessment of violent or threatening employees and makes an appropriate referral for clinical evaluation or treatment, as needed.

D. PROCESS AND SANCTIONS

1. The Director of Human Resources or its delegate shall appoint a Threat Assessment Team (TAT) which shall be responsible for reviewing, investigating and recommending responses to acts of violence where appropriate.
2. When the Threat Assessment Team is convened, it shall review and evaluate the act of violence. Where appropriate, the Threat Assessment Team will consult a mental health specialist or behavioral specialist specializing in workplace violence.
3. The Threat Assessment Team shall develop a strategy for dealing with the act of violence. The strategy shall be implemented by appropriate personnel as determined by the Threat Assessment Team.
4. The Threat Assessment Team shall inform, in writing, the individual who is the object of the act of violence, and the individual who is the subject of the act of violence that it is

conducting an investigation. The team will also inform these individuals of the results of its investigation and the ensuing recommendations. All records and reports of the Threat Assessment Team will be kept confidential.

5. The Chief of Security may inform, law enforcement authorities of any act of violence that constitutes a violation of the Criminal Code of Canada. The Chief of Security may report other acts of violence, as appropriate.

Disciplinary steps available to University managers are set forth in various existing manuals, and directives, such as student code of conduct and collective agreements. In the case of workplace violence, two specific exceptions are provided.

1. A psychological assessment, a fitness for duty evaluation, and/or counseling may be recommended on either a voluntary basis or as a condition of continued employment.
2. All acts of violence may be grounds for suspension without pay or termination.

Finally, the adopted policy excludes incidents of harassment because they are dealt with under separate University Policy.

E. THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM (TAT) MANDATE

There are three key elements in Laurentian's approach to addressing the occurrence of workplace violence. The first is a commitment to progressive and humane human resources practices. The second is an unequivocal refusal to tolerate violent acts. The third is the use of a threat assessment team (TAT) as a key response tool.

When a situation of potential or actual violence arises, any University community member may activate the workplace violence response mechanism by reporting it to any supervisor, the Human Resources Department, or the Department of Security. In all cases, the information is channeled to the Director of Human Resources, whose responsibility is immediately to convene a threat assessment team.

A TAT is composed of members drawn from a panel, appointed by the Vice President Administration. Each panelist serves a three-year term and may be reappointed.

The Director of Human Resources selects at least three persons from this list to compose a threat assessment team based on the characteristics of the threat to be reviewed. Considerations shall be given to participants so that there not be any conflict of interest from any of the parties involved.

Included as factors in making the selection are such aspects as the organizational units affected, the nature of the threat, and any especially useful qualifications a potential panel member may bring to the team.

Acting as a personnel representative of the University's Senior Management Office, the TAT has the authority to take statements from relevant parties, and interpret University policies. The team is advised by a member of the University's Legal Counsel. It may also consult with mental health or behavioral specialists as necessary. The TAT's role is fourfold:

1. To review the threat or act of violence and to articulate its specific elements.
2. To determine whether a threat is legitimate and to categorize the risk level of that threat; in the case of a completed act of violence, to determine the risk of a future act and recommend appropriate action.
3. To develop a strategy for addressing the act of violence or threat and determine responsibility for implementing the strategy.
4. To communicate to the key individuals in the case, in writing, the fact of the inquiry, its results, and recommendations.

The TAT's recommendations must be communicated to persons who have the responsibility and authority to act in the case in question. The TAT is a problem-solving resource, not a replacement for appropriate managerial action.

There is no mandatory time frame within which the TAT must complete its work. The need is to respond in a timely fashion to the threat posed by the case at hand while ensuring sufficient opportunity for a thorough review and evaluation of the relevant facts and issues. This may occasionally necessitate the interim suspension of the target of the assessment in the interest of

Threat Assessment Panel

One member from Purchasing and Insurance Services
One member from Occupation Health and Safety
Two members of the Department of Security
Three members of LUFA
Two Senior Administration
Three LUSU
Three LUAPSA
Two students
One staff member from the Health Services

safety.

Levels of Risk

Level One - Negligible

- Insufficient information to determine if a threat was made and if threat was/is serious
- Reported threat-maker has no history of threats or inappropriate behavior
- The motives of the reporting person may be questionable, frivolous or vexatious

Level Two - Low

- Comment was made and the recipient misconstrued it as a threat
- Not enough evidence to determine if threat was actually made
- Reported threat-maker has no apparent intent to harm and has no history of threats or inappropriate behavior
- Insufficient evidence to continue investigation

Level Three - Moderate

- Threat was made and causes distress to others
- There is a reasonable belief of an intent to cause harm
- Threat-maker denies or rationalizes actions
- No history of problems but immediate behavior is inappropriate or irrational
- Violates organizational policy, but no criminal code violation or need for hospitalization

Level Four - High

- Clear threat with intent to cause harm
- History of problems in the organization
- Violates organizational policy but no criminal code violation
- May be need for hospitalization
- Individual owns or has access to weapon(s)

Level Five - Extreme

- Clear acting out
- Violation of criminal code; reason to arrest
- Weapon displayed or used
- Hospitalization clearly necessary

F. COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Dissemination of the Policy

The workplace violence policy should be disseminated in hard copy to all University vice presidents, deans, directors and department heads. Further, it should be distributed among Laurentian University employees. This will ensure that every operating unit within Laurentian has at least one complete copy for informational and reference purposes.

Because of the policy's significance, a memorandum announcing the issuance of the policy should be sent to all University staff by the President. This memorandum should state the reasons for the policy, citing key elements, and providing a way for individual employees to obtain a personal copy if they desire it.

2. Threat Assessment Team Training

Threat Assessment Team members should receive two days of training from a workplace violence consultant to prepare them for their roles. The training should highlight the various causes of workplace violence and focus on its behavioral manifestations. The levels of risk should be identified and discussed thoroughly.

Actual cases should be presented so that the new TAT members can dissect them, identifying the information they believe is necessary for successful assessment. The TAT should work through each case and compare their assessment methods and conclusions with those of the actual event.

The TAT panel should meet regularly for additional training and to keep abreast of developments relevant to their special role in the University's life.

3. University-wide Training

Recognizing the need to provide employees throughout the University with information and training in support of the new Policy on Acts of Violence in the Workplace, the Manager of Training in the Human Resources Department should develop a program with four objectives:

- 1.1 To raise awareness about the issue of violence in the workplace and its pervasiveness.
- 1.2 To inform employees of the University's new policy.
- 1.3 To provide employees with some examples of inappropriate behavior in relation to the categories of inappropriate aggression outlined in the policy.

1.4 To inform employees of the procedures for reporting inappropriate behavior.

All supervisors and front-line employees who work in areas where there is the propensity for violence should be targeted for the initial training, in the belief they were most likely to encounter threats or threatening behavior. Eventually, all employees will receive the training; the process is continuous.

Rather than have a consultant deliver the training to the large numbers involved, a University staff member should be trained and qualified as a trainer by the consultant.

4. Policy Should be Reviewed by Legal Council

5. Appropriate Budget to Implement Policy is Required

**LAURENTIAN UNIVERSITY
VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE COMMITTEE**

- M I N U T E S -

**REGULAR MEETING NO. 2002.02
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2002**

**COMMENCEMENT: 1:35 P.M.
ADJOURNMENT: 3:31 P.M.**

PRESENT:

Larry Denomme	Chair /Chief of Security	Ext. 4882
Ray Coutu	LUAPSA/Risk Management and Insurance	Ext. 1555
Ron Blondin	Human Resources/Occupational Health and Safety	Ext. 3016
Suzanne Pharand	LUSU	Ext. 2199
Dr. Brian Bigelow	LUFA	Ext. 4256
Dr. Bernie Schell	LUFA	Ext. 2123
Claudette Vrab	LUSU	Ext. 2122

REGRETS:

Ron Smith	Registrar	Ext. 3900
Art Bourrie	USWA	Ext. 4828
Dr. Peter Suschnigg	LUFA	Ext. 4362

1. **Motion 2002.01**

To present the document to Senior Administration for approval, according to Article 9 of the LUFA Collective Agreement.

Proposed by: B. Schell

Seconded by: B. Bigelow

UNANIMOUS