

UConn HEALTH

Administrative Policy 2017-02 Workplace Violence Prevention

Title	Workplace Violence Prevention
Policy Owner and Contact Information	Human Resources Website: https://health.uconn.edu/human-resources/
Campus Applicability	UConn Health
Applies To	UConn Health Workforce
Effective Date	January 13, 2023

PURPOSE:

This policy communicates the meaning of “workplace violence,” defines prohibited conduct and establishes potential consequences for violations. Additionally, the policy provides direction on how to report incidents and offers sources of assistance and support to those impacted by workplace violence.

POLICY STATEMENT:

UConn Health takes any act of violence seriously and prohibits all conduct, either verbal or physical, that is abusive, threatening, intimidating, or demeaning. The prevention of workplace violence is everyone’s responsibility. It is expected that UConn Health employees will maintain a workplace atmosphere of mutual respect and civility.

No person covered by this policy may engage in conduct intended to threaten, intimidate, or harass any individual. No person covered by this policy may possess a weapon or dangerous instrument while at a UConn Health worksite unless required to do so as a component of their job. Any such weapon or dangerous instrument will be confiscated and turned over to the appropriate law enforcement authorities; there is no reasonable expectation of privacy with respect to these items. No person covered by this policy may use, attempt to use, or threaten to use a weapon or dangerous instrument. No person covered by this policy may cause or threaten to cause death or physical injury to any individual while at UConn Health premises. Consistent with state regulations offensive or abusive conduct toward the public, co-workers, inmates, patients or clients of State institutions or facilities is forbidden and may be just cause for disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Additionally, the [University Policy Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Related Interpersonal Violence](#) defines and addresses prohibited conduct including sexual and gender-based harassment, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, intimate partner violence, stalking, complicity, retaliation, and inappropriate amorous relationships.

EMERGENCIES

In the event of an EMERGENCY, police must be contacted immediately. Call 911. A situation is an “emergency” if an injury has occurred or there is an immediate threat of physical harm or injury.

INVESTIGATION AND CORRECTIVE ACTION

- UConn Health will promptly investigate all reports of workplace violence allegations.
- The appropriate authority will be notified of any workplace violence incidents involving workforce members.
- All members of the workforce are expected to cooperate fully in all such investigations.

- Any worker suspected of violating this policy may be placed on administrative leave pending the results of the investigation.
- A worker may be immediately removed from the workplace for suspected violation of this policy.
- If claims are substantiated, or if it is found that an employee has otherwise violated this policy, the worker may be subject to discipline up to and including dismissal.
- Where the situation warrants, UConn Health will request that the UConn Police Department/local law enforcement become involved in the investigation of the matter and may seek prosecution of conduct that violates the law.

PREVENTION AND RESPONSE

State Agency Responsibilities

The [State of CT Violence in the Workplace Policy and Procedures Manual](#) provides direction to state agencies in preventing and/or responding to incidents or threats of workplace violence.

In accordance with the manual, UConn Health has established a **Threat Assessment Team** to promote awareness of campus safety and security, evaluate the potential for violence, and respond to situations that may involve behavioral concerns, threats, intimidation, or acts of violence. The Team will meet at least twice per year to identify and analyze any apparent trends in incidents relating to particular units, jobs, activities, etc. and make recommendations as appropriate. The team will also assist Human Resources with record-keeping and reporting requirements. Members may include:

- UConn Police Department –Chief of Police or designee
- Vice President of Human Resources or designee
- Psychiatrist or Psychologist (in advisory capacity)
- Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
- Legal Counsel
- Ad Hoc manager (the manager of the person reporting the incident or a designee)

Protections for Health Care Employees

Connecticut law establishes additional responsibilities for the protection of health care employees, including adjustments to patient care assignments and reporting. While the law narrowly applies to certain health care institutions, UConn Health extends protections to all health care employees to the extent practicable.

Consistent with the law, a “health care employee” is a person either directly or indirectly employed by or volunteering for the institution who:

- (1) Is involved in direct patient care; or
- (2) Has direct contact with a patient or the patient’s family when
 - a) collecting or processing information needed for patient forms or documentation or
 - b) escorting or directing a patient or the patient’s family on the facility’s premises.

To the extent practicable, managers will adjust patient care assignments when requested, so that no health care employee is required to care for a patient who has intentionally physically abused or threatened him/her.

- Patient behavior that is a direct manifestation of the patient's condition or disability is not considered intentional physical abuse or threatening of an employee.
- If reassignment is not practicable, the health care employee may request that a second employee be present when caring for such patient(s). When requested, the manager will assign a second employee to be present.
- UConn Health has formed a **Workplace Violence Prevention Steering Committee** to address the health and safety of the workforce. The Workplace Violence Prevention Steering Committee maintains two subcommittees for John Dempsey Hospital and UConn Medical Group. These subcommittees are comprised of representatives from administration, physicians, nursing, police, and other direct patient care staff. At least fifty percent (50%) of the members will be non-

management employees. Responsibilities for these steering committees and subcommittees include:

- Quarterly meetings with minutes made available through Clinical Operations Administration. For John Dempsey Hospital, minutes will also be maintained in the Nursing Supervisor's Office.
- Annual security risk assessment and a written workplace violence prevention and response plan by January 1 of each year.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Employees will be apprised of this policy as it constitutes what is workplace violence, how to report workplace violence incidents and the training and resources available to respond to concerns. Training will occur at time of hire, annually, and whenever changes occur regarding the workplace violence prevention program.

RECORD KEEPING AND REPORTING

Human Resources will maintain completed Workplace Violence Incident Report Forms.

UConn Health shall provide information, on a biannual basis, the frequency, character, and resolution of workplace violence incidents to the Department of Administrative Services and Statewide Security Management Council.

UConn Health will report annually to the Department of Public Health, the number and location of workplace violence incidents occurring in its licensed health care facilities, which include John Dempsey Hospital.

Violations of this policy should be reported to Human Resources. Human Resources will maintain completed copies of the Workplace Violence Incident Report Forms.

DEFINITIONS:

UConn Health Workforce:

Workplace Violence: any violent act or the threat of violence directed at persons at work involving workforce members, patients, or visitors. Violent acts or threats of violence includes, but is not limited to, physical assaults, threats (verbal, non-verbal or written), harassment and/or intimidation.

Worker: an individual workforce member.

Weapon: any firearm including a BB gun, blackjack, metal or brass knuckles, or any dirk knife, or any switch knife, or any knife having an automatic spring release device having a blade of over one- and one-half inches in length, or stiletto, or any knife the edged portion of the blade of which is four inches or more in length, any police baton or nightstick or any martial arts weapon or electronic defense weapon.

Dangerous instrument: any instrument, object article, or substance that, under the circumstances, is capable of causing death or serious physical injury.

PROCEDURES/FORMS FOR REPORTING SUSPECTED VIOLATIONS

[Procedures for #2017-02 Reporting Suspected Workplace Violence Incidents](#)
[Workplace Violence Reporting Form](#)

REFERENCES:

[Employee Assistance Program \(EAP\)](#)

[Executive Order 16, August 1999](#)

[State of Connecticut Violence in the Workplace Policy and Procedures Manual \(Rev. April 2012\)](#)

[National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health \(NIOSH\)](#)

[University Policy Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Related Interpersonal Violence](#)

[UConn Health Work life](#)

[Connecticut General Statutes §19a-490q\(b\)](#)

[Non- Retaliation Policy](#)

RELATED POLICIES:

None

ENFORCEMENT:

Violations of this policy or associated procedures may result in appropriate disciplinary measures in accordance with University By-Laws, General Rules of Conduct for All University Employees, applicable collective bargaining agreements, the University of Connecticut Student Code, other applicable University Policies, or as outlined in any procedures document related to this policy.

APPROVAL:

Bruce Liang (Signed) _____
Bruce Liang
UConn Health Chief Executive Officer

1/13/2023 _____
Date

Kiki Nissen (Signed) _____
Kiki Nissen
Administrative Policy Committee Vice-Chair

1/12/2023 _____
Date

Janel Simpson (Signed) _____
Janel Simpson
Administrative Policy Committee Chair

1/12/2023 _____
Date

POLICY HISTORY:

New Policy Approved: 3/13/2017

Revised: 1/2023