

# LINCOLN UNIVERSITY

**Policy:** Workplace Violence Prevention and Weapons Policy  
**Policy Number:** HRM-115  
**Effective Date:** August 1, 2009  
**Revisions:** August 2011  
**Next Review Date:** August 2013  
**Responsible Officer:** Chief Human Resources Officer  
**Status:** Approved by President and Active

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## 1. Purpose

1.1. This Lincoln University policy on Workplace Violence Prevention and Weapons promotes a safe environment through the University's commitment to working with, and holding accountable, its employees to maintain a campus and a work environment free from violence, threats of violence, harassment, intimidation, and other disruptive behavior. While this kind of conduct is not pervasive at Lincoln, the University may be affected by disruptive behavior at one time or another. This Human Resources (HR) Policy is applicable specifically to the conduct of University employees. Conduct of students and of visitors or the public is addressed separately from this Policy.

## 2. Definitions

2.1. "Weapon" as used in this Policy means any instrument of combat, or any implement or object even if not designed as an instrument of combat, but which is used or attempted to be used for the purpose of inflicting or threatening bodily injury. Examples of weapons include, but are not limited to, firearms, bows and arrows, switchblades, pocket knives with fixed blade and other knives with blades longer than four inches, razors, hatchets, and explosives.

2.2. "Workplace" as used in this Policy means the University's main campus or Philadelphia campus, or any location or property owned, leased, or controlled by the University or any other location on or off University property where an employee performs any work-related duty. It also includes, but is not limited to, all University buildings and grounds, including parking lots, fields, classrooms, dormitories, and other work locations, University vehicles, and travel locations while on duty.

### 3. Policy

- 3.1. General. Lincoln University has a “zero tolerance” policy with respect to workplace/campus violence. The University does not tolerate any level of acts or threats of violence or hostility, including but not limited to acts of intimidation, harassment, coercion, assaults, stalking, threats or other violence committed by or against University employees, students, visitors, invitees, or other third parties on University campuses or other property owned, leased, or controlled by the University. The University also does not tolerate any such acts or threats of violence by University employees while conducting University business at any location, whether on or off University property, including but not limited to while attending off-site conferences, meetings, or sporting events, or while riding in University vehicles.

Because of the vulnerability of its students, employees and others at the University campuses and workplace, the University also strictly regulates weapons on University property and in the workplace. With certain very narrow exceptions described below in this Policy, including with respect to certified Law Enforcement Personnel acting in the course of their duties, the University prohibits the possession, carrying, or use of any weapons on University property or in the workplace with the exception of Law Enforcement Personnel.

This Policy also applies to the conduct of employees while functioning in the scope and course of employment, whether on campus property or elsewhere. Moreover, in the event of certain off-duty instances of serious violent behavior by an employee which adversely impacts upon the suitability of the employee to perform his or her position, or to have access to the University’s campus or workplace, this Policy will also apply. Students, except to the extent acting as employees of the University, will be subject to separate policies and procedures specifically applicable to students.

- 3.2. Prohibited Violent Conduct. Although it is impossible to ever guarantee that no violence will happen at any campus or workplace, Lincoln University intends to use all of its resources – including but not limited to its Public Safety law enforcement, its employee discipline, and its Employee Assistant Program resources – to protect against and prevent violence. Workplace violence of the type prohibited by this Policy takes many forms and includes, but is not limited to, murder, rape, arson, burglary, intimidation, threats, assaults, harassment (including sexual harassment), coercion, or property damage.

Specific prohibited conduct also includes, but is not limited to, intentionally:

- Physically injuring another person;
- Engaging in verbal or physical behavior that threatens or creates a reasonable fear of injury to another person;
- Engaging in threatening or violent behavior based on race, ethnic background, national origin, gender, religion, or other protected status;
- Engaging in verbal or physical behavior that is intended to and does subject another specific person to extreme emotional distress;
- Vandalizing property of the University, students, visitors, other employees, or other parties;
- Committing or threatening to commit acts of sexual assault, stalking, domestic violence, or sexual harassment;
- Violations of the weapons prohibitions set forth below in this Policy;
- Violating a protection against abuse order; and
- Retaliating against an individual who, in good faith, reports a violent crime or a violation of this Policy.

Verbal behavior includes not only face-to-face communication but also any other form of communication, including via telephone, email, website postings, or any other paper or electronic format.

A violation of this Policy by a University employee may lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination from employment, and may result in further legal action, including arrest, where appropriate.

The prohibited conduct set forth above is not intended to in any way prohibit or limit the lawful acts and practices of law enforcement personnel who are performing in accordance with applicable statutes and authority of law.

- 3.3. Weapons Prohibition. Subject to the limited exceptions in Section 3.3.1 of this Policy, the possession, carrying, or use of any weapon (as defined below) by any person is strictly prohibited on all University property or by any University employee while her or she is in the course and scope of performing University work duties, whether on or off University property. The University's employees, students, visitors, invitees, and other third parties on University property, including but not limited to those attending any sporting events, educational events, meetings, entertainment events or other activities, are prohibited from carrying, maintaining, using, or storing any firearms or other weapons on any University campus or other

University property, regardless of whether the individual has a valid permit or license for such firearm or weapon, except to the extent, as provided below, that it is a required part of the individual's job, or is in accordance with a relevant University policy applicable to students or employees.

Regarding the enforcement of the weapons prohibition as it specifically relates to employees, any employee who is in violation of this Policy in possession of a firearm or other weapon on University property or in the workplace will be required to immediately remove it. Employees will also be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge, and, in appropriate circumstances, arrest.

3.3.1 Exceptions to Prohibition on Possession of Weapons. As specific limited exceptions, an employee may possess a weapon to the extent, but only to the extent, it is:

- Used by an employee who is a certified law enforcement officer employed in the Lincoln University Public Safety Department; or

In appropriate circumstances employees are permitted to possess and use appropriate tools, such as saws and knives and similar implements necessary for, and typical for, the performance of the job duties or academic work, and students are permitted to possess and use said tools for appropriate recreational purposes approved in accordance with University policies applicable to students.

Any other exceptions must be approved in writing by the President of the University in consultation with the Director of the Public Safety Department.

## 4. Reporting

4.1. In the event of any urgent or extremely serious incident such as a murder, rape, or physical attack with a weapon, law enforcement and other emergency personnel should be immediately notified by dialing 911. After law enforcement and other emergency personnel have been notified and the situation has been brought under control, the incident should be also reported to your supervisor or manager, or alternatively to the Office of Public Safety and/or Office of Human Resources.

4.2. If you observe or experience violent behavior, or observe what appears to you to be a violation of the above prohibition on weapons, by anyone on the University property or in the workplace, report it immediately to a supervisor or manager, the Office of Public Safety, 484-365-7211, and/or

the Human Resources Office, 484-365-8059. Supervisors and managers who receive such reports should seek advice from the Office of Public Safety or the Office of Human Resources at regarding investigating the incident and initiating appropriate action.

**NOTE:**

**FOR THREATS OR ASSAULTS THAT REQUIRE  
IMMEDIATE ATTENTION – DIAL 911.**

**5. Prevention/Identifying Risks**

5.1. In order to implement this policy effectively and maintain a safe work and learning environment, employees are encouraged to recognize the indicators of potentially violent behavior as outlined below and to report any inappropriate behavior to a supervisor, manager, the Office of Public Safety, or the Office of Human Resources.

**5.2. Indicators of potentially violent behavior**

The following indicators have been identified by the Federal Bureau of Investigation's National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime, Profiling and Behavioral Assessment Unit in its analysis of past incidents of workplace violence:

- a. Direct or veiled threats of harm;
- b. Intimidating, belligerent, harassing, bullying, or other inappropriate and aggressive behavior;
- c. Numerous conflicts with supervisors and other employees;
- d. Bringing a weapon to the workplace, brandishing a weapon in the workplace, making inappropriate references to guns, or fascination with weapons;
- e. Statements showing fascination with incidents of workplace violence, statements indicating approval of the use of violence to resolve a problem, or statements indicating identification with perpetrators of workplace homicides;
- f. Statements indicating desperation (over family, financial, and other personal problems) to the point of contemplating suicide;
- g. Drug/alcohol abuse; and
- h. Extreme changes in behaviors.

5.3. Each of these behaviors is a clear sign that something is wrong. None should be ignored. By identifying the problem and dealing with it appropriately, managers may be able to prevent violence from happening.

- 5.4. The Offices of Public Safety and Office of Human Resources are prepared to assist managers, supervisors and other employees in dealing with such situations. Some behaviors require immediate police or security involvement, some constitute actionable misconduct, some require disciplinary action, and others indicate an immediate need for an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) referral.

## **6. Awareness and Education**

- 6.1. All newly hired and current employees will be provided with a copy of this Policy and are required to read and understand the Policy. To the extent any employee has any questions regarding the meaning of any portions of the Policy those questions should be directed to the Office of Human Resources.
- 6.2. Training and education are key elements to a successful prevention and response program. Training in Workplace Violence Prevention shall consist of promoting awareness, prevention and protection and review the Lincoln University Workplace Violence Prevention policy. The goal of such training and education is for all employees to become familiar with the University's policy on Workplace Violence Prevention and to know how to recognize and report incidents of violent, intimidating, threatening, and other disruptive behavior.

## **7. Pre-Employment Screening and Criminal Background Checks**

The Office of Human Resources administers appropriate criminal conviction and other background checks to the extent permitted by law.

## **8. Responsibilities**

- 8.1. All University employees have a general responsibility to take any threat, act, or identified risk of violence, or any violation of the University's weapons prohibition, seriously and to report any such violations or identified risks or threats to appropriate authorities in accordance with this Policy.
- 8.2. The Lincoln University Office of Public Safety will primarily coordinate all University action in the event of a violent incident on campus or in the workplace, in conjunction with outside law enforcement agencies.

- 8.3. The Lincoln University Office of Human Resources will coordinate employee-related preventative measures, including in conducting background checks in accordance with University policies, providing an awareness program to new employees, coordinating the Employee Assistance Program, and coordinating disciplinary action with department heads, managers and supervisors.

## **References**

*An Agency Guide to Workplace Violence Prevention and Response. Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Office of Administration – Human Resources and Management. M505.6. Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)  
National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)  
University Policy HRM-XXX Jeanne Clery's Disclosure of Campus Security Policy*

***Questions about this policy may be addressed to:***

***The Office of Human Resources  
Lincoln University  
PO Box 179, 1570 Baltimore Pike  
Lincoln University, PA 19352  
484-365-8059***