

The University of Mississippi

Violence-Free Workplace Policy

Summary/Purpose: The University of Mississippi's goal is to ensure the safety of all university campuses, facilities, activities, and events so that students, employees (faculty and staff), and visitors can work, learn, and enjoy an environment free from violence and threats. The purpose of this policy is to encourage all employees to report incidents of threats, aggression, and other prohibited behaviors and acts of any individual(s) on university properties to their immediate supervisor, University Police Department, and/or Human Resources. This policy lists prohibited conduct and outlines reporting responsibilities and procedures should a safety concern arise.

Prohibited Conduct

University of Mississippi prohibits violence, threats of violence, and any other behavior that risks or harms the safety of any university campus, facility, activity, or event, or that raises a reasonable concern for the safety of students, employees, or visitors at a university campus or related facility or during university-sponsored activities or events.

“Violence” is defined as any intentional or reckless act that physically harms people or property.

“Threat of violence” refers to any verbal or physical conduct that conveys the intent to cause physical harm or to place someone in fear of physical harm.

Prohibited conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Any ongoing or regularly reoccurring aggressive behavior that would make it difficult for a reasonable person in that workplace to perform his or her duties.
- Engaging in any act of violence toward a person or property
- Making a direct, indirect, or conditional threat of harm
- Engaging in any conduct, including aggression, intimidation, harassment, belligerence, and disruptive or erratic behavior, that has the purpose or effect of generating a reasonable concern for physical safety. Such conduct may consist of: physical acts, oral or written statements, harassing electronic media (i.e. emails text, Facebook, twitter, snapchat, etc.), telephone calls, gestures, or behaviors.
- Damaging or destroying university property or equipment, or threatening such harm
- Engaging in stalking or aggressive pursuit
- Participating in, or encouraging, a fight
- Using any instrument to injure, threaten, or intimidate
- Brandishing or using any firearm, explosive, or weapon of any kind or possessing a firearm in violation of University policy or state law.
- Using university resources to engage in threats or violence towards anyone

In the interest of protecting safety, the university reserves the right to address any behavior in addition to that described above whenever the conduct generates a reasonable concern for the safety or wellbeing of students, employees, or visitors at a university campus or related facility or during university-sponsored activities or events.

Violation of this policy is considered to be serious misconduct and can lead to disciplinary and/or other appropriate responsive action, up to and including termination. In addition, where appropriate, the university may pursue civil and/or criminal prosecution.

When this Policy Applies

This policy applies to employees, vendors, contractors, consultants, clients, and all persons, whether affiliated with the University of Mississippi or not, who visit a campus or facility or conduct business with the university.

This policy applies to behavior occurring at any university campus or facility. In addition, this policy can apply to conduct occurring off-campus and off-duty, if that conduct generates a reasonable concern for safety at a university campus or related facility or during university-sponsored activities or events, or for the safety of students, employees, or visitors.

“Workplace” is defined as the work setting in general, including any university education program or activity, which means all academic, research, educational, public service and outreach, extracurricular, athletic, and other programs.

Reporting Responsibilities

All employees are encouraged to remain alert to, and must immediately report any behaviors listed in the “Prohibited Conduct” section above to the persons listed in the “Where to Report” section below. No student or employee should assume that an official knows about a particular situation.

In addition, all employees must report any conduct that indicates an employee might intentionally commit self-inflicted harm.

Required reporting includes but is not limited to behavior described above that any employees experience, witness, or otherwise become aware of, regardless of: (a) whom that behavior affects, (b) the perpetrator’s relationship to the university or its students or employees, and (c) whether the behavior occurs on or off campus, if there is reason to believe that the behavior could affect safety of students, employees, or affiliates.

Employees are encouraged to report any behaviors of concern, whether or not strictly covered by this policy, so that the university may evaluate the need to address conduct potentially affecting the wellbeing of students, employees, or visitors.

Nothing in this policy is intended to require that any employee breach legally protected privilege or confidences, unless otherwise permitted by law.

The University of Mississippi reserves the right to investigate and resolve a complaint or report of workplace violence regardless of whether the complainant ultimately desires officials to pursue the complaint.

Where to Report

When appropriate, complaints under this policy may be reported to the University Police and Campus Safety Department, Human Resources, or the Office of Equal Opportunity and Regulatory Compliance. All reports or complaints under this policy will be investigated and include confidentiality where appropriate. Once an investigation is complete, a recommendation on how to handle the complaint will be submitted to the appropriate area for disposition. The University may assist in pursuing civil penalties, criminal penalties, or other appropriate action against the offender.

Report concerns involving an employee (faculty or staff member) to:

Department of Human Resources

Phone: 662-915-7431

Email: hr@olemiss.edu

Equal Opportunity and Regulatory Compliance

Phone: 662-915-7735

Email: eeo@olemiss.edu

Report concerns involving a contractor or visitor to:

University Police Department

Phone: 662-915-7234

Email: upd@olemiss.edu

You may also submit a report at umatter.olemiss.edu.

Behavioral Intervention Team:

The Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT) exists to address employee behavior that is of concern, such as the behaviors included in, but not limited to, the list of behaviors are threats, aberrant or strange behavior, violent or perceived violent behavior, repeated threats of suicide or violence against others. BIT does not pre-empt any other university department in performing its duties in enforcing the law or managing student situations.

Additional information may be found at <http://umatter.olemiss.edu/bit/>.

Non-Retaliation Policy

The University of Mississippi adheres to a strict policy of non-retaliation and prohibits retaliation and threats or attempts to retaliate against anyone who makes a good-faith report under this policy or who participates in, cooperates with, or contributes to efforts to investigate and resolve such reports. Any employee who believes that he or she is being penalized as a consequence of making a report under this policy, or for participating in, cooperating with, or contributing to efforts to investigate or resolve a report, should immediately contact the Office of Equal Opportunity & Regulatory Compliance at (662) 915-7735.

Support for those affected by violence

The University Counseling Center will respond to requests for assistance from victims of violence or threats of violence by providing counseling, advocacy, safety planning, and other support as appropriate. *If there is an emergency or if you are in immediate danger, call 4911.*

Non-Emergency requests for assistance may be directed to:

University Counseling Center

Address: 320 Lester Hall

Phone: 662-915-3784

Email: counselg@olemiss.edu

Web: counseling.olemiss.edu

University Police Department

Address: Kinard Hall, Wing C

Phone: 662-915-9411

Web: upd.olemiss.edu

Sexual Assault Response

Address: 270D Martindale

Phone: 662-915-7045

Email: TitleIX@olemiss.edu

Web: umsafe.olemiss.edu

Violence Prevention Office

Address: 320 Lester Hall

Phone: 662-915-1059

Email: vpo@olemiss.edu

Web: violenceprevention.olemiss.edu