

North Seattle College Workplace Violence Prevention Program

Statement: A Commitment to Community Safety

North Seattle Community College is concerned for and committed to our employees' and students' safety and health. We will not tolerate violence in the workplace, and we will make every reasonable effort to prevent it by implementing a Workplace Violence Prevention Program (WVPP). We will provide adequate authority and budgetary resources for our WVPP goals to be met.

Workplace Violence: "Violence" or "violent act" means any physical assault or verbal threat of physical assault against a campus community member. RCW 49.19.010 (et seq)

North Seattle College Campus Safety Office:

Phone: 206.934.3636

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAM

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1. RESPONSIBILITIES

All administrators, classified staff, and faculty are expected to assist in maintaining a safe and secure work environment. Employees are responsible for complying with our WVPP, which requires 1) prompt and accurate reporting of all violent incidents or threats of violence whether or not physical injury has occurred, 2) use of safe work practices, 3) adherence to all safety directives, policies, and procedures, and 4) open communication among all employees on all workplace safety, health, and security issues.

a. Administrators and Managers

The College President is responsible for ensuring that all safety and health policies and procedures involving workplace security and safety are clearly communicated and implemented by all employees.

The Workplace Violence Prevention Program Administrator is the Vice President of Student Development, who has the authority and responsibility for implementing the provisions of this program and for regularly assessing its effectiveness, notwithstanding current agreements.

Administrators and managers are responsible for:

- Promptly assessing the safety concerns of the entire campus community and taking action to protect the safety of the campus community and the victim(s) of workplace violence.
- Ensuring that all safety and health policies and procedures related to workplace security are clearly communicated, understood, and complied with by employees.
- Applying related policies and procedures fairly and uniformly.
- Ensuring the confidentiality of the parties, as appropriate. Also, disseminating information of violent occurrences with the college community at large.
- Protecting employees who report incidents or threats of violence from discrimination or retaliation. Threats of violence can be broadly defined as willful intimidation or malicious harassment; belligerent language; threatening bodily injury; and threatening violence, assault, or placing a person in reasonable fear of harm to his/her person or property.
- Informing the employees they supervise about our Workplace Violence Prevention Program and making copies of the WVPP policy statement and guidelines readily available to them.

- In addition to computer posting of crime information and safety issues, taking other actions to notify employees of crime and safety issues, such as, personal contact, notification at staff meetings, and bulletin board postings.
- Advocating, monitoring, and enforcing employees' compliance with workplace security measures.
- Advising employees who do not comply with the WVPP.
- Initiating an investigation to determine and document facts and circumstances concerning workplace violence issues.
- Initiating disciplinary action for employees' failure to comply with workplace safety and security policies and procedures in accordance with applicable contract agreements and applicable state and federal law.
- Reporting incidents of violence, threats of violence, or the presence of a firearm or other dangerous weapon on campus to security office personnel for the maintenance of records in that office.

b. All Employees

All employees are responsible for:

- Attending a WVPP orientation session within the first 60 days of employment.
- Adhering to work practices that are designed to ensure a more secure workplace. This includes following all directives, policies, and procedures aimed at maintaining a safe and secure work environment.
- Promptly and accurately reporting all violent incidents or threats of violence on campus to her/his administrator/supervisor and to security personnel, whether or not physical injury has occurred.
- Familiarizing themselves with these WVPP guidelines located in the Safety and Security section of the NSC public folders in Microsoft Outlook or Exchange.
- Familiarizing themselves with Emergency Procedures located on the college's home page under General Information/Emergency Procedures.

- Reading the monthly crime information summary posted on the Safety and Security public folder in NSC Microsoft Outlook e-mail on the Safety and Security website and published in the Polaris.
- Notifying security personnel and administrators/supervisors if they believe that any person not designated to carry a weapon has a firearm or other dangerous weapon on campus.

Response to Violence in the Workplace

Employees who engage in violence in the workplace will be disciplined in accordance with applicable contract agreements and related SCD policy and procedures and applicable state and federal laws.

If an employee, as a victim of workplace violence, wants a police investigation of the case, the employee must request police involvement unless the seriousness of the injuries or circumstances of the incident interfere with the employee's ability to initiate the call. Police involvement is strongly recommended in all cases of workplace violence; the college may be required to contact appropriate authorities depending on the circumstances.

c. Security Office Personnel

Personnel in the Security Office will assist any employee in obtaining a Seattle District Court or a King County Superior Court no-contact order or anti-harassment order.

The Security Office is responsible for maintaining and distributing records of certain incidents reported to Security and the local police in accordance with The Clery Act.

Security Office staff are responsible for notifying the appropriate college administrator following reports of violent incidents, threats of violence, or the presence of a firearm or other dangerous weapon on campus.

d. Human Resources Office

The Human Resources Representative will ensure that new employees receive a copy of the Workplace Violence Prevention Program and that it is discussed at new employee orientations. A record keeping system will be maintained to ensure that all employees participate in the WVPP training.

e. Students

Pursuant to the authority granted by RCW 28B. 50. 140 (et seq), the Board of Trustees of the Seattle College District VI established the following regulations on student conduct and student discipline:

375.10 (WAC 132F-120-100) (et seq)

Students have the obligation to:

Subsection .2 (b) Respect the rights of others and cooperate with all parts of the college community to ensure that such rights are guaranteed, whether or not the views of those exercising such rights are consistent with their own.

(c) Refrain from those actions that would interfere with the campus functions or endanger the health, safety, welfare, or property of others.

375.20.2 (WAC 132F-120-110) (et seq)

Irresponsible behavior for which the campuses may impose sanctions is defined as follows:

(e) Physical and/or verbal abuse of any person on campus property at any campus sponsored or campus supervised function; or conduct which threatens or endangers the health and safety of any such person.

(j) Possession of firearms even if licensed to do so except by commissioned police officers as prescribed by law.

2. ACCESSIBLE INFORMATION AND EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

The College has a communication system that encourages clear and open communication between management and employees and provides a continuous flow of safety, health, and security information that is readily available and understandable.

The WVPP communication system is designed to encourage a continuous flow of readily understandable safety, health, and security information between administration and employees. The system is comprised of the following elements:

- All new full – time and part-time employees receive an orientation on the workplace safety and security policies, procedures, and work practices, including the procedure for employees to inform the administration about workplace security hazards or threats of violence.
- A copy of the WVPP policy statement and guidelines is available to all employees in the public folders and on the Security Office websites.

- Supervisors annually review the Workplace Violence Prevention Program with all personnel.
- Upon request to the Security Office, informational materials are available regarding the magnitude of the workplace violence problem in the United States and the role of firearms and other dangerous weapons in this violence.
- The Safety Committee meets on the third Tuesday of each month at 2:00 PM to discuss issues, including workplace security. These meetings are open to the campus community. Check with the Security Office for the meeting location.
- Workplace security information updates are posted in the Safety and Security section of the NSC public folders in Microsoft Exchange or Outlook and distributed monthly to NSC employees who have college e-mail addresses.

3. TRAINING AND EDUCATION

The College delivers information and provides training to all employees to promote and ensure workplace safety and security.

Employees are educated and trained on specific aspects of workplace security unique to our campus community through the following resources:

- Employee orientation on workplace security policies, procedures, and work practices.
- Review by supervisors of the Workplace Violence Prevention Program with all personnel as part of the regular performance review process.
- Other training as required by State law.

Some warning signs of potentially violent individuals:

- Irrational beliefs and ideas
- Verbal, nonverbal, or written threats or intimidation
- Obsession with weapons and/or acts of violence
- Expressions of a plan to hurt oneself or others
- Externalization of blame
- Unrequited romantic obsession
- Taking up much of a supervisor's time with behavior or performance problems
- A drastic change in belief systems
- Displays of unwarranted anger

- New or increased source of stress at home or work
- Inability to take criticism
- Feelings of being victimized
- Intoxication from alcohol or other substances
- Expressions of hopelessness or heightened anxiety
- Steals or sabotages projects or equipment
- Demonstrates a lack of concern for the safety of others

Investigations into every incident of workplace violence have revealed several of these traits in the suspects' history profile, which manifested them, sometimes subtly before the incident. Threats from off-campus individuals usually have something to do with someone on campus.

4. SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

The College demonstrates its commitment to workplace safety issues by providing an array of supportive services to members of the college community.

The following services are available to members of the college community:

Any employee concerned about personal safety may request an escort (e.g., to a parking lot off-premises) or other appropriate intervention by Security Office personnel.

All employees are eligible for confidential counseling or other needed assistance immediately after the incident. Victims of workplace violence are encouraged to contact the Washington State Employee Assistance Program (EAP) at 877-313-4455 or <https://des.wa.gov/services/hr-finance/washington-state-employee-assistance-program-eap>

5. WEAPONS POLICY

To the extent allowed by law, the college prohibits employees, students, or visitors from carrying weapons in College facilities or on College property. Any employee or student in possession of a firearm or other weapon within the College property or while otherwise fulfilling job responsibilities may face disciplinary action, including termination or expulsion. Possession of a valid concealed weapons permit authorized by the State of Washington is not an exemption under this policy.

a. Definition (see also RCW 9.41.270)

Firearms or other dangerous weapons mean:

- any device from which a projectile may be fired by an explosive
- any simulated firearm operated by gas or compressed air
- sling shot
- sand club
- metal knuckles
- any spring blade knife
- any knife which opens or is ejected open by an outward, downward thrust or movement
- any instrument that can be used as a weapon and poses a reasonable risk of injury

b. Exemptions

This weapons policy does not apply to:

- any law enforcement personnel engaged in official duties
- any security or facilities personnel engaged in official duties
- any person engaged in military activities sponsored by the federal or state Government, while carrying out official duties

c. Additional Definitions and Exemptions

RCW 9.41.250 (et seq) Dangerous weapons--Penalty.

Every person who:

(1) Manufactures, sells, or disposes of or possesses any instrument or weapon of the kind usually known as sling shot, sand club, or metal knuckles, or spring blade knife, or any knife the blade of which is automatically released by a spring mechanism or other mechanical device, or any knife having a blade which opens, or falls, or is ejected into position by the force of gravity, or by an outward, downward, or centrifugal thrust or movement;

(2) Furtively carries with intent to conceal any dagger, dirk, pistol, or other dangerous weapon; or

(3) Uses any contrivance or device for suppressing the noise of any firearm, is guilty of a gross misdemeanor punishable under chapter 9A.20 RCW (et seq).

RCW 9.41.270 (et seq) Weapons apparently capable of producing bodily harm--
Unlawful carrying or handling--Penalty--Exceptions.

(1) It shall be unlawful for any person to carry, exhibit, display, or draw any firearm, dagger, sword, knife or other cutting or stabbing instrument, club, or any other weapon apparently capable of producing bodily harm, in a manner, under circumstances, and at a time and place that either manifests an intent to intimidate another or that warrants alarm for the safety of other persons.

(2) Any person violating the provisions of subsection (1) above shall be guilty of a gross misdemeanor. If any person is convicted of a violation of subsection (1) of this section, the person shall lose his or her concealed pistol license, if any. The court shall send notice of the revocation to the department of licensing, and the city, town, or county which issued the license.

(3) Subsection (1) of this section shall not apply to or affect the following:

(a) Any act committed by a person while in his or her place of abode or fixed place of business;

(b) Any person who by virtue of his or her office or public employment is vested by law with a duty to preserve public safety, maintain public order, or make arrests for offenses, while in the performance of such duty;

(c) Any person acting to protect himself or herself against the use of presently threatened unlawful force by another, or to protect another against the use of such unlawful force by a third person;

(d) Any person making or assisting in making a lawful arrest for the commission of a felony; or

(e) Any person engaged in military activities sponsored by the federal or state governments.

6. SANCTIONS IN RESPONSE TO INCIDENTS OR THREATS OF WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

The college will sanction employees according to applicable documents, including employee contracts/agreements, WAC, and RCW references.

