

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY



HRS Overview Workplace Issues

Presented by:
Human Resource Services

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Bullying Prevention and Reporting

WSU Business Policy and Procedure (BPPM 50.31)

- WSU is committed to maintaining an environment free from acts or threats of violence, including workplace bullying.
- Applicable to students, faculty, staff, visitors, volunteers and all other personnel while on University property or conducting University business.
- Retaliation is prohibited and may form independent grounds for taking appropriate corrective or disciplinary action.



Workplace Bullying

- Workplace bullying refers to *repeated*, unreasonable actions of individuals (or a group) directed towards an employee (or a group of employees), which intimidate, degrade, humiliate, or undermine; or which create a risk to the health or safety of the employee(s).
- Workplace bullying often involves an abuse or misuse of power. Bullying behavior creates feelings of defenselessness and injustice in the target and undermines an individual's right to dignity at work.



Workplace Bullying

HRS assists and provides guidance to Employees, Managers and Appointing Authorities.

Reporting Incidents:

- Employees are encourage to contact their supervisor, manager, Dean/VP
- Contact HRS



Workplace Bullying – Scenario 1

You work a large office and over the last year you have observed a supervisor's behavior (John) has become less collegial to other supervisors and staff member.

Specifically for the past 6+ months you have witnessed John constantly interrupting and actively prevents others from speaking.

You have also heard him make snide remarks regarding another unit's employees productivity.




Scenario 1 – What do you do?

- Talk to your immediate supervisor and inform her/him of the behaviors you have observed.
- Set up a meeting with John to discuss his behavior in the workplace.
- Meet with John's supervisor and inform her/him of the behaviors you have observed.
- Ignore the problem.
- Participate in "water cooler" conversations about John and hope someone else addresses it.
- None of the above.



Bullying Behavior

Let's change Hats:

In this situation John is your supervisor. You are not constantly interrupted by John, but you see how he treats your co-workers and others in the office.

What do you do?



Bullying Behavior

What is often seen in workplace cases where the co-worker is a bully or who has bully-like behavior; they want to be like other co-workers; they want to *belong, be part of a team, perform meaningful work, etc.*

They just are going about it in an inappropriate and unprofessional way.



Inappropriate and Bully-like Behavior

Sign(s) to watch for and take action:

- Excessive criticism (appears different standards)
- Belittling a person's opinion
- Keeping a file of mistakes or falsely accusing
- Yelling, insulting, humiliating, or using profanity
- Socially singling out
- Spreading destructive gossip and lies
 - Failing to stop the spread of rumors
- Work sabotage (not performing tasks crucial to another's success)
- Habit of taking the credit for work of others
- Blocking ability for training, vacation, or promotion

?? Would most people consider the action unacceptable??



Bullying and Harassing Behavior

Bullying and Harassing Behavior – Is Not:

- Expressing differences of opinion;
- Offering constructive feedback, guidance, or advice about work-related behavior;
- Reasonable action taken by a supervisor relating to the management of an office;
- Reasonable action taken to manage an employee's performance, initiating corrective and/or disciplinary action.



Harm Caused by Bullying

- Employees suffer low morale and productivity
- Shock, anger, feels frustrated or helpless
- Higher absenteeism
- Panic or anxiety, especially about going to work
- Higher turnover
- Higher employee benefit costs
- Clinical depression
- Stress disorders
- Increased employees out on FMLA
- Problems at home – increased stress



Informal Complaint Process

The goal of reporting bullying complaints to a supervisor is to resolve the issue at the lowest level and as quickly as possible.

Informal Complaint Option(s):

1. Meet with a supervisor and seek advice on addressing concern.
2. Request a supervisor intervene on your behalf.
3. Request an informal meeting with the alleged offender and your supervisor or the alleged offender's supervisor to discuss the concerns.



How Can HRS Assist?

- Provide training
- Departmental discussions on appropriate behavior
- Treat all complaints seriously and take appropriate action promptly
- If necessary provide "re-training" to supervisor and managers on how to handle complaints or emerging conflicts
- Perform departmental assessments
- Recommend Conflict Resolution



Workplace Bullying

Questions about workplace bullying?



Workplace Violence Policy

WSU Business Policy and Procedure (BPPM 50.30)

While on University property or while conducting University business all employees are prohibited from subjecting any individual to any violence or threat of violence, including workplace bullying.

Workplace Violence Definition:
Any physical assault, threatening, or intimidating behavior, or abusive conduct occurring in the work setting.



Workplace Violence Policy

Reporting Incidents:

- Review WPV Checklist located on:
 - HRS website – Safe Environment
- All employees are expected to report incidents of violence or potential violence.

HRS is responsible for investigating the incident and recommending appropriate action. HRS reports information to the Appointing Authority.



Workplace Violence Definitions

Emerging or Potential Threat:
a situation has the potential for becoming violent over time.

- Call WSU Police 509-335-8548 OR 911
- Alert HRS
- Alert Chair/Director and Dean



Workplace Violence Definitions

Urgent / Direct Threat:
there is actual violent behavior towards a person or property, where a person is being threatened, or where it appears violent behavior is likely to take place, such as a verbal altercation.

- Isolate or evacuate yourself & others
- Call 911
- Alert HRS
- Alert Chair/Director and Dean/VP



Workplace Issues – Scenario 2

It's Friday afternoon and you witnessed two co-workers (Mike and Sandy) arguing in the hallway. The interaction is very upsetting, especially with the tone used, body language, how close in proximity they were standing, and the use of foul language. You also are concerned how quickly the interaction changed from what appeared to be a normal discussion to more of an argument.



As a Co-worker, What Do you Do?

- a) Jump in the middle of Mike and Sandy to break up the argument.
- b) Walk away in disbelief that employees would behave this way at work.
- c) Find your supervisor or the closest supervisor to address the situation.
- d) Call the police to handle the situation.
- e) Some or all of the above.
- f) None of the above.



Workplace Issues – Scenario 3

It's Friday afternoon and you are informed by an employee (Lily) that she witnessed two employees (Mike and Sandy) arguing in the hallway. Lily mentions she was very upset by the incident, yelling in the hall, students present, body language, and a lot of cussing. She asks not to be identified and asks you to keep this confidential.



What do you do?

As a supervisor, what do you say to Lily?

- a) You ask if the argument occurring right now? Or when did it occur?
- b) Thank her for notifying you, you will look into the situation, and it will be handled appropriately, but you cannot guarantee confidentiality.
- c) Tell her you will schedule a meeting with her, Mike, and Sandy to discuss the situation.
- d) Agree to not disclose her name and keep the conversation confidential.
- e) None of the above.
- f) Some or all of the above.



Workplace Violence

Questions about workplace violence?



Domestic Violence Guidelines

WSU seeks to enhance workplace safety by educating employees about domestic violence and its possible risks.

- **Domestic Violence Definition:**
Abusive behavior that is either physical, sexual, and/or psychological, intended to establish and maintain control over a partner or family or household member. (RCW 26.50)



Domestic Violence Guidelines

Reporting Incidents:

- Review WPV Checklist located on:
 - HRS website – Safe Environment
- Alert your supervisor
- Alert HRS
- Call 911 if Urgent / Direct Threat

HRS is responsible for investigating the incident and recommending appropriate action to area Appointing Authority.



Domestic Violence Guidelines

- A victim's *workplace* is a particular target because the abuser know she/he can find her/his victim.
- A victim's *job* is a particular target for the abuser because it is both a perceived and real loss of control.



Domestic Violence Guidelines

When a Co-Worker / Employee may be a Victim:

- Encourage to contact a community or state agency for information, guidance & support
- Encourage to talk with Employee Assistant Program (EAP) or HRS regarding workplace related concerns



When You Become Aware

- **DO NOT:**
 - *Get overly involved*
 - *Pressure employee to disclose what is happening*
 - *Give specific advice*
- **DO:**
 - *Listen, support, and refer*
 - *Listen without judging*



Domestic Violence Case Study

Victim: 26 year old female UW employee

- She was killed at work on April 2, 2007

Post Break-up / Pre-incident:

- March 2007 broke up with Offender 41 years old
- Offender called her from pay phones was on the run
- Left threatening messages to victim and her sister
- Stole a revolver from a friend
- Evaded service on Order of Protection

HR unaware:

- Victim received death threats
- Victim filed a report & a copy of the Order was given to University Police

Lesson(s) learned



Domestic Violence

Questions about domestic violence
in the workplace?



Training Review

- Call out the bully
- Assess work environments
- Pay attention to warning signs
- Promote respect
- Know WSU policies and procedures
- Trust your instincts
- Be mindful of your surroundings



University Resources

- Human Resource Services
- University Ombudsman
- Office for Equal Opportunity
- Employee Assistance Program



WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY

Human Resource Services
Pullman: 509-335-4521
Spokane: 509-358-7554
Vancouver: 360-546-9587
Tri-Cities: 509-372-7470

HRS website: www.hrs.wsu.edu

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY



This has been a
WSU Training
Videoconference

If you attended this live training session
and wish to have your attendance
documented in your training history,
please notify Human Resource Services
within 24 hours of today's date:

hrstraining@wsu.edu
