



Managing Situations That Are Highly Charged With Emotion Or Potentially Violent: Guidelines for Action

We must always be aware of and respond carefully to incidents or circumstances that increase risks to the university community. For almost a decade The Ohio State University has had services in place to intervene in such circumstances before they escalate to the level of physical violence. Here are some general guidelines for directors and peers, including information about when and how to access these university resources.

Workplace violence is typically preceded by patterns of problematic behaviors and interactions. Speak out to others if actions, words, or behaviors cause uncomfortable situations in the workplace.

If initial polite attempts to bring a stop to behaviors such as verbal outbursts or intimidation are not effective or are met with an escalation of anger, seek appropriate assistance from your departmental Senior HR professionals, the Office of Human Resource Consulting, or the University Faculty and Staff Assistance Program (contact information for these two offices appears below). These professionals will help guide you through the appropriate process.

When reasonable attempts don't work, it may be necessary to convene a meeting of a university Crisis Assessment Team (CAT Team; contact information appears below), consisting of representatives from the Office of Human Resources, University Police, Employee Health, University Faculty and Staff Assistance Program, Environmental Health and Safety, and other units when appropriate, such as the Office of Legal Affairs and/or the Office of Academic Affairs. The crisis assessment team will meet with leaders from the affected area, conduct a risk assessment, and make specific recommendations to be implemented.

In case of actual physical violence or threats, call 911.

The most important point is to not tolerate or excuse inappropriate behavior but to reach out for consultation and guidance. Directors and peers should remember the following:

1. A goal of the Ohio State University is to provide a workplace in which violence of any kind is neither tolerated nor excused.
2. Extremely violent acts rarely occur in a vacuum but are often the culmination of a pattern of escalating negative interactions.

3. Zero tolerance for violence and intimidation, whether verbal or physical, must become part of the culture of the organization through education, performance expectations, and predictable administrative response to offenses.
4. The Ohio State University provides multiple resources to assist leaders and others in responding appropriately and with support to inappropriate workplace behavior.
 - [Workplace and family and relationship violence policy](#) (HR policy 7.05)
 - Senior Human Resource Professionals in academic and work settings
 - The [Office of Organization and Human Resource Consulting](#), OHRC (614-292-2800)
 - The [Faculty and Staff Assistance Program](#), UFSAP (614-292-4472)
 - Crisis Assessment Team (CAT team), Robert Meier, Director of Behavioral Health, OSU Managed Health Care Services, Robert.Meier@osumc.edu (614-292-3283)
 - OSU Medical Center Security (614-293-8500); emergency (911)
 - Columbus campus: OSU Police Department (614-292-2121); emergency (911)
 - Lima campus: Campus Security Office (419-995-8499); emergency (911)
 - Mansfield campus: Campus Security Office (419-755-4346 or -4218); emergency (911)
 - Marion campus: Public Safety Office (740-725-6300); emergency (911)
 - Newark campus: Public Safety Department (740-366-9301); emergency (911)