



Policy

TITLE: Threat of Violence and Duty to Warn

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 1, 2010; Revised April 1, 2021

APPROVER(S): Dean of Medical Education, OCS Head of School

NUMBER: OCS 100.05

I. Purpose

The Ochsner Clinical School and Ochsner Health System supports the establishment of a pro-active warning system to ensure patient, student, visitor and employee safety during and after a threat of violence. It is the responsibility of all students to give appropriate warning when they hear direct or implied threats toward a patient, student, visitor, employee or OCS and OHS property.

II. Scope

This policy applies to all Ochsner Clinical School students.

III. Definitions

A. Threat of Violence – Examples of a threat of violence include, but are not limited to:

1. Threatening physical harm toward any other individual, his/her family, friends, associates or property.
2. The intentional destruction or threat of destruction of Ochsner property.
3. Harassing or threatening telephone call, emails or text messages.
4. Stalking.
5. Veiled threats of physical harm or other forms of intimidation.

B. Corporate Threat of Violence Team - The Team will be comprised of persons from:

1. Human Resources
2. Risk Management
3. Senior Management
4. Public Affairs
5. Security
6. Psychiatry Department – Ph.D.

C. Type One Behavior- includes, but is not limited to:

1. Actively causing or threatening to cause harm to self and/or others

2. Acts of physical aggression (assault or attempted assault on another)
3. Use of or possession of explosives, firearms, other weapons, drugs, and/or alcohol
4. Active intentional damage to hospital property, or the property of other patients, family, staff
5. Face-to-Face Threats (words or actions that create either reasonable fear in another person or a reasonable perception of intent to harm a person or property); or
6. Comments (even if joking) about violence or possession of weapons.

D. Type Two Behavior- includes, but is not limited to:

1. Comments, slurs, personal insults, or the like that a reasonable person would view as demeaning, disparaging, degrading, harassing, or intimidating
2. Repeated shouting, use of swearing, rudeness
3. Persistent unwelcomed attention bestowed on staff member (gifts, invitations to dates) either verbal, written, email, or telephonic; or
4. Written, telephonic, and or email threats (words or actions that create either reasonable fear in another person or a reasonable perception of intent to harm a person or property).

E. Weapon- Any item designed or used to intimidate, assault, or injure another person or to damage property.

Individual facilities may also maintain a local TOV team

IV. Policy Statements

The safety and security of our patients, students, visitors and employees are of vital importance. Acts or threats of violence made toward a patient, student, visitor or employee or made while on Ochsner property will not be tolerated from anyone. Any student with knowledge of a threat or potential threat of violence has a duty to warn appropriate Ochsner officials as outlined in this policy.

V. Policy Implementation

- A. Any student witnessing or hearing a direct or implied threat of violence is to report it to his/her supervisor, OCS Administration, Ochsner Human Resources or Security department immediately.
- B. Students may also report a direct or implied threat by calling Corporate Safety and Security directly at (504) 842-3770.

- C. The Safety and Security Department will assess the information provided and determine if the Corporate Threat of Violence (TOV) Team should be notified. If necessary, the Director of Safety and Security will notify the TOV Team.
- D. If convened, the Corporate TOV team will be responsible for considering the report, determining what action should be taken, and implementing any action or response decided upon.
- E. Students suspected of or implicated in a threat of violence may be immediately suspended from clinical rotation education pending a full investigation.

VI. Enforcement

- A. Direct or implied threats by students as well as fraudulent reports of threats by students are considered major violations of rules which may lead to immediate disciplinary action including legal action if warranted.
- B. Under this policy, decisions and/or actions may be needed to prevent harm to people or property. No existing Ochsner policy or procedure is to be interpreted in a way that would prevent this from taking place.
- C. Department leaders, Security or a Human Resources representative should de-brief staff and/or provide Employee Assistance Program contact information after a Threat of Violence or similar incident has occurred.

VII. References

OHS.HR.502 Progressive Discipline

OHS.SAFESEC.022 Weapons

OSHA 3148-04R 2015