



SUBJECT:	Human Resources		
POLICY:	405.5 Threat Reports		
PROCEDURE:	405.5.1 Processing Threat Reports		
EFFECTIVE:	February 2025	REVISED:	REVIEWED:

Introduction and Purpose

Threats made against Great Falls College Montana State University students, faculty, staff or administration, even in jest, will not be tolerated.

Assessing Threats

When a threat is reported, unless it is referred to the Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT), human resources and the CEO/Dean will begin the assessment process.

Initial Screening

The initial screening consists of human resources receiving a full report from the person identifying the threat. The goal of the screening is to gather as many details as possible to determine immediacy and level of threat.

Immediacy/Imminence

When the initial screening identifies an immediate threat, human resources or the CEO/Dean, or their designee, will contact local law enforcement by dialing 911. When the threat does not appear imminent, human resources or the CEO/Dean, or their designee, will triage the situation. Two results are expected in this step: (1) a determination as to what, if any, intervention is required now; and (2) a decision as to whether a full inquiry is warranted. If immediate interventions are not likely to resolve the concern, human resources will conduct a full inquiry. Conversely, if immediate interventions are warranted and likely to bring resolution to the concern, a full inquiry will not be conducted.

Inquiry and Assessment

If it is determined that some level of threat exists, warranting an inquiry and assessment, human resources or the CEO/Dean, or their designee will determine the level of threat that exists and subsequent action or monitoring needed.

Procedure if Threat Made By Employee

Employees who violate policy 405.5 Threats against Employees will be subject to disciplinary action as outlined in the Great Falls College employee handbooks. When a threat by an employee is reported, human resources, the CEO/Dean or their designee, will determine which of the following levels apply to the situation and take the described action.

Level I

If the statement:

- Was made by a person with no previous history of violence or threats and was a spontaneous response as a result of a brief anger flare-up, or
- Was made well after any contributing incident and the employee's intent/motivation is unclear

Then:

- The person may be suspended without pay for 1-10 days, depending on the nature of the incident and the individual's past and current behavior.

Level II

If the statement reflects a patterned, sustained response rather than a momentary flare-up:

- And is made by a person with a previous history of violence or threats, or
- Indicates or reflects a plan, regardless of how often the threat has been made, or
- Suggests a long harbored ill-feeling toward or resentment of the threatened individual

Then:

- The person's employment with Great Falls College will be terminated immediately.
- The individual will be instructed not to return to campus.
- Police will be notified.

Guiding Principles

The appraisal of risk in a threat assessment focuses on actions/behaviors, communications, and specific circumstances that might suggest that an individual intends to engage in violence and is planning or preparing for that event. The threat assessment process is centered upon an analysis of the facts and evidence of behavior in a given situation.

Six core principles form the foundation of the threat assessment process at Great Falls College:

1. The central question in any threat assessment inquiry or investigation is whether an individual (student or other) poses a threat, not whether the individual has made a threat.
2. Targeted violence is the end result of an understandable, and often discernible, process of thinking and behavior.
3. Targeted violence stems from an interaction among the individual, the situation, the setting, and the target.
4. An investigative, skeptical, inquisitive mindset is critical to successful threat assessment.
5. Effective assessment is based on facts and observations of behavior, rather than on characteristics or traits. (Profiles do not provide a reliable basis for making judgments of the threat posed by a particular student.)
6. An integrated approach should guide threat assessment inquiries. (Coordination with the college's Behavioral Intervention Team, other institutions of learning, and other agencies – such as mental health services and law enforcement – is an important practice for gaining a comprehensive understanding of the potential threat.)

Assessing and Classifying Threats

Based on the information available, the threat assessment team should seek to answer the following questions:

1. What are the individual's motives and goals?
 - a. What motivated the individual to make the statements or take the actions that caused him/her to be reported?
 - b. Does the situation or circumstance that led to these statements or actions still exist?
 - c. Does the individual have a major grievance or grudge? Against whom?
 - d. What efforts have been made to resolve the problem and what has been the result? Does the potential attacker feel that any part of the problem is resolved or see any alternatives?
2. Have there been any communications suggesting ideas or intent to attack?
 - a. What, if anything, has the individual communicated to someone else (targets, friends, other students, teachers, family, others) or written concerning his/her ideas and/or intentions? (Written documents may include assignments submitted in NRCC course and postings on social media sites, as examples.)
 - b. Have friends been alerted or "warned away?"
3. Has the subject shown inappropriate interest in any of the following?
 - a. School attacks or attackers
 - b. Weapons (including recent acquisition of a weapon)
 - c. Incidents of mass violence
4. Has the subject engaged in attack-related behaviors? These behaviors might include:
 - a. Developing an attack idea or plan
 - b. Making efforts to acquire or practice with weapons
 - c. Casing, or checking out, possible sites and areas for attack
 - d. Rehearsing attacks or ambushes
5. Does the individual have the means to carry out an act of targeted violence?
 - a. How organized is the individual's thinking and behavior?
 - b. Does the individual have the means (access to a weapon, for example) to carry out an attack?
6. Is the subject experiencing hopelessness, desperation, and/or despair? (BIT should be consulted on this question.)
 - a. Is there information to suggest that the individual is experiencing desperation and/or despair?
 - b. Has the individual experienced a recent failure, loss, and/or loss of status?
 - c. Is the individual known to be having difficulty coping with a stressful event?
 - d. Is the individual now, or has he/she ever been, suicidal or "accident prone?"
 - e. Has the individual engaged in behavior that suggests that he/she has considered ending his/her life?
 - f. Has the individual been known to practice self harm?
7. Does the individual have a trusting relationship with at least one responsible adult?

- a. Does the individual have at least one relationship with an adult that he/she can confide in, believing that he/she will be heard in a non-judgmental way?
 - b. Is the individual emotionally connected to others? Is he/she emotionally disconnected from others?
 - c. Has the individual previously come to someone's attention or raised concern in a way that suggests he/she needs intervention or supportive services?
8. Does the subject see violence as an acceptable (or desirable or only) way to solve problems?
 - a. Does the setting around the individual (friends, fellow students, colleagues, parents, teachers, spouses, etc.) explicitly or implicitly support or endorse violence as a way of resolve problems or disputes?
 - b. Has the individual been "dared" by others to engage in an act of violence?
 9. Are the individual's conversation and story consistent with his/her actions? Does the information from collateral interviews and from the individual's own behavior confirm or dispute what the individual says in going on?
 10. Are other people concerned about the individual's potential for violence?
 - a. Are those who know the subject concerned that he/she might take action based on violent ideas or plans?
 - b. Are those who know the subject concerned about a specific target?
 - c. Have those who know the subject witnessed recent changes or escalation in mood and behavior?
 11. What circumstances might affect the likelihood of an attack?
 - a. What factors in the individual's life and/or environment might increase or decrease the likelihood that the person will attempt to mount an attack at the college?
 - b. What is the response of other people who know the subject's ideas or plan? Do those who know the subject's ideas actively discourage the individual from acting violently, encourage the subject to attack, deny the possibility of violence, passively collude with an attack, etc?

Threat Level	Response
Priority 1 (Extreme Risk)	<p>The person/situation appears to pose a clear and imminent threat of serious violence toward self or others and requires containment. TAT should contact law enforcement to pursue containment options and/or protect identified target(s). Once containment action has been taken, the BIT will develop and implement a management plan.</p>
Priority 2 (High Risk)	<p>The person/situation appears to pose a threat of self-harm or physical violence, usually to an identifiable target, but currently lacks immediacy and/or a specific plan – or a specified plan of violence does exist but currently lacks a specific target. TAT develops a monitoring plan.</p>

Priority 3 (Moderate Risk)	The person/situation does not appear to pose a threat of violence or self-harm at this time, but does exhibit behaviors/circumstances that are likely to be disruptive to the community. This case warrants intervention, usually by the Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT), to include referral and/or monitoring to minimize the risk of escalation. TAT develops a monitoring plan.
Priority 4 (Low Risk)	The person/situation does not appear to pose a threat of violence or self-harm at this time, nor is there evidence of significant disruption to the community. TAT maintains report for potential re-examination in the future and contacts BIT (if appropriate) for referral.
Priority 5 (No Identified Risk)	The person/situation does not appear to pose a threat of violence or self-harm at this time, nor is there evidence of significant disruption to the community. TAT closes the case.

Follow-Up

Follow-up activities usually follow one of two forms: (1) referral; and/or (2) monitoring.

1. Referral

For threat assessment purposes, referral means placing further investigation, monitoring, and intervention within the sphere of responsibility of another body. The most common referral are those to the college's Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT). BIT referrals are made for Priority 3 and 4 cases (as deemed appropriate by the TAT) for intervention and monitoring. The BIT may, at its discretion, transfer the case back to TAT should an escalation be deemed present.

The second most common referral is to an external agency. Individuals who volunteer to do so may be contained and/or evaluated by ACCESS (the intake counseling service provided by New River Valley Community Services). Individuals who will not willingly seek such intervention may be referred to local law enforcement (usually the Pulaski County Sheriff's Office).

2. Monitoring

Monitoring plans are created for all Priority 3 through 5 risks, and for Priority 2 risks where circumstances warrant. Monitoring plans should identify the primary caseworker (person responsible for ensuring that the monitoring plan is carried out), specific steps that will be taken to monitor the situation, and a timeline associated with those steps. For example, an individual who has made threats via his/her social media account can expect to have that account monitored (overtly or covertly) at regular interval (daily, weekly, etc.) by his/her caseworker (John D. Counselor).

Finally, follow-up includes documentation. The chair of the Threat Assessment Team (TAT) is responsible for ensuring that all appropriate documentation of the TAT's assessment – including contributing documents like incident reports and interviews – are part of the official record. A Threat Assessment and Response Report form (below) should be completed with each assessment.

Definitions

Threat: A threat is any expression, act, or behavior that implies or directly communicates an intention to cause harm, injury, or damage to another individual, their property, or their well-being. Threats can be explicit or implicit and may occur in person, through electronic communication, or via third parties. This includes, but is not limited to:

- verbal threats,
- written threats,
- physical gestures, or
- any other form of communication that creates a reasonable fear of harm.