

Cheyney University Policy Number FA 2013-1004

Policy Title: Threat Assessment

Approved by: FA Council
President's Cabinet

History: Issued – 8-1-2012
Revised – 9-1-2013

Related Policies:

Additional References:

A. Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to guide the coordination of efforts by Cheyney University of Pennsylvania in the process of identifying, investigating, evaluating and managing Concerning Behaviors (violence, or threats of violence to persons or property that are disruptive to institutional activities) of members of the University Community (faculty, staff, students, and visitors) that indicate an proclivity toward or the potential for targeted violence.

B. Scope: This policy applies to all Concerning Behaviors exhibited by any member of the University Community and at activities and events, regardless of the location, including classrooms, sponsored by the University or by a University-recognized organization. This Policy does not provide for the adjudication of misconduct by, discipline of, or imposition of sanctions on CU faculty, staff or students for exhibiting Concerning Behaviors. Such action may, however, be taken pursuant to the applicable University policy or procedure, e.g. Student Code of Conduct (students) or University Policy Manual (faculty or staff).

C. Definition (s): Threat: A threat is defined as any behavior that suggests intent to harm self or others. Threats may be spoken, written, e-mailed, social media or expressed in some other way, such as through gestures. Threats can be made towards self, directly to the intended victim, communicated through third parties, or expressed in private writings. Possession of any item used as a weapon such as a firearm or knife on campus would be presumed to indicate a threat, unless determined otherwise by subsequent investigation.

D. Policy and Procedures(s): Cheyney University is committed to promoting a safe and secure work and learning environment. All employees, students and visitors are expected to treat students, employees, coworkers, supervisors, managers, and all other contacts at the university in a mature and civil way. Under no circumstance will violence, threatening behavior, unwanted pursuit or harassment be

tolerated. Such acts will be thoroughly investigated and appropriate actions taken, including disciplinary actions, suspension, expulsion, termination, and criminal charges. For the purpose of protecting the university populations, any threat, explicit or implied, will be considered a statement of intent. Therefore a person making a threat should have no expectation of privacy.

For the safety of the campus community any threat, explicit or implied, will be considered a statement of intent. The **Threat Assessment Team** will recommend actions to the appropriate Vice President(s) in order to protect the student, employee, and University community. This Team has been established to:

- Respond to circumstances of violence, threatening behavior, unwanted pursuit, or harassment;
- Investigate the situation and recommend appropriate actions including suspension, expulsion, termination of employment, filing of criminal charges, or ongoing monitoring for follow-up and observation of behavior patterns;
- Respond quickly to behavior indicating a student, faculty, or staff member poses a risk to self or others;

The CU Threat Assessment Team is a group of individuals that represent a cross section of the University community.

The group is directed by the Chief of Police, who has been trained extensively in Threat Assessment from the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Municipal Police Officers' Education and Training Commission.

CU THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM MEMBERS:

TITLE	PHONE
VP Finance & Administration	610-399-2131
VP Student Affairs	610-399-2430
Chief of Staff	610-399-2430
CU Detective Division	610-399-2405
CU Clergy Compliance	610-399-2188
Facilities Director	610-399-2502
Director, Telecommunications & Media Services	610-399-2418
Wellness Specialist or Director, Guidance and Counseling Center	610-399-2428
Residence Life Director	610-399-2428

Contact

The threat assessment team can be contacted 24 hours a day 365 days a year by calling the Cheyney Police Department at 610-399-2405. The Cheyney Police Dispatcher will immediately pass this information on to the Chief of Police who will investigate the threat with the Detective Division and report the threat to the Executive Assistant to the President. A redundant notification system is in place to ensure that the system does not fail in the absence of one or more team members.

Response

Upon receipt of a valid threat the Threat Assessment Team will meet and discuss the threat and determine appropriate steps towards resolution. During this phase the team will address the need for investigative interviews, assistance from experts, etc.

The goal of the team is to take steps to de-escalate the situation and remove violence as an alternative from the individual or group responsible for the threat. Action steps are developed by the Threat Assessment Team as a means to address a reported incident.

Action steps may include:

- Referral to mental health agencies
- Removal from the campus community
- Referral to behavioral modification counseling
- Restrictions on communications with individuals
- Communications regarding the actions
- Monitoring the situation without taking actions

Reporting a Threat – What to Expect

Upon reporting a possible threat you will be contacted by the special investigator. The investigator will conduct an interview with the reporting person and any persons that may have additional information related to the threat. Once action steps have been developed the reporting person will be briefed by a representative of the team.

What NOT to Expect

In order for the threat assessment team to make informed decisions they must be able review confidential information. This information will not be shared with the reporting person or others in the workplace. (Photos, Medical Records, etc.)

In dealing with privacy issues of the individual it is difficult for the Threat Assessment Team to disclose certain information. The team will make every effort possible to meet and discuss relevant issues with the reporting person or area. However there will be a point of disconnect with regards to information sharing. Therefore you should report all behavior that raises concerns.

Warning Signs

These warning signs may be evident in combination or individually. If you observe any of these warning signs contact the Department of Public Safety.

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| • Social withdrawal | • History of discipline problems |
| • Excessive feelings of isolation or rejection | • Past history of violent and aggressive behavior |
| • Being a victim of violence | • Drug use and alcohol use |
| • Feelings of being picked on and persecuted | • Affiliation with gangs |
| • Uncontrolled anger | • Inappropriate access to, possession of, and use of firearms |
| • Impulsive and chronic hitting, intimidating, bullying | • Intolerance for differences, prejudicial attitudes |
| • Expression of violence in writings and drawings | • Serious threats of violence |

The Administration reserves the right to determine if particular actions are considered violence, threatening behavior, unwanted pursuit or harassment.

Examples include, but are not limited to:

Repeated abusive or profane language
Ominous obsession with violent themes
Allusions to violence against self or others
Fighting or assault
Aggression, intimidation, or hostile behavior
Persistent inappropriate anger or conflict
Dangerous pranks or aggressive horseplay
Sexual harassment, stalking or unwanted pursuit
Possession of firearms or other weapons on University property or at university sponsored events is strictly prohibited unless specifically authorized under the Cheyney University Firearms, Weapons and Dangerous Devices Policy.

Students and Employees sometimes experience personal situations of domestic violence that may adversely affect the safety and security of the university. Students and employees who are aware of such situations must report them to their Residence Life Advisor, Faculty Advisor, Supervisor, Manager or the Cheyney Police Department.

All threat related information shall be forwarded to the Chief of Police of the Cheyney Police Department or in an emergency the Cheyney Police Dispatch Center. The Chief of Police or designee will convene the available Threat Assessment Team members upon receipt of threat.

When information is received about a possible threat, the information will be investigated and a probability will be identified. It is understood that no one can assess a possible threat with 100 percent accuracy. The investigation and probabilities will be determined by the Threat Assessment Team. The Threat Assessment Team will consist of the members with expertise in human resources and employee assistance programming, medical background, law enforcement and threat assessment, law enforcement tactical applications, psychology or counseling or writing interpretations, physical plant, and student concerns. Other individuals may be consulted as needed.

The following list of criteria, originally presented in Appendix M of the Virginia Tech Review Panel report, may be used when assessing threat information.

Anger problems
Fascination with weapons and accoutrements
Boasting and practicing of fighting and combat proficiency
Loner personality
Suicidal ideation Homicidal ideation
Stalking behavior Non-compliance and disciplinary problems
Imitation of other murderers Interest in previous shooting situations
Victim/martyr self-concept
Strangeness and aberrant behavior

Paranoia thoughts
Violence and cruelty
Inappropriate affect
Acting out
Police contact Mental health history related to dangerousness
Expressionless face/anhedonia
Unusual interest in police, military, terrorist activities and materials
Use of alcohol/drugs

It is every student, employee and visitor's responsibility to immediately report any situation that could possibly result in harm to anyone at the university. Any student, employee or visitor may become aware of troubling persons or situations that cause serious anxiety, stress or fear. Students, Employees and Visitors should report such situations immediately to their Residence Life Advisor, Faculty Advisor, Supervisor, Manager or Chief of Police or Cheyney Police Department.

It is understood that Residence Life Advisors, Faculty Advisors, Supervisors and Managers rarely encounter violent, threatening or alarming situations at the university, and they are not expected to be experts in responding to such issues reported to them. Instead they should immediately report the information to the Chief of Police or in emergency the Cheyney Police Dispatch Center.