

**WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
EXECUTIVE POLICY MANUAL**

Executive Policy #42
Approved March 7, 2022

Policy on Threat Assessment

POLICY

The University's Threat Assessment Team (TAT) identifies, assesses, and addresses threats to Washington State University's (WSU) community and property. The TAT coordinates with University stakeholders to receive and assess information of potential threats. Further, the TAT recommends University action regarding safety and security matters to the appropriate University decision makers, consistent with carrying out the University's mission and goals.

THREAT ASSESSMENT TEAM (TAT)

Purpose

The TAT is a multidisciplinary team that is tasked with promoting a safe and secure environment for faculty, staff, students, and visitors to the University campuses. The TAT reviews and evaluates information regarding concerns or issues involving perceived threats to WSU community or its property. The TAT works with any appropriate University departments, law enforcement, mental health agencies, and other third parties to assess situations and recommend appropriate interventions.

The TAT receives and assesses reports of threats and other concerning behavior reportedly carried out by students, employees of the University, or by others who may impact the safety of the WSU community. The TAT is designed to work quickly and efficiently with the best information available at the time of the concern.

Anyone may submit a report of instances of distressing, disruptive, or dangerous behavior to the TAT. The TAT is not a substitute for police or emergency involvement. Persons witnessing or engaged in an emergency situation should call 911. The TAT is not a disciplinary body.

Composition

The TAT has a co-chair model leadership comprised of the Associate Vice President and Executive Director of Public Safety and the Dean of Students. The co-chairs are responsible for:

- Convening meetings;
- Leading threat management methodology;
- Leading team-training efforts;
- Continuing education in the threat assessment field;
- Record keeping;

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TAT Composition (cont.)

- Liaising with reporting parties and WSU Executive leadership; and
- Iteratively evaluating the TAT core membership for:
 - Subject matter expertise,
 - Organizational structural representation, and
 - Attendance.

Additional representatives include administrators in leadership positions from the following areas, subject to change by the co-chairs:

- Human Resource Services
- Emergency Management
- Campus safety and security departments throughout the WSU system
- Student Affairs departments throughout the WSU system
- Academic Affairs
- Counseling and Psychological Services

Other individuals, including those participating on an advisory basis, are asked to participate at the discretion of the co-chairs. A representative from the WSU Division of the Office of the Attorney General must be present at each meeting to provide legal advice. Any Attorney General representative must receive full ongoing threat assessment training.

TAT Responsibilities and Authority

The TAT has responsibility and authority for the following:

- Conducting regular meetings and conferring on an as-needed and urgent basis to assess and recommend mitigating strategies for threats of potential violence;
- Acting as a liaison and additional resource to campus units engaged in the process of assessing and managing behavioral risks or threats;
- Developing policy recommendations and guidance regarding behavioral threat assessment management for the WSU community based on individualized review;

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TAT Responsibilities and Authority (cont.)

- Coordinating behavioral threat-related training and public awareness campaigns to ensure consistency and continuity in threat assessment and incident management protocols and messaging;
- Notifying appropriate WSU leadership of threats to the WSU community or property when necessary; and
- Maintaining records of TAT activities consistent with WSU policy.

THREAT ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

The TAT utilizes tools and methods recognized in the field for assessment of individual cases and situations. The use of a particular tool or method is at the discretion of the co-chairs, with input from the TAT membership. Tools used by the TAT are written with non-clinical users in mind and include psychological, behavioral, historical, and situational factors associated with organizational violence, (e.g., preoccupation with violence, threats, irrational thinking, substance abuse, history of violence or criminality, extreme moods).

The result of the assessment is used to help determine recommendations for decisions makers in each case. Threat assessment is about behavior, not profiles. Contact the TAT for information related to a specific tool used to conduct an assessment.

Threat Assessment Areas of Focus

Threat assessment areas of focus include, but are not limited to:

- Violent behavior that creates reasonable fear of physical harm;
- Physical attacks, domestic or relationship violence, sexual assault, intimidation, property damage (especially if such behaviors are driven by anger or other heightened emotions);
- Threats, both direct and indirect, stalking, fixation (on a person or cause), harassment, presence of protective orders;
- Troubling preoccupation with weapons or the presence of weapons on or near campus;
- Homicidal thoughts, plans, or intent;
- Paranoia or other psychological distress, inappropriate outbursts or anger;
- Substance abuse, particularly if accompanied by violence or misconduct; or
- Suicidal thoughts, plans, or intent.

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ASSISTANCE

For assistance, contact:

- Office of the Dean of Students; telephone 509-335-5757; e-mail deanofstudents@wsu.edu
- Human Resource Services; telephone 509-335-4521; e-mail hrs@wsu.edu
- Campus safety and security departments:
 - WSU Everett Campus Safety Officer; telephone 425-315-4014; website: everett.wsu.edu/campus-safety/
 - WSU Pullman Police Department; telephone 509-335-8548, e-mail police@wsu.edu
 - WSU Spokane Campus Security; telephone 509-358-7995; e-mail rpsecurity@wsu.edu
 - WSU Tri-Cities Campus Safety and Security; telephone 509-372-7234; website: tricity.wsu.edu/emergency/
 - WSU Vancouver Public Safety and Police; telephone 360-546-9001; e-mail wsuvcops@wsu.edu; websites:
vancouver.wsu.edu/public-safety
vancouver.wsu.edu/public-safety/campus-police