

SAP 08.99.99.T0.01 Responding to Reports of Bullying



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Procedure Statement

Tarleton State University (Tarleton) is committed to maintaining a working, learning, and social environment in which the rights and dignity of all the staff, faculty, and students of the university community are respected. Tarleton prohibits behaviors that rise to the level of bullying. Complaints of bullying will be dealt with and resolved in an effort to eliminate and prevent all forms of bullying.

Reason for Procedure

This procedure defines the conditions and actions considered bullying and the process for responding to bullying.

Procedures and Responsibilities

1. General Discussion

- 1.1 Bullying may be intentional or unintentional; however, when an allegation of bullying is made, the intention of the alleged bully is irrelevant and will not be given consideration when meting out discipline. As in sexual harassment, it is the effect of the behavior on the individual that is important.
- 1.2 Bullying of any sort (physical, verbal, gesture, cyber, institutional, mobbing, or exclusion) will not be tolerated and is strictly prohibited.
- 1.3 Disciplinary action or other sanctions may be imposed for confirmed instances of bullying.
- 1.4 The following are examples of actions that may constitute or contribute to evidence of bullying:
 - 1.4.1 Verbal and non-verbal communication
 - Abusive and offensive language

- Personal insults and use of offensive nicknames
- Teasing
- Spreading rumor and innuendo
- Unreasonable criticism
- Trivializing of work and achievements
- Verbal or obscene gestures

1.4.2 Manipulating the work or academic environment

- Isolating people from normal work interaction
- Excessive or unreasonable demands
- Setting impossible deadlines
- Taking credit for another person's ideas
- Refusing reasonable requests for leave in the absence of work-related reasons not grant leave
- Deliberately interfering with mail and other communications
- Inflicting menial tasks not in keeping with the normal responsibilities of the job
- Interferes with a student's education or substantially disrupts the operation of a school

1.4.3 Psychological manipulation

- Unfairly blaming for mistakes
- Setting people up for failure
- Deliberate exclusion
- Excessive supervision
- Practical jokes
- Belittling or disregarding opinions or suggestions
- Criticizing in public
- Exploitation of an imbalance of power between the perpetrator and the victim

1.4.4 Physical

- Unwanted physical contact
- Physical abuse or threats of abuse to an individual or an individual's property

1.5 Retaliation against any person, including a victim, witness, or another person, who in good faith provides information concerning an incident of bullying is prohibited. However, malicious or false reporting of acts of bullying will be subject to disciplinary actions.

1.6 Individuals witnessing acts of bullying are required to report the incident as soon as possible.

1.6.1 An individual who purposefully ignores a bullying situation or witnesses a bullying event and does not take appropriate actions may be subject to

disciplinary action.

- 1.7 Individuals subjected to bullying should remove themselves from any threat and report the incident as soon as possible.
- 1.8 Counseling for a victim of bullying is available for students through the Student Counseling Center and for employees through the Employee Assistance Program.

2. Procedures for Reporting

2.1. Reporting Violations by Employees, Contractors, or Vendors

- 2.1.1. Complaints of bullying should be immediately reported to Employee Services.
- 2.1.2. Employee Services will determine at what level the complaint will be investigated and any corrective action that should be administered.

2.2. Reporting Student Violations

- 2.2.1. Complaints of bullying should be immediately reported to the University Police Department, Residential Living and Learning, Judicial Affairs, or the camp director.
- 2.2.2. Immediate intervention strategies for protecting the victim from additional bullying or retaliation should be identified and implemented.
- 2.2.3. Complaints against students will be promptly investigated as directed by the Office of Judicial Affairs.
- 2.2.4. Complaints involving university employees, contractors, or vendors will be forwarded to Employee Services for investigation and corrective actions.

2.3 Any reports of bullying should also be forwarded to the Title IX and Clery Compliance Coordinator.

2.4 Investigations of complaints of bullying will be done in accordance with System Regulation 08.01.01, System Regulation 32.01.01, or System Regulation 32.01.02, and all supporting Tarleton State University procedures as appropriate.

2.5 Retaliation for reporting an incident of bullying or participating in an investigation is cause for a separate complaint and should be filed in the same manner as the described above.

Related Statutes, Policies, or Requirements

[Texas Education Code Chapter 37, *Bullying Prevention Policies and Procedures*](#)
[Department of Education Office of Civil Rights, *Dear Colleague Letter of October 26, 2010*](#)
[System Regulation 08.01.01, *Civil Rights Compliance*](#)
[System Policy 13.02, *Student Rights and Obligations*](#)
[System Policy 32.01, *Employee Complaint and Appeal Procedures*](#)

Definitions

Bullying – repeated, unreasonable actions of individuals directed toward an individual which are intended to intimidate, degrade, humiliate, or undermine, or which create a risk to the health or safety of the targeted individual; an imbalance of power or strength which may be in the form or verbal, social, or physical acts.

Cyber-bullying – is bullying that takes place using electronic technology, including devices and equipment such as cell phones, computers, or any digital device that is capable of sending text or images that are intended for the sole purpose of hurting or embarrassing another individual.

Gesture bullying – nonverbal threatening gestures; glances that can convey threatening messages.

Physical bullying – pushing, shoving, kicking, poking, tripping, assault or threat of physical assault; damage to a person’s work area or property.

Verbal bullying – slandering, ridiculing, or maligning a person or his or her family; persistent name calling that is hurtful, insulting, or humiliating; using a person as butt of jokes; abusive and offensive remarks.

Institutional bullying – placing unreasonable expectations on employees for the purpose of making life unpleasant for (or dismissing) anyone who objects; ignoring or denying potential work related causes of stress when reported or known; encouraging employee to fabricate complaints about colleagues with promises of promotion or threats of discipline.

Mobbing – a particular type of bullying carried out by a group rather than by an individual; bullying or social isolation of a person through collective unjustified accusations, humiliation, general harassment, or emotional abuse.

Harassment – offensive and unwelcome conduct, serious enough to adversely affect the individual, which occurs because of the person’s protected class.

Exclusion – socially or physically excluding or disregarding a person in work or academic related activities.

Contact Office

Employee Services
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