

SOUTHWEST TENNESSEE COMMUNITY COLLEGE**SUBJECT: Prevention of Workplace Violence****EFFECTIVE DATE: May 2, 2001; Revised April 28, 2023****Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to set forth the intention of Southwest Tennessee Community College (“Southwest” or “the College”) to provide all employees with a workplace free from physical violence, threats, and intimidation.

Definitions

Violence or threats- Acts or threats of aggression, including but not limited to, gestures, oral expressions, and written words that:

- create fear of bodily harm;
- cause or can cause death or bodily injury;
- threaten the safety of a co-worker, student or member of the public; or
- damage property.

Acts and threats of violence- Include, but are not limited to the following: verbal (such as threats, harassment, abuse or intimidation), nonverbal (such as gestures and intimidation), written communication (such as notes, e-mail), physical (such as hitting, pushing, shoving, kicking, touching and assault), and other (such as arson, sabotage, vandalism and stalking).

Employee- For purposes of this policy, individuals who receive a payroll check from Southwest.

Reasonable Suspicion- The degree of knowledge sufficient to cause an ordinarily prudent and cautious person to believe that the circumstances being presented are more likely to be true than not. Reasonable suspicion must be based on an articulable, specific and objective basis and may include direct observation or information received from a source believed to be reliable.

Workplace or Work Site- All real property owned or occupied by Southwest, College vehicles, and personal vehicles when being used to perform College business.

Policy

- I. Commitment to a Safe and Healthy Workplace

- A. Southwest seeks to provide a safe, healthy, and secure work environment for its employees.
- B. The College expects its employees to maintain a high level of productivity and efficiency.
- C. The use of violence or threats of violence in the workplace are inconsistent with these objectives. Southwest expects all employees to report to the work site and perform their duties in a safe and productive manner, without violence or threats of violence toward any individual. Violence, threats, or intimidation toward any individual will not be tolerated.
- D. Southwest's Code of Conduct policy, [5:00:00:00/41](#) as well as Tennessee Board of Regent's (TBR) Policy [7.01.00.00](#), Firearms and Other Weapons, controls the possession and use of weapons on property owned or controlled by the College. To the extent that this policy conflicts with the provisions of TBR's policy, that policy controls.

II. Applicability

- A. The provisions of this policy apply to all Southwest employees and to all work sites owned or occupied by the College.
- B. This policy also applies to any employee conduct, on or off the work site, that creates a substantial threat to people or property within the College community.

III. Implementation

- A. It is the responsibility of the Human Resources department to ensure that all employees are informed about this policy. This policy shall be posted on the College's website within the policy manual and copies are available to each new employee.
- B. Employees who witness violence or threats of violence must immediately report such conduct to the College's department of Police Services/Public Safety, appropriate supervisor, and the Human Resources Office.
- C. Employees who are victims of violence or threats of violence in the workplace are encouraged to report such conduct to the College's department of Police Services/Public Safety, appropriate supervisor, and the Human Resources Office.

IV. Prohibited Activities

- A. Southwest specifically prohibits the following:

1. Possessing, storing, or using a weapon in violation of Southwest's Code of Conduct policy, [5:00:00:00/41](#) as well as Tennessee Board of Regent's (TBR) Policy [7.01.00.00](#), Firearms and Other Weapons.
 2. Refusing to submit to an inspection for the presence of a prohibited weapon based on reasonable suspicion.
 3. Refusing to allow inspection of personal storage areas based on a reasonable suspicion that a prohibited weapon or weapons will be found in such area.
 4. Conviction under any criminal statute for the illegal use or possession of a weapon or for committing a violent act against the person or property of another.
 5. Refusing to cooperate in an investigation about allegations or suspicion that violence or threats of violence have or is likely to occur, or an investigation about the possession of a prohibited weapon by the employee or a co-employee.
 6. Engaging in violence or threats of violence.
 7. Repeated verbal abuse in the workplace, including derogatory remarks, insults, and epithets.
 8. Verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a threatening, intimidating, or humiliating nature in the workplace.
- B. An employee who engages in any of these prohibited activities will be subject to discipline up to and including termination.

V. Permissible Activities

The-following activities do not violate this policy:

1. Disciplinary procedures conducted in accordance with Southwest or TBR policies and guidelines;
2. Routine coaching and counseling, including feedback about and correction of work performance;
3. Reasonable work assignments, including shift, post, and overtime assignments;
4. Individual differences in style or personal expression that are otherwise legally permissible.
5. Passionate, loud expression with no intent to harm others and that are otherwise legally permissible;

