



# Procedure CO-CS-PR15 Threat Assessment Management

Dates Effective: February 13, 2020

Responsible Officer: Vice President for Administration and Campus Operations

Sponsoring Department: Administration and Campus Operations

Errors or changes to: Office of Legal Affairs

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## Objective

“Reliably predicting any type of violence is extremely difficult<sup>1</sup>, but The University of Texas at Arlington (UTA) endeavors to promote a safe and secure environment in which to learn and work by recognizing warning signs, intervening and preventing, mitigating, alleviating, and prohibiting threats and acts of violence by or against members of the University community. The Threat Assessment Management Team (TAMT) works collaboratively with the campus community and others as needed to maintain awareness of behaviors that may indicate a possible determination to cause harm.

## Rationale

UTA prohibits threats and acts of violence on University property and within University facilities. In addition, UTA prohibits threats or acts of violence at any University-sponsored event; while engaged in University business, educational or athletic activities; and while traveling in university owned or leased vehicles. UTA will also evaluate and take necessary corrective action for any conduct that occurs off-duty or outside the above-listed activities, when that conduct may impact an employee's or student's work or educational environment.

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<sup>1</sup> The School Shooter: A Threat Assessment Perspective, Mary Ellen O'Toole, PhD, FBI Supervisory Special Agent Federal Bureau of Investigation Critical Incident Response Group (CIRG) National Center for the Analysis of Violent Crime (NCAVC) FBI Academy Quantico, Virginia 22135, found at <https://www.fbi.gov/file-repository/stats-services-publications-school-shooter-school-shooter>.

## Scope

This procedure applies to all members of the UTA community.

## Responsibilities

### Campus Community

- Report behavior out of context that may indicate an intent to cause harm.
- Seek assistance from available resources if needed.
- Report any emergency situation to 911 and to the UTA Police Department emergency number (campus extension 2-3003) before notifying the TAMT.

### Threat Assessment Management Team

- Receives and assesses reports of behavior indicating threats or possible threats of harm.
- Convenes to assess reports and identify appropriate responses.
- Ensures confidentiality in all communications.
- Maintains appropriate and necessary documentation.
- Oversees implementation of action plans in response to incidents.
- Monitors situations to prevent and mitigate harm.
- Provides training and accessible information for the campus community

## Procedures

### I. Threat Assessment Management Team (TAMT)

Behaviors of concern should be brought to the TAMT's attention by the campus community. The TAMT will assess and then address the threat through monitoring and/or intervention, depending on the results of the initial assessment. This is not necessarily a linear process. Each step - identification and communication of behaviors; assessing; intervening; and monitoring - may raise complex issues and possible responses. The steps can be taken sequentially or divided up by TAMT members and handled concurrently. Information gathered in the inquiry process should be brought back to the TAMT as it is gathered, both to keep the TAMT informed about current information and prepared if new information suggests a change in direction or response.

## II. Reports of Threats and Possible Threats

Any UTA community member who becomes aware of information that suggests a potential risk of violence should, as soon as possible, report that information to the TAMT and to any appropriate University department. The UTA Police Department should be contacted when necessary to address an imminent threat and to further investigate the matter.

### What Constitutes a Threat?

Threats are communications, concerning behaviors or other indications of possible intent to harm others or oneself or to disrupt the general safety and security of the campus. Threats can be communicated directly or indirectly to an intended target or to third parties. They may also be expressed in private or public statements, e.g., in journals or on social media. Triggers for incidents may include personal relationships, academic performance, workplace issues, and individual stressors.

- Cases may be referred to the TAMT by the Behavior Intervention Team (BIT). The BIT serves as a resource for faculty, staff, and students to address the needs of students who are experiencing significant behavioral disturbances. The BIT uses the NaBITA Threat Assessment Tool to determine the level of a potential threat and will refer any case with a score of 6 or higher to the TAMT. These cases will all be student based.
- Referrals may also come from Human Resources, the Office of the Provost, the Police Department, and other departments such as Housing, UTA maintenance, janitorial, and dining services staff, fraternities and sororities, Multicultural Affairs, the Parent and Family Center, Office of Disabilities, etc.

## III. Meetings

The TAMT convenes to discuss potential threats to, or by, a member of the UTA community (including students, faculty, staff, guests, and visitors), whether the behavior is reported to a member of the TAMT, or a member of the TAMT observes the behavior firsthand. Once the TAMT is assembled, next steps will depend on the severity of the behavior and the threat level.

The TAMT will hold regular meetings each quarter, and these meetings will be scheduled by the Chair of the TAMT ("Chair") at the beginning of each new fiscal year (in advance) for the next twelve-month period.

In the event of a reported threat, the Chair may call an emergency meeting to be held in person, by phone, or correspond by email. For privacy concerns, email should be kept to a minimum.

## IV. Assessment and Management

- A. The TAMT receives reports regarding members of the University community, or others, whose behavior (and circumstances) may be a threat to themselves or other members of the University community. TAMT members evaluate the legitimacy of concerns reported and assess the likelihood that the individual in question may pose a serious threat to him/herself or others, or may pose a significant disruption. Cases referred to the TAMT will be assessed using the MOSAIC threat assessment system. Steps in the assessment and management process include the following:

### 1. Identify the Threat:

Identify an individual(s) who has engaged in behaviors that have raised serious concern regarding the individual's well-being, stability, and/or potential for violence, suicide or other self-harm.

- If an immediate threat is perceived, the TAMT will initiate direct intervention by the UTA Police and include necessary supervisory or other personnel for assessment and support.
- If an immediate threat is not perceived and there is continued concern for the individual's welfare or behavior, the Chair will mobilize the TAMT to further assess and manage the situation.
- As part of the TAMT's communication and training responsibilities to the larger community, behavioral threats that constitute or require immediate action, and as such are considered emergencies, will require immediate notification to either the local police (911) or to the UTA Police Department ("UTAPD") (campus extension 2-3003) if on campus.
- Emergency Notifications or Timely Warnings will be issued as appropriate and in accordance with the Clery Act.

### 2. [Perform an Initial Evaluation of the Seriousness of the Threat:](#)

When the TAMT convenes, they will use the MOSAIC tool to assess current circumstances and develop "next steps". If the MOSAIC assessment tool results in a score of 6 or lower, the case will continue to be monitored by UTAPD. If the score is 7 or higher, the case will be handled by the TAMT as a threat. All applicable laws, regulations and policies will be considered in the determination of any action to be taken, including disability laws, state tort law affecting negligence standards, notice of risk and duty of care, etc. Evaluation steps may include:

- a. Review Documentation and Develop Responses

- Review incident reports and relevant documentation.
  - Discuss community impact and how to manage internal and external constituencies.
  - Define issues of rights and compliance.
  - Initiate background check if necessary.
- b. Ask Questions, including, but not limited to:
- Has there been any mention of suicidal thoughts, plans, or attempts?
  - Has there been any mention of thoughts or plans of violence?
  - Have there been any communications suggesting ideas or an intent to attack?
  - Have there been any behaviors that cause concern for violence or an individual's well-being?
  - Does the person have access to weapons or has s/he attempted to gain access to weapons?
  - Are there behaviors which are significantly disruptive to the campus environment?
  - Is the individual demonstrating signs of hopelessness, desperation, or despair?
  - Does the person have a history of similar behavior?
  - Has the person demonstrated a sudden change in demeanor or mood?
- c. If the answer is yes to any of the above questions, then additional research, action, and support will be needed (see next step d.) If not, the assessment will be assigned a priority and acted upon accordingly. See step IV.A.3.
- d. The TAMT will conduct a full review and inquiry including gathering additional information from relevant sources, e.g. Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT), faculty members, coaches, judicial records, incident reports, human resources information, police department, and information from family members and coworkers.

- e. Gather answers to the following questions and others as relevant and applicable:
  - Have there been any communications suggesting ideas/intent to attack?
  - Is individual experiencing hopelessness, desperation or despair?
  - Does individual have at least one trusting relationship/source of social support?
  - What circumstances are likely to mitigate/aggravate the situation/risk?
  - What are the individual's goals/motives?
  - Has the individual shown any inappropriate interest in weapons, mass violence, stalking?
  - Has the individual engaged in any attack-related behaviors, such as planning, practicing?
  - Does the individual have the capacity to act?
  - Does the individual see violence/self-harm as an acceptable way to solve problems?
  - Are the individual's story and actions consistent?
3. Respond and Prioritize: Intervene to Reduce the Risk of Violence
  - a. Make a formal assessment and assign a priority level in accordance with MOSAIC.

## **V. Monitoring**

The TAMT will develop and implement a plan to monitor the identified individual according to the priority level. The TAMT will assign responsibilities and set a schedule for follow-up. Depending on the assessment, the TAMT may offer a recommendation that the individual be suspended, depending on student/employee status, a medical withdrawal may be permitted or the individual may be placed on leave. The TAMT will monitor and reevaluate the strategies employed during and after the intervention and management action has been completed.

## **VI. Documentation**

The TAMT will document all reports, actions, referrals, and reevaluation. In accordance with Texas law, TAMT meetings are closed meetings and all documents



recorded in or compiled for use in any TAMT meeting will be exempt from disclosure to the maximum extent allowed under the Texas Public Information Act, FERPA, and any other applicable laws. Maxiant software will be used for case management. The Dean of Students or designee will maintain and update case records and assign. The Office of Legal Affairs will be the custodian for any such documents / reports produced or other information retained, and will be managed confidentially in accordance with the University's State-mandated record retention policy.

## **VII. Education and Training**

UTA will use a variety of strategies to educate members of the University community; identify, prevent and provide consequences for threats and acts of violence; and mitigate the effects of threats and acts of violence

### **Definitions**

N/A

### **Relevant Federal and State Statutes**

N/A

### **Relevant UT System and UTA Policies, Procedures, and Forms**

N/A

### **Contact Information**

Questions and comments about this procedure should be directed to the Office of the Vice President of Administration and Campus Operations, (817) 272-2102.