Threat Assessment, Behavioral Intervention, and Suicide Prevention

UNIVERSITY POLICY #124

Authority: W. Va. Code § 18B-1B-7
Approval Date: April 21, 2025
Effective Date: April 21, 2025
Revision History: None
President's Signature: On File

SECTION 1: Purpose and Scope

1.1 The purpose of this policy is to ensure the safety and well-being of the West Liberty University community by providing a comprehensive framework for threat assessment, behavioral intervention, and suicide prevention. This policy is aligned with W. Va. Code § 18B-1B-7 and mirrors best practices in higher education for identifying, assessing, and managing individuals who may pose a threat to themselves or others.

1.2 This policy applies to all students, faculty, and staff at West Liberty University. It outlines the procedures for reporting concerning behaviors, conducting threat assessments, and implementing interventions related to mental health crises, including suicide prevention and postvention.

SECTION 2: Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT)

2.1 West Liberty University's Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT) is composed of representatives from the following offices:

2.1.1 Counseling Services

2.1.2 Campus Police

2.1.3 Student Affairs

2.1.4 Student Health Services

2.1.5 Academic Affairs

2.1.6 Athletics

2.1.7 General Counsel (if applicable).

2.2 The Behavioral Intervention Team is a group of campus professionals who assess and manage those referred for behaviors of concern such as potential violence, safety, or mental health issues. A core function of the BIT is threat assessment and early

intervention, with the hope of prevention. The BIT offers a structured positive method for appropriately dealing with problem student behaviors impacting the West Liberty University (WLU) community.

SECTION 3: Behavioral Intervention Procedures

3.1 Upon receiving a report of concerning behavior, BIT will:

3.1.1 Conduct a thorough assessment, considering behavioral patterns, threats, and any indications of distress;

3.1.2 Coordinate an appropriate response that may include mental health referrals, security interventions, or disciplinary action; and

3.1.3 Ensure that the individual receives timely support and follow-up from appropriate campus services.

SECTION 4: Suicide Prevention and Mental Health Resources

4.1 West Liberty University will:

4.1.1 Provide readily accessible mental health counseling services for students in crisis through the counseling center and BetterMynd;

4.1.2 Offer suicide prevention training and resources to faculty, staff, and students, including information on how to recognize warning signs and how to intervene; and

4.1.3 Collaborate with external agencies for suicide prevention education and crisis response.

SECTION 5: Reporting Mechanism

5.1 The university will maintain confidential and accessible avenues for reporting concerns, including anonymous reporting options. Students, staff, and faculty are encouraged to report behaviors of concern that may indicate a threat to safety or mental health issues.

SECTION 6: Training and Awareness

6.1 To promote early identification and intervention:

6.1.1 Annual training will be provided for faculty, staff, and student leaders on recognizing and responding to concerning behaviors; and

6.1.2 Suicide prevention and mental health awareness programs will be implemented throughout the academic year.

SECTION 7: Emergency Response and Intervention

7.1 In the event of an imminent threat:

7.1.1 Campus police will take immediate steps to secure the safety of all individuals involved; and

7.1.2 BIT and CIRT will coordinate with law enforcement and medical professionals to manage the situation.

SECTION 8: Postvention

8.1 Postvention is the provision of psychological support, crisis intervention and other forms of assistance to those affected by a campus suicide. Postvention leaders (Director of Counseling Services and Vice President of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management) will organize implementation efforts of the postvention protocol including but not limited to communication, notification, psychological support, and provide resources to family, effected individuals and campuswide.

SECTION 9: Confidentiality and Compliance

9.1 All activities under this policy will be conducted in compliance with applicable laws and regulations, including FERPA and HIPAA, to protect the privacy of individuals.

SECTION 10: Policy Review

10.1 This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure its effectiveness and alignment with current best practices. Updates will be made as necessary to reflect any changes in state law or university needs.