

# University Policy 3002: Respectful Workplace

**Category:** Human Resources

**Sub Category:** Rights & Responsibilities

**Covered Individuals:** All Employees

**Responsible Executive:** Vice President for Finance and Administrative Services

**Policy Custodian:** Office of Human Resources, Associate Vice President of Human Resources

**Last Revised:** 2022/06/23

**Previous USU Policy Number:** Not applicable

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## 3002.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Utah State University (USU) is committed to maintaining a work environment that encourages mutual respect and facilitates collegial relationships. To build and promote trust, all USU [employees](#) are collectively responsible to set a positive example and to avoid behaving disrespectfully, including bullying, or any other behavior that would reasonably offend, intimidate, embarrass, or humiliate others, whether deliberately or unintentionally.

## 3002.2 POLICY

[University-related interactions](#) should be conducted with courtesy, civility, decency, and a concern for personal dignity. Disrespectful behavior and/or [abusive conduct](#) will not be tolerated. Expectations include but are not limited to, using professional language, not recording interactions without all parties' consent, and not providing unrelated third parties unauthorized access to university and/or employee information (see USU Policy 3004: Employee Privacy and Confidentiality and Policy 3016: Information Privacy for more information).

All employees are expected to complete training on preventing abusive conduct in the workplace at least annually. Employees violating this policy are subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment per USU Policy 3001: Setting Expectations and Managing Performance, USU Policy 4006: Academic Due Process: Sanctions and Hearing Procedures, or USU Policy 3305: Employment at Will, as applicable.

For issues regarding sexual harassment, please refer to USU Policy 2102: Sexual Harassment. For issues regarding discrimination, please refer to USU Policy 2100: Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity.

This policy does not limit USU leadership's right to manage. Performance management, work assignment and evaluation, and disciplinary measures taken by USU for any valid reason do not constitute disrespectful behavior, abusive conduct, and/or bullying. Such management actions should be done in ways that are consistent with the intent and expectations of this respectful workplace policy.

## **2.1 Reporting and Resolution of Disrespectful Behavior and/or Abusive Conduct**

If an employee is subjected to and/or observes disrespectful or abusive conduct of another by an individual or group of individuals, the employee should first attempt to resolve concerns within their own area per USU Policy 3006: Staff Employee Grievance. This should be done by discussing their concerns or observations with their immediate [supervisor](#). Their immediate supervisor will then initiate a process to determine the nature and extent of the issue and initiate an effective resolution.

If an employee does not feel comfortable contacting their immediate supervisor, the employee may contact another level of management within their [reporting chain](#) or the Office of Human Resources, who will meet with the employee to discuss their concerns or observations. The Office of Human Resources will then initiate a review and collaborate with the appropriate leadership and employee(s) to initiate an effective resolution. Additionally, the Office of Human Resources may formally investigate allegations of abusive conduct to determine whether such conduct occurred. Parties and participants in such investigations shall treat information pertaining to the matter as confidential, subject to the rights and obligations of the party or participant. If the investigation reveals evidence of criminal conduct, the Office of Human Resources, in consultation with the Office of Legal Affairs, may refer the matter to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

At the conclusion of an abusive conduct investigation, the parties will be notified of any investigative findings and of the procedure to request an administrative review of the findings.

## **2.2 Administrative Review**

An employee that has been subject to an investigation under this policy may seek an administrative review of any investigative findings by written request to the Office of Human Resources within 10 calendar days of receiving notification of the investigative

findings. The Office of Human Resources will designate appropriate administrative review personnel, who shall not be the same individuals as those who personally conducted the investigation. The review personnel will determine within 30 days of receiving the administrative review request whether the investigative findings are reasonable, rational, and sufficiently supported by the evidence. This determination is not subject to further review.

## **3002.3 RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **3.1 Supervisors**

Supervisors have an obligation to set expectations in their areas to ensure a safe, collegial, and respectful workplace for all employees and address issues as they arise. If a supervisor becomes aware of a situation within their area that may violate this policy, the supervisor should take appropriate steps to resolve the problem on an informal basis. If [informal processes](#) are not adequate to address the situation, then [formal disciplinary action](#) should be utilized per USU Policy 3001: Setting Expectations and Managing Performance, which applies to benefited employees (non-faculty) and USU Policy 4006: Academic Due Process: Sanctions and Hearing Procedures (faculty). Supervisors should ensure that their employees complete training on the prevention of abusive conduct in the workplace at least annually.

### **3.2 Employees**

All employees have an obligation to promote and preserve the reputation of the university by demonstrating respect toward all members of the campus community, including students, faculty, and staff. Employees are responsible for responding to and reporting perceived disrespectful and/or abusive conduct in accordance with this policy. All employees are expected to complete training on the prevention of abusive conduct in the workplace at least annually.

### **3.3 Office of Human Resources**

The Office of Human Resources may investigate, make determinations, advise, assist, and/or mediate between employees and departments in resolving possible violations of the policy. The Office of Human Resources will offer all employees training on the prevention of abusive conduct in the workplace.

## **3002.4 REFERENCES**

- [H.B. 12 Abusive Conduct Reporting Amendments \(2020\)](#)

## **3002.5 RELATED USU POLICIES**

- [Policy 2100](#): Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity
- [Policy 3001](#): Setting Expectations and Managing Performance
- [Policy 3004](#): Employee Privacy and Confidentiality
- [Policy 3006](#): Staff Employee Grievance
- [Policy 2102](#): Title IX Sexual Misconduct in an Employment or Education Program or Activity
- [Policy 4006](#): Academic Due Process: Sanctions and Hearing Procedures
- [Policy 3016](#): Information Privacy

## **3002.6 DEFINITIONS**

### **6.1 Abusive Conduct**

Verbal, non-verbal, or physical conduct of one party to another that, based on its severity, nature, and frequency of occurrence, a reasonable person would determine that it: (A) is intended to cause intimidation, humiliation, or unwarranted distress; (B) results in substantial physical harm or substantial psychological harm as a result of intimidation, humiliation, or unwarranted distress; or (C) exploits an employee's known physical or psychological disability.

Bullying is one form of abusive conduct. It is conduct that seeks to harm, intimidate, coerce, persecute, or torment; often repeated or habitual.

### **6.2 Employee**

Any individual legally employed by Utah State University in any capacity.

### **6.3 Formal Disciplinary Action**

Action as set forth by USU Policy 3001: Setting Expectations and Managing Performance which applies to benefited employees (non-faculty) and Policy 4006: Academic Due Process: Sanctions and Hearing Procedures (faculty).

### **6.4 Informal Processes**

Any process that does not follow the formal disciplinary action(s) set forth by USU Policy 3001: Setting Expectations and Managing Performance, or USU Policy 4006: Academic Due

Process: Sanctions and Hearing Procedures (e.g. Performance Improvement Plan, Letter of Expectation).

## **6.5 Reporting Chain**

Levels of supervisory roles within a department or unit.

## **6.6 Supervisor**

A person employed by Utah State University who has hiring authority and/or holds a position that directly supervises an employee of Utah State University.

## **6.7 University Related Interactions**

Any job function that pertains to Utah State University.

**Information below is not included as part of the contents of the official Policy.** It is provided only as a convenience for readers/users and may be changed at any time by persons authorized by the President, subject to review by the USU Policy Committee.

# **RESOURCES**

## **Procedures**

- Please see 2.2 Administrative Review above.

## **Guidance**

- N/A

## **Related Forms and Tools**

- N/A

## **Contacts**

- Office of Human Resources Solution Center, [hr@usu.edu](mailto:hr@usu.edu), (435) 797-0122

# **POLICY HISTORY**

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