

**WEBSTER UNIVERSITY**  
**CAMPUS VIOLENCE AND WEAPONS POLICY**  
*Effective September 14, 2016*

**I. PURPOSE:**

Webster University seeks to provide for the safety of students, faculty, staff and visitors and our buildings and property by eliminating or reducing threats of violence in our Webster learning, living and working environments. The University is committed to maintaining learning, living and working environments free from dangerous weapons, violence and/or threats of violence.

**II. POLICY SCOPE**

This policy applies to all full-time and part-time students and employees of the University, all contract workers on University premises, and to all visitors to University locations. This worldwide policy includes all University campuses, all locations where University-sponsored events and activities occur and all on-line, skype and social media activity initiated by a student or employee of the University that may impact others in our University community.

**III. POLICY STATEMENT**

Possession of firearms or other dangerous weapons (as defined below) at any University location or at any University event is prohibited. This includes but is not limited to items stored in vehicles parked on any property owned, leased or maintained by the University. (This excludes Public Safety Officers only with regard to any specific equipment they are officially issued by the University in the normal course of carrying out their assigned duties and responsibilities.)

Students, faculty, staff and campus visitors who are members of the military and/or commissioned law enforcement officers and who are required by the military or their law enforcement employer to carry their weapons while in uniform may carry a weapon while on campus upon presenting to the campus director or, at the Webster Groves campus, to the Department of Public Safety, a copy of their government issued credentials and in the case of military personnel, orders necessitating the need to carry a firearm while on campus. Commissioned law enforcement personnel not wearing uniforms may carry weapons on campus so long as the weapon is concealed and not carried in a manner that would cause alarm to a reasonable person; they must also have their credentials with them at all times and readily identify themselves as a commissioned law enforcement officer. Likewise, with presentation of documentation substantiating the necessity of carrying weapons for their jobs, these individuals may be permitted to store such weapons in the secured storage areas on their vehicles while parked on campus or other University property. At no times should an individual be permitted to load or unload weapons while on campus.

Notwithstanding the above, the University recognizes that some individuals carry pepper spray or similar devices for personal protection when walking on or off-campus. This policy is not intended to prohibit the carrying of such items; however, the University expects that individuals will use good judgment in their use of display of such devices. The University prohibits the sale

of such devices on campus or by campus entities. Additionally, the University has the right to determine whether any such item is acceptable.

The university will not tolerate workplace violence or the threat of violence at its learning, living or working environments or other locations in which University activities are sponsored. This includes but is not limited to threatening, destructive or violent actions directed by or toward students, employees, visitors or University buildings, equipment or property.

A person who is found in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination (if an employee), dismissal (if a student) or removal and/or permanent bar from campus if a student, employee or visitor. Lesser sanctions may be considered depending upon the specific offense.

The Department of Public Safety (DPS) has overall responsibility for ensuring safety and a non-violent community for all of the University's constituencies. This is supplemented by the responsibility of each administrator and supervisor, and each individual member of the University's many constituencies and communities to observe University policies designed to establish and maintain safe and non-violent learning, living and working environments.

If an individual learns of or witnesses possession of or use of a dangerous weapon or learns of or witnesses a threat or any act of violence or any other conduct in violation of this policy, he/she is urged to immediately report it to the Department of Public Safety, Campus Director, Office of Student Affairs and/or Office of Human Resources or Division Executive. Instances of severe and immediate danger should be reported to the local authorities and the Department of Public Safety.

The University will respond promptly, positively and firmly to deal with reports of dangerous weapons and reports of threats and/or actual campus violence.

#### **IV. DEFINITIONS:**

**Webster learning, living and working environments** include any location throughout the world where Webster students engage in learning under the sponsorship of Webster University; living environments include Webster hosted residences for students engaged in learning with Webster University and working environments include any location in which a Webster employee is assigned to work for Webster University, for compensation or as a volunteer.

**Commissioned law enforcement officer** - a law enforcement officer of the state or federal government or any political subdivision of the state with the power of arrest for a violation of the criminal code or declared or deemed to be a peace officer by state or federal statute.

**Dangerous weapons** – for purposes of this policy, “dangerous weapons” means fireworks, other explosives, other weapons, or dangerous chemicals not specifically authorized by the University. This also includes any item commonly used as, or primarily intended for use as, a weapon (concealed or otherwise) firearm, ammunition, knife with a blade over 3 inches, metal knuckles, billy, blackjack and club. This also includes misuse of legal objects in a dangerous manner.

Such items are prohibited on all University owned, leased, managed or maintained property and any property used as a University sponsored learning, living or working site. Similarly, such items may not be stowed in any vehicle while parked on University owned, leased, managed or maintained property or any property used as a learning, living or working site by Webster University.

The definition of dangerous weapons does not include certain tools issued by the University for use in the performance of assigned job duties such as knives or saws or drain cleaners issued to facilities personnel when used for their intended purpose. The definition does not apply to prop weapons used for theatrical performances and/or performance art with prior approval of the Director of Public Safety or his designee.

**Violence** - aggressive, hostile or similar behavior which is intended to injure or otherwise harm an individual or property.

**Threat** – a declaration of an intention or desire to injure or otherwise harm an individual or property. A threat may be made by means of innuendo or suggestion as well as by express language or gesture.

Aggressive or hostile behavior or threat of same may include but is not limited to:

- Statements, verbal, written or electronic, that threaten action
- Statements, verbal, written or electronic, that imply negative consequences
- Stalking or engaging in any pattern of harassment of another individual including, but not limited to following or covertly or overtly monitoring another person physically or electronically
- Physical aggression such as shoving or striking
- Loud, offensive or harsh language
- Defaming or derogatory terms used in describing an individual

**Witness** – one who has first-hand knowledge of an act, including a threat or act of violence or other violation of this Policy.

## **V. RESPONSIBILITIES**

As stated above, if an individual learns of or witnesses a threat or any act of violence or any other conduct in violation of this policy he/she should immediately report it to the Department of Public Safety, Campus Director, Office of Student Affairs and/or Office of Human Resources or Division Executive.

Department of Public Safety, Campus Directors, Office of Student Affairs, Office of Human Resources, Division Executives, Deans, Department Heads and Chairs and Supervisors all share in a leadership responsibility to help ensure a safe environment, to monitor and resolve conflicts and disputes when they arise, and to take appropriate action when potentially violent situations develop. They are empowered to take immediate action to resolve or stabilize violent situations and to protect individuals and property from harm. They must insure that the Department of

Public Safety and/or local authorities and the appropriate member of executive leadership are notified immediately in the event of a serious situation.

## **VI. EDUCATION AND DISTRIBUTION OF POLICY**

The Department of Public Safety will provide education programs for administrators, deans, department heads and chairs, and supervisors on how to deal with situations involving reports of dangerous weapons, threats, and/or violence.

A copy of this policy is available on-line in the Student Handbook, the Human Resources Policies and the Public Safety websites. The Policy will be highlighted with new hires and during orientation with new students.

*Approved by Administrative Council  
August 2, 2016*