



Operational Area:	Employment
Responsible Executive:	Chief Operating Officer
Responsible Office:	Human Resources Office
Effective:	July 1, 2019

Bullying in the Workplace

Employment

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I. Introduction

- A. **Authority:** C.R.S. § 23-54-102, *et seq.* (2019) authorizes the Trustees of Metropolitan State University of Denver (MSU Denver) to establish rules and regulations to govern and operate the University and its programs. The Trustees retain authority to approve, interpret, and administer policies pertaining to University governance. The Trustees authorize the President of MSU Denver to approve, administer, and interpret policies pertaining to University operations.
- B. **Purpose:** This policy prohibits bullying in the MSU Denver workplace.
- C. **Scope:** This policy applies to employees, including administrators, classified staff, exempt staff, faculty, and student employees; applicants for employment; and others in the workplace environment, including members of the public.

II. Roles and Responsibilities

- A. **Responsible Executive:** Chief Operating Officer
- B. **Responsible Administrator:** Chief Human Resources Officer
- C. **Responsible Office:** Human Resources Office
- D. **Policy Contact:** Chief Human Resources Officer, 303-615-0999



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III. Policy Statement

MSU Denver will provide a secure work environment for all employees free from bullying and will not tolerate any behavior in the workplace that constitutes bullying activity as defined in this policy. Bullying may be directed toward an employee by a manager, co-worker, subordinate, appointing authority, vendor, contractor or member of the public. Bullying conduct may be challenged even if the complaining party is not the intended target of the conduct.

This policy is not intended to and will not be applied in a way that would violate rights and responsibilities with regard to academic freedom and freedom of expression, nor will it be interpreted in a way that undermines a supervisor's authority to appropriately manage the supervisor's work unit.

This policy prohibits retaliation against employees who report potential workplace bullying or participate in the investigation of the complaint.

Any employee violating this policy will be subject to corrective or disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

A. Definition

Unwanted, repeated, aggressive behavior that manifests as verbal abuse, conduct that is threatening, humiliating, intimidating, or acts of sabotage that interfere with work, consequently creating a hostile, offensive and toxic workplace. For more detail, please see the Workplace Bullying Complaint Procedures.



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B. Reporting

When an employee, including a student employee, believes that they are the target of behavior that may satisfy the definition of workplace bullying, as defined in the University policy on bullying, the employee should report any and all incidents immediately to the employee's supervisor or the supervisor of the alleged bully.

Administrators and Classified Employees have the right to report alleged bullying activity directly to Human Resources by submitting a written complaint with supporting documentation.

Tenured, Tenure Track, Category II and III faculty have the right to report alleged bullying activity directly to their Dean's Office by submitting a written complaint with supporting documentation.

C. Mandatory Cooperation

All employees, supervisors, managers, appointing authorities and agents of MSU Denver will cooperate, unless there are extraordinary circumstances, such as conflict of interest, with any investigative process or resolution, whether informal or formal, by the appropriate investigator. Any MSU Denver employee who fails to cooperate and/or attempts to impede participation in an investigation will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. To enable MSU Denver to achieve the goals of this policy, the Office of Human Resources and the deans' offices will have access to all relevant and necessary information.



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D. Non-retaliation

This policy prohibits retaliation against employees who report potential workplace bullying or participate in the investigation of the complaint. Any employee bringing a complaint under this policy, or assisting in the investigation of such a complaint, will not be adversely affected in terms and conditions of employment or dismissed because of the complaint. Anyone who engages in retaliatory action will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. Retaliation is defined as activity that may dissuade a reasonable person from exercising their rights under this policy.

Employees who report alleged bullying complaints that they know are false may be subject to disciplinary action within the University and/or external legal action from those they have falsely accused.

E. Confidentiality

To the extent feasible, information provided in the complaint and investigation process will be treated as confidential. However, MSU Denver will disclose information if deemed reasonably necessary to investigate and take appropriate corrective or disciplinary action, or to defend such corrective or disciplinary action, if required by law.

F. Witnesses

When an employee has witnessed or been made aware of behavior that the employee believes may satisfy the definition of workplace bullying, as defined in the University policy on bullying, the employee should report any and all incidents to their supervisor, or the supervisor of the alleged bully, the Office of Human Resources, or the appropriate dean's office if a faculty member is involved.



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G. Supervisors

When a supervisory-level employee is notified about possible workplace bullying behavior, the supervisor must immediately notify the Office of Human Resources or the appropriate dean's office if a faculty member is involved.

H. Training

To prevent and reduce the number of incidences of bullying, the University offices of Equal Opportunity, Human Resources and Diversity and Inclusion will implement workshops for employees, including student employees, on what constitutes bullying, what the University's policies and procedures are, employees' role in reporting incidents of bullying, and how to access the grievance process.

I. Review

The offices of Equal Opportunity, Human Resources, Diversity and Inclusion, and General Counsel will review this policy on an annual basis and make updates as necessary.

IV. Policy History

- A. **Effective:** July 1, 2019
- B. **Revised:** This policy supersedes Chapter XIV.F of MSU Denver's *Handbook for Professional Personnel*, July 1, 2017.
- C. **Enacted:** July 1, 2016
- D. **Review:** This policy will be reviewed annually or as deemed necessary by University leadership.



President's
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V. Policy Approval

Janine Davidson, Ph.D.
President, Metropolitan State University of Denver

Date

N/A

Chair, Board of Trustees, Metropolitan State University of Denver

Date