

North Dakota State University

Policy Manual

SECTION 608

SUICIDE THREAT RESPONSE POLICY

SOURCE: NDSU President
Student Affairs and Enrollment Management Unit

1. INTRODUCTION: Suicide is known to be a leading cause of death for college and university students. In addition, suicide, attempted suicide, and suicidal gestures have a significant detrimental effect, not only on the involved student, but on others in the campus community.

North Dakota State University (NDSU) seeks to foster a campus community free from all personal abuse, whether that abuse is directed at oneself or others. NDSU commits its resources to the following twofold process: 1) to provide crisis intervention and 2) to educate and promote discussion about self-abuse and violence.

2. DEFINITION: For the purpose of this policy, suicide is the purposeful act of causing one's own death. Attempted suicide is the act, threat, or gesture in which a person engages in life threatening behavior(s) with the intent of jeopardizing his/her life.
3. PREVENTION: The goal of educational programming offered by various units in [Student Affairs and Enrollment Management](#) is to promote understanding concerning the dynamics of suicide and to recognize behaviors that may signal suicidal intent. Periodic programming will address issues of depression, general principles of mental health, stress, and other topics related to student concerns. These collaborative educational efforts will involve staff from the Department of Residence Life, Counseling Center, and other staff who work with students from across campus.
4. [PARENTAL NOTIFICATION](#)- EMERGENCY EXCEPTION TO CONFIDENTIALITY: Suicidal situations are highly individual. The primary goal of this policy is student safety. To achieve this, appropriate family members will be contacted as necessary, under the direction of the Vice Provost for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management, to promote the safety of the student and others whose health, life, or safety may be endangered. The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA, 34 CFR 99.36) provides for the release of normally protected student data when it is believed that the student represents a health or safety risk to self or others.
5. INTERVENTION: The University's intervention efforts begin with the [Care Team](#) who will rely, in part, on the expertise of the staff of the Counseling Center. Other University professional staff members will collaborate as needed to help individuals experiencing difficulties to remain in the University community.
 - a. The Dean of Students staff may choose to seek advice from other individuals, as appropriate. In addition, the NDSU's designated legal advisor may be consulted when circumstances indicate a need.

This team will follow established procedures. This team may also participate in decision making that could lead to separation from the community for any individual whose presence may pose a safety risk to self or others.

- b. **Counseling Center:** Staff from the Counseling Center will follow professional ethical guidelines when suicidal or potentially suicidal students seek help directly from that office. The general requirement that counselors keep information confidential does not apply when disclosure is required to prevent clear and imminent danger to the client or others or when legal requirements demand that confidential information be revealed. Counselors consult with other professionals when in doubt as to the validity of an exception.

Counseling Center staff will also provide consulting services to University personnel upon request to assist staff in working with students on issues related to suicide. University faculty and/or staff members who are concerned about questions relating to suicide may call the office at any time. There is emergency service 24 hours a day all week during the academic year.

- c. **Other University Personnel:**
All other University personnel are expected to observe these procedures.

6. **REPORTING:** Because suicidal attempts may result in death, the early identification of persons at risk for suicide is essential. Help should be sought when individuals are talking about suicide or have taken any actions that could be construed as leading to a possible suicide attempt. In emergencies contact:

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| On Campus | NDSU University Police | 231-8998 (available 24 hours) |
| Off Campus | Fargo Police Department | 911 (available 24 hours) |

[Note: Fraternities and Sororities are considered off-campus, but residents may also call NDSU University Police for assistance in emergencies.]

7. **CONSULTATION:** For consultation, advice can be sought from the following:

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| Counseling Center | 231-7671 (available 24 hours) |
| Department of Residence Life | In any on-campus living facilities, help may be sought from staff including Complex Managers, Hall Directors, Resident Assistants, or any other Residence Life administrators. |
| Dean of Students Office | 231-7701 |

8. **ASSESSING SUICIDE ATTEMPTS AND THREATS:** Once an individual has been identified as at risk for suicide, the individual is expected to cooperate with University personnel and/or medical personnel in taking any necessary measures to reduce the likelihood that a suicide attempt will be made.

9. **POST-EVENT PROCEDURES:** Once a suicide or attempted suicide has been reported, the following procedures will be followed by faculty or staff members:

- 9.1 Once the immediate emergency has passed, contact the Student Affairs Office (231-6537) for assistance in notifying instructors, advisers, and conducting other necessary University business. The following services may be offered as needed:

- a. academic schedule adjustments
- b. university withdrawal
- c. notice to faculty and advisers concerning class absences

d. other appropriate University services

- 9.2 Class enrollment. The decision concerning continuing at NDSU will be made by the student in consultation with medical personnel, counseling personnel, academic advisors, or others necessary to make a decision that is in the best interests of the student.

10. OTHER BEHAVIORAL ACTIONS: When behaviors of students interfere with the rights of other students or disrupt the normal functioning of University, complaints about these behaviors will be processed as described in [*Rights and Responsibilities of Community: A Code of Student Conduct*](#).

- a Campus residents. When the rights of other students are infringed upon by the behavior of a resident, the student may be refused further University living accommodations or may be required to comply with conditions established by the Department of Residence Life. Such conditions may be developed in consultation with the Counseling Center staff. Other actions may be taken as outlined in the Residence Life License Contract or as a result of a disciplinary proceeding under [*Rights and Responsibilities of Community: A Code of Student Conduct*](#).
- b. Administrative Withdrawal. In very rare instances, when all other measures prove ineffective, the University may invoke the policy on Administrative Withdrawal as outlined in Section 9.5 of the [*Code of Student Conduct*](#).

HISTORY:

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| New | September 1995 |
| Amended | September 2003 |
| Amended | October 2007 |
| Housekeeping | July 2009 |
| Amended | June 1, 2011 |
| Housekeeping | September 1, 2015 |
| Housekeeping | August 28, 2017 |
| Housekeeping | March 30, 2022 |