



# Threat Assessment and Violence Prevention

## Guidelines for Students

The policies of the Los Angeles Community College District prohibit disruption and obstruction of college functions and activities, verbal threats, and behavior endangering the health or safety of any individual. Los Angeles City College is committed to providing a safe environment in which to learn, study and work.

**Disruptive behavior** disturbs, interferes with, or prevents normal work functions or activities of the college. Examples include yelling, using profanity, waving arms or fists, verbally abusing others, and refusing reasonable requests for identification.

**Threatening behavior** includes physical actions short of actual contact/injury (e.g., moving closer aggressively), general oral or written threats to people or property, ("You'd better watch your back" or "I'll get you") as well as implicit threats ("You'll be sorry" or "This isn't over").

**Violent behavior** includes any physical assault, with or without weapons; behavior that a reasonable person would interpret as being potentially violent (e.g., throwing things, pounding on a desk or door, or destroying property), or specific threats to inflict physical harm (e.g., a threat to shoot a named individual).

### What are the Warning Signs?

Below is a list of signs and attitudes that may be indicators of disruptive, threatening, or violent behavior. If you observe a pattern or change in behavior and attitude that causes you concern, please notify your instructor or work supervisor.

- Challenging or resisting authority.
- Becoming unusually upset over recent event(s) (work or personal crisis).
- Withdrawing from normal activities, family, friends, and co-workers.
- Making a major change in lifestyle, demeanor, or appearance.
- Exhibiting signs of substance abuse.
- Blaming others for problems in life or work; being suspicious, holding grudges.
- Expressing feelings of being morally superior, self-righteous.
- Feeling entitled to special rights; rules don't apply to her/him.
- Exhibiting a recent fascination with weapons.
- Having a known history of violence.

## What Behaviors Should I Report Immediately?

The following behaviors should be immediately reported to your instructor or work supervisor and the college sheriff's department.

- Engaging in persistent, obsessive attention to others and/or stalking.
- Intimidating, verbally abusing, harassing or mistreating others.
- Making threatening references to other incidents of violence.
- Making threats to harm self, others, or property.
- Detailing specific proposed act(s) of disruption or violence,
- Expressing strong feelings of wanting or needing to get revenge, or being wronged, humiliated, or degraded.

## What Should I do if Confronted by Disruptive, Threatening or Violent Behavior?

- Use a calm, non-confrontational approach to defuse the situation. Indicate your desire to listen and understand the problem. Allow the individual to describe the problem.
- Do not take the behavior personally. Usually, the behavior has little to do with you, but you are used as a target in the situation.
- Set limits to indicate the behavior needed to deal with the concern. "Please lower your voice." "Please stop shouting (or using profanity) or I'll have to ask you to leave."
- Ask questions. Respectful concern and interest may demonstrate that aggression is not necessary.
- Consider offering an apology. Even if you've done nothing wrong, an apology may calm the individual and encourage cooperation. "I'm sorry that happened. What can we do now to solve the problem?"
- Summarize what you hear the individual saying. Make sure you are communicating clearly. In crisis, a person feels humiliated and wants respect and attention. Your summary of the individual's concerns reflects your attention. Focus on areas of agreement to help resolve the concern.

## What Should I do if I Feel Threatened or in Danger?

- Find a way to excuse yourself, leave the room/area and get help.
- Do not mention discipline or calling the sheriff's office if you fear an angry or violent response.
- Signal for assistance.
- Do not isolate yourself with an individual you believe may be dangerous. Maintain a safe distance, do not turn your back, and stay seated if possible. Leave the door open or open a closed door, and sit near the door. Be sure a co-worker is near to help if needed.
- **NEVER** try to remove an individual from the area. Even a gentle push or grabbing an arm may be interpreted as an assault by an agitated individual who may respond with violence towards you or file a lawsuit later.

## **How do I Report Disruptive, Threatening, or Violent Behavior?**

Report all acts or threats of violence to your instructor or work supervisor and the LACC Sheriff's office at 323-662-5276 or in the Administration Building (AD 115).

**Please be prepared to answer the following questions:**

**WHO** – Name (if known) and description.

**WHAT** - The circumstances and sequence of events leading up to the incident.

**WHEN** - Time of day.

**WHERE** - Location of the incident.

**HOW** - Describe how the threat or offense was committed.

**WHY** – Why do you believe this incident occurred?

## **Who should I contact if I feel threatened?**

You should immediately report threats or acts of violence to any one of the following campus representatives:

**LACC Sheriff's Department**  
**Faculty Instructor or Department Chair**  
**Counselor or Academic Advisor**  
**On Campus Work Supervisor**  
**Administrator (Deans)**  
**Student Health & Wellness Center (Holmes Hall 2)**