

Addressing Bullying and Abusive Conduct in the Workplace

Definition

Bullying is a form of conduct that is abusive and unjustified by UCSF's legitimate business/educational interests. Bullying is defined as behavior of an individual and/or group of individuals that a reasonable person would find hostile, offensive, oppressive and/or humiliating. A single act shall not constitute bullying, unless especially severe or egregious.

- Spreading malicious rumors and misinformation
- Teasing and practical jokes
- Belittling, humiliating, degrading language
- Circulating embarrassing photos
- Name calling, insults, epithets
- Yelling and screaming
- Isolating, excluding, or marginalizing others
- Undermining and sabotage performance
- Interference with personal property
- Unwarranted physical contact

Be PROACTIVE before abusive conduct occurs

Raise awareness of the importance of fostering a respectful workplace.

- Identify and be mindful of your own unconscious biases.
- Have conversations at work about shared values.
- Establish workplace norms for respectful behaviors.
- Create a plan for handling abusive conduct when/if it occurs.
- Bring **respectful behavior** to your workplace.
- Say hello and goodbye to everyone.
- Offer feedback.
- Ask for help sooner rather than later.

If you are a MANAGER/SUPERVISOR

Intervene.

Step 1 - Acknowledge the impact of the problem.

"I've received several complaints about your behavior and this cannot continue."

Step 2 - Document patterns and set consequences.

Step 3 - Offer help, support, and coaching.

- Avoid rationalizing or minimizing.
*"Nobody's perfect." or "That's just how (Coworker) is."
"Don't take it personally." or "You're overthinking this."*

If you WITNESS abusive conduct

Be an **active bystander**. An active bystander will:

- Use the three Ds – Direct, Distract, or Delegate.
- Speak up using “I” statements.
“I feel uncomfortable when I hear you yell at (Coworker).”
- Focus on the impact of abusive conduct.
“I know it’s not your intention, but I’ve noticed your words are making others feel unsafe.”
- Offer support.
“I saw what happened. How are you doing?”
- Document. Take notes and keep records.

If you EXPERIENCE abusive conduct

Document your experiences.

- Make a plan.
- Keep a record.
Who, What, When, Where
- Tell someone.
Anyone may report bullying/abusive conduct to the [Whistleblower Hotline](#) at 415-476-3851 or [EthicsPoint](#) at 1-800-403-4744. Reports to the Whistleblower Hotline or EthicsPoint may remain anonymous.

For specific concerns regarding:

- *Intimidation, Threats, or Acts of Violence*: [UCPD](#) (9-911 or 415-476-6911) or [FSAP](#) (415-476-8279), ask to speak with a member of the [Threat Management Team](#)
- *Sexual Harassment/Violence or Workplace Discrimination*: [Office for the Prevention of Harassment and Discrimination](#)
- *Faculty and Non-Faculty Academics*: Department Chair or Division Director
- *Staff*: ELR@ucsf.edu or via phone at 415-353-4012 or 415-353-4107
- *Students*: [Student Life’s](#) Student Conduct Officer at 415-502-3302
- *UCSF Community Members*: Manager on duty
- *Patients and/or Family Members*: Manager on site or [Patient Relations](#)

Practice **self-care**.

- [Faculty Staff Assistance Program \(FSAP\)](#)
- [Student Health and Counseling Services](#)
- [Spiritual Care Services](#)
- Healthcare provider

If you are ACCUSED of abusive conduct

Be **accountable** for your own behavior. If you are accused of abusive conduct:

- Stay open and curious.
“What are you noticing about my behavior that feels harmful?”
- Work to understand your triggers.
- Consider an apology.
- Seek training, guidance, and support.

UCSF Policy 150-27: Violence and Bullying: <https://policies.ucsf.edu/policy/150-27>