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](https://policies.ucsf.edu/policy/150-27)