

Ohio State Guide to Assist Disruptive or Distressed Individuals

ccs.osu.edu • osuhealthplan.com/OhioStateEAP



The Office of Student Life's Counseling and Consultation Service and the Office of Human Resources' Employee Assistance Program developed this information guide to aid faculty and staff as they assist coworkers or students experiencing distress. For information on resources and programs available to you, visit the Staff and Faculty section on our website: ccs.osu.edu.

- Also see Office of Human Resources:
 - Employee Assistance Program: osuhealthplan.com/OhioStateEAP
 - Employee and Labor Relations: hr.osu.edu/elr

IMPORTANT NUMBERS (614 area code except where noted):

Emergency..... Dial 911
University Police..... 292-2121

For faculty and staff: **Employee Assistance Program**..... 1-800-678-6265
Office of Human Resources..... 292-2800

For students: **Veterans Affairs**..... 292-7047

Student Life departments: **Counseling and Consultation Service**..... 292-5766
Student Advocacy Center..... 292-1111
Student Conduct..... 292-0748
Student Health Services..... 292-4321
Office for Disability Services..... 292-3307
Multicultural Center..... 688-8449
Student Wellness Center..... 292-4527
University Residences..... 292-8266

24-HOUR CRISIS/SUICIDE PREVENTION SERVICES

**Suicide
Prevention
Services**
 (614) 221-5445
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**National Suicide
Prevention
Lifeline**
 1-800-273-8255
 (Veterans, press 1
to talk with
a veteran)

DEALING WITH AN INDIVIDUAL IN DISTRESS:

- Be aware of the location of the nearest telephone (within the building or a cellular phone).
- If you are concerned for your safety, or that of others, call 911 immediately.
- If the individual is causing a disruption to the classroom or the office environment yet does not pose a threat:
 - Discuss the situation with the person to address inappropriate behavior.
 - Ask the individual to leave the room.

DEALING WITH DISRUPTIVE OR DISTRESSED INDIVIDUALS:

Signs of Disruptive Behavior

- Disruptive or dangerous
- Verbal or physical threats or active threats of homicide
- Active threats of suicide and resisting help

Signs of Distressed Behavior

- Troubled or confused
- Very sad, anxious, or irritable
- Lacks motivation and/or concentration
- Behavior suggests a loss of contact with reality
- Expresses thoughts of suicide
- Expresses thoughts of homicide

POTENTIAL HARM TO SELF OR OTHERS: FIRST, CALL 911! THEN:

- If the individual is a student, also call Student Conduct: (614) 292-0748; studentconduct.osu.edu
- If the individual is a faculty or staff member, also call the Office of Human Resources: (614) 292-2800;
- If the individual is willing to talk with someone else, or if you would like assistance while waiting, call Suicide Prevention Services at (614) 221-5445 for help calming the individual while you are waiting for additional assistance.

Consultation or Questions (614 area code except where noted):

For faculty and staff: **Employee Assistance Program**..... 1-800-678-6265
Office of Human Resources..... 292-2800

For students: **Counseling and Consultation Service**..... 292-5766
Campus Suicide Prevention Program..... 688-5829
Student Health Services..... 292-4321

Student Advocacy Center..... 292-1111

Student Conduct..... 292-0748

CAP (Campus Advocacy Program) for survivors of sexual violence..... 292-4527

BART (Bias Assessment and Response Team)..... 688-8449

BRAVO (Buckeye Region Anti-Violence Org.)..... 294-7867

(BRAVO reports cases of violence against GLBTQI individuals.)

WHEN IN DOUBT, CALL 911!

Dealing with Disruptive Individuals

WHAT IS DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR?

Behavior that interferes with students, faculty, or staff and their access to an appropriate educational or work environment is considered disruptive.

WHAT ARE SOME EXAMPLES OF DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR?

- Yelling or screaming
- Persistent and unreasonable demands for time and attention
- Words or actions that intimidate or harass another
- Words or actions that cause another to fear for his/her personal safety
- Threats of physical assault

HOW SHOULD I DEAL WITH A DISRUPTIVE PERSON?

Disruptive behavior should not be ignored. Remain calm. Remind yourself that it is not about you; it is about the situation. Tell the individual that such behavior is inappropriate and that there are consequences for failing to improve the disruptive behavior. Many disruptive situations involve anger. **Recognize that the period of peak anger usually lasts 20-30 seconds.** Although this may seem like an eternity in the throes of the situation, often it is best to “wait it out” before progressing.

DOCUMENTATION

Disruptive behavior should be documented. Write a factual, detailed account of what occurred. Use concrete terms. Share the documentation appropriately.

THE DOs

- DO listen through the anger. Use active listening.
- DO acknowledge the feelings of the individual.
- DO allow the person to vent and tell you what is upsetting to him/her. Use silence to allow the person to talk it out.
- DO set limits. Explain clearly and directly what behaviors are acceptable: “I will be willing to speak with you as soon as you lower your voice.”
- DO be firm, steady, consistent, and honest.
- DO focus on what you can do to help resolve the situation.
- DO make personal referrals. Give a name of an individual when possible, and call ahead to brief the person.
- DO report the behavior to University Police and/or Student Conduct or Human Resources.

THE DON'Ts

- DON'T interrupt, particularly during the first 20-30 seconds of peak anger.
- DON'T minimize the situation.
- DON'T get into an argument or shouting match.
- DON'T blame, ridicule, or use sarcasm.
- DON'T touch.
- DON'T ignore warning signs that the person is about to explode.
- DON'T ignore your own limitations.

IF YOU FEEL THREATENED OR ENDANGERED, CALL 911!

RESOURCES (614 area code except where noted):

Emergency	911
University Police	292-2121
Student Conduct	292-0748
Employee Assistance Program	1-800-678-6265
Office of Human Resources	292-2800

Dealing with Distressed Individuals

Adapted from materials from The University of Colorado at Boulder and Penn State University

WHAT IS MY ROLE?

You might be in a good position to spot someone who may be emotionally distressed. While some of this is expected, especially during stressful times of the year, you may notice someone acting in a way that is inconsistent with your normal experience with that person. You may be able to be a resource in times of trouble, and your expression of interest and concern may be critical factors in helping the individual re-establish emotional equilibrium. You also may be able to alert the university so that an appropriate intervention can be made.

POSSIBLE SIGNS OF DISTRESS

- Marked change in performance or behavior
- Excessive absence or tardiness
- Trouble eating and/or sleeping
- Disruptive behavior
- Undue aggressiveness
- Exaggerated emotional response that is obviously inappropriate to the situation
- Depressed or lethargic mood
- Hyperactivity or very rapid speech
- Marked change in personal hygiene
- Excessive confusion
- Dramatic weight loss or gain
- Dependency (individual hangs around or makes excessive appointments to see you)
- Behavior indicating loss of contact with reality
- Feelings of helplessness or hopelessness
- Verbal or written references to suicide
- Verbal or written references to homicide or assault
- Isolation from friends, family, or classmates
- Giving away prized possessions
- Preparing for death by making a will and final arrangements

IF YOU FEEL THREATENED OR ENDANGERED, CALL 911!

THE DOs

- Do speak with the individual privately.
- DO let him/her know you are concerned about his/her welfare.
- DO express your concern in behavioral, non-judgmental terms.
- DO tell him/her you are willing to help.
- DO listen carefully to what he/she is troubled about.
- DO help him/her explore options.
- DO suggest resources.
- DO make referrals to the appropriate campus department.
- DO point out that help is available and that seeking such help is a sign of strength and courage, rather than of weakness or failure.
- DO maintain clear and consistent boundaries and expectations.
- DO recognize your limits.
- DO enlist the help of others as appropriate.
- DO document the interaction or incident.

THE DON'Ts

- DON'T promise confidentiality.
- DON'T judge or criticize.
- DON'T ignore the unusual behavior.
- DON'T make the problem your own.
- DON'T involve yourself beyond the limits of your time or skill.

REFERRALS AND RESOURCES

- In a crisis situation, call University Police at **911**.
- To consult regarding a student, call Counseling and Consultation Service at (614) 292-5766. Refer to ccs.osu.edu.
- Student Conduct: studentconduct.osu.edu
- To consult regarding a faculty or staff member, call:
 - Ohio State Employee Assistance Program: 1-800-678-6265 (or visit osuhealthplan.com/OhioStateEAP)
 - Office of Human Resources, Employee and Labor Relations: hr.osu.edu/elr
- Ohio State Department of Public Safety: ps.ohio-state.edu

Referrals and Resources at Ohio State

FOR STUDENTS IN CRISIS (AT RISK TO HARM THEMSELVES OR OTHERS):

- Contact Counseling and Consultation Service: (614) 292-5766
- Call University Police: (614) 292-2121
- Take student to Ohio State’s hospital emergency room: (614) 293-8333

FOR FACULTY OR STAFF IN CRISIS:

- Contact the Employee Assistance Program (EAP): 1-800-678-6255.

IF THE PERSON IS NOT AT RISK TO HARM HIM/HERSELF OR OTHERS:

Suggest in a caring manner that he/she may benefit from a meeting with a counselor.

- **STUDENTS** can contact Counseling and Consultation Service: (614) 292-5766
 - Counseling is confidential.
 - Counseling does not affect academic records.
 - Ten free counseling sessions are available to registered Ohio State students.
- **FACULTY OR STAFF** can contact the Employee Assistance Program: 1-800-678-6255.
 - Counseling is available to university employees, their immediate families, and domestic partners.
 - Counseling is not part of personnel or human resource files.
 - Five free counseling sessions are available; counseling is confidential and voluntary.

Helpful Resources (614 area code except where noted):

Treatment:

Counseling and Consultation Service.....	292-5766
Student Health Center.....	292-4321
Employee Assistance Program.....	1-800-678-6265
Psychological Services Center.....	292-2059
(at OSU Harding Hospital.....)	293-9600)

Support:

Student Wellness Center.....	292-4527
Office for Disability Services (ODS).....	292-3307
Office of Student Life.....	292-9334
Student Advocacy Center.....	292-1111
Sexual Assault Response Network of Central Ohio (available 24/7).....	267-7020
BART (Bias Assessment and Response Team) for witnesses or victims of discrimination.....	688-8449
Veterans Affairs.....	292-7047



REACH:
TO SAVE A LIFE.

Nationally, suicide is the second leading cause of death in young adults aged 19–24. Suicide is preventable, however, and you can help prevent a suicide by learning warning signs and how to intervene.

OSU Suicide Prevention is a free resource. Its REACH training program is a short, easy, and free program available to all Ohio State affiliated organizations, units, departments, and individuals upon request. For further

information and/or to schedule training, contact Wendy Winger at (614) 688-5829 or at suicideprevention@ehe.osu.edu.

24-HOUR CRISIS/ SUICIDE PREVENTION SERVICES

Suicide Prevention Services
(614) 221-5445

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273-8255

(Veterans, press 1 to talk with a veteran)

Call for yourself or for someone else.
Calls are free and confidential.

Available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

*Ohio State Student Life acknowledges University of Central Florida and University of Florida for folder concept and format.