

# Pennsylvania College of Technology

## Policy Statement

**Title:** Bullying

**Number:** P 7.28

**Approved by:**  
Presidential Action

**Approved Date:** 09/2014  
**Implementation Date:** 09/2014  
**Last Review Date:** 12/2021  
**Last Revision Date:** 12/2021

**Persons/Departments Affected:**  
All employees and students

**Responsible Department:**  
Human Resources - Employees,  
Student Affairs - Students

### Definitions:

***Bullying*** – Bullying is unwarranted, aggressive behavior, direct or indirect, by a single individual or a group of individuals involving a real or perceived power imbalance to abuse, intimidate or aggressively dominate others, in which someone intentionally and repeatedly causes another person who is perceived to be weaker personal injury or discomfort. Bullying behavior consists of four basic types of abuse: emotional, verbal, physical and cyber.

### Policy:

#### I. Introduction

The Pennsylvania College of Technology is committed to maintaining a working, learning, and social environment in which the rights and dignity of all the staff, faculty, and students of the College community are respected. Among the many things we do to maintain such an environment, the College prohibits behaviors that rise to the level of bullying as described below.

#### II. Behaviors That Can Constitute Bullying

Prohibited bullying behavior can take a variety of forms, and may include, but is not limited, to the following examples:

- attacking someone physically or verbally, making threats, spreading rumors, hurting someone's reputation or relationships, intentionally excluding a

- person, telling others not to associate with someone, embarrassing someone in public;
- verbal abuse, such as the use of derogatory remarks, insults, and epithets; slandering, ridiculing or maligning a person or their family; persistent name calling; using an individual or group as the butt of jokes;
  - verbal or physical conduct of a threatening, intimidating, or humiliating nature;
  - sabotaging or undermining an individual or group's work performance or education experience;
  - inappropriate physical contact, such as pushing; shoving, kicking, poking, tripping, assault, or the threat of such conduct, or damage to a person's work area or property, and
  - inappropriate electronic communication, such as the use of electronic mail, text messaging, voice mail, pagers, website, online chat rooms, social media in a threatening, intimidating, or humiliating manner.

This policy does not limit freedom of expression, or academic freedom or a supervisor's authority to manage their work unit, so long as the exercise of academic freedom, freedom of expression or supervisory authority does not include an element of bullying.

### **III. Reporting an Incident of Bullying**

Any individual that feels that they have been the victim of prohibited bullying, or who witnesses any incident of bullying, should promptly report it as set forth below. If a supervisor or administrator becomes aware, whether from direct observation, statements of others or otherwise, of any bullying, the supervisor must report it. The College will investigate any allegation of bullying.

An individual who reports an allegation of bullying may be required to document the incident in writing. Any individual may make an anonymous report concerning an act of bullying but must be aware that depending on the level of information available about the incident or the individuals involved, the College's ability to respond to an anonymous report may be limited. In investigating allegations of bullying, attempts will be made to respect the privacy of all individuals involved, but due to the nature of fact-finding and investigation that may be needed, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. Further, no individual will be disciplined or retaliated against for making a good faith allegation regarding bullying.

Student concerns about violations of this policy can be directed to the College's Senior Administrator for Student Affairs for consultation and investigation.

Faculty and/or staff concerns about violations of this policy can be directed to the College's Senior Administrator for Human Resources for consultation and investigation.

In addition, depending on the circumstances, the College encourages individuals who believe they are being subjected to any form of bullying to promptly advise the offender that their behavior is unwelcome and request that it cease. However, the College recognizes that an individual may not be comfortable doing this and an employee is never required to do so. Whether or not the matter is discussed with the offender, it should be reported as outlined in this policy and when reported, will be investigated.

Employees and students can refer to [Policy 7.30](#) – Sexual Misconduct/Sexual Harassment and [Policy 7.31](#) Harassment and/Discrimination Based on Protected Class, for guidance on these matters.

#### **IV. Conclusion**

It is the policy of the College that bullying behavior by or against any member of the College community, whether student, employee, faculty or guest, will not be tolerated. If inappropriate bullying behavior is found to have occurred, prompt remedial action will be taken. Any employee found to have engaged in prohibited bullying or retaliatory behavior is subject to immediate discipline up to and including termination and any student found to have engaged in prohibited bullying or retaliatory behavior is subject to immediate discipline, up to and including expulsion.

#### **Revision History:**

Date: 12/2021 Revised to reflect updated policy links

Date: 02/2017 Responsible Party Title Change

Date: 09/2014 Policy implemented

#### **Cross References:**

Sexual Misconduct/Sexual Harassment, [P7.30](#) and [PR7.30](#)  
Harassment and/Discrimination Based on Protected Class. [P7.31](#) and [PR7.31](#)