



Cover Memorandum

Behavioral Threat Assessment, JHPD Directive #418

Purpose of the Directive

The purpose of this Directive is to establish the role of the Johns Hopkins Police Department (JHPD) in Johns Hopkins University's (JHU's) behavioral threat assessment process. This includes JHPD's responsibility to identify, investigate, evaluate, and manage "concerning behaviors" (violence or threats of violence to persons or property that are disruptive to institutional activities) of any person with whom the JHPD is interacting that indicates the proclivity toward, or the potential for, targeted violence that may affect the Johns Hopkins (JH) community.

Summary of Directive Requirements

The Directive requires that whenever a member of the JHPD receives information that someone is exhibiting concerning behavior that may pose a threat to the safety of the JH community, they will consider the information relative to overall campus safety and report it to their supervisor when warranted. This is true whether or not the person exhibiting the behavior is affiliated with JH.

This Directive notes that an analysis of violent incidents shows that violent acts can often be the culmination of long-developing, identifiable trails of problems, conflicts, and disputes. The procedures described in this Directive are focused on helping JHPD proactively identify potential acts of targeted violence and attempt to reduce or recommend actions to reduce a threat. Per the directive, all members of JHPD will be responsible for either taking an initial report or immediately notifying their supervisor when they become aware of any concerning behavior or incident while on or off duty that involves a member of JHPD, member of the JH community, or of a situation that could potentially affect the JH community, regardless of if the incident happens on or off campus.

The Directive describes the responsibilities of Communications Specialists and JHPD officers during the initial response to and preliminary investigation of threats. For example, the Directive states that officers will be primarily responsible for taking initial reports, answering calls for service, and determining whether the call is for concerning or threatening behavior. Officers must use training and de-escalation skills to mitigate immediate threats of violence when encountering the subject of the concerning/threatening behavior and shall document all incidents that are reported to or observed by them.

The Directive also lists the behaviors/acts that will require officers to document and conduct a preliminary investigation, including acts of violence, threats, harassment, homicidal or suicidal thoughts or actions, intimidation, stalking or unwanted pursuit, and behavioral health concerns, including a propensity for violent behavior. Additionally, the Directive provides guidance on how officers should conduct preliminary investigations, including: a list of the indicators of risk of violence that officers must

look for, the databases and other resources that officers should consult, and the types of evidence or property that officers should collect.

According to the Directive, when the preliminary investigation reveals that a multidisciplinary assessment and subsequent review may be necessary to ensure the safety of the involved person and/or the community, the Chief of Police or their designee will notify the appropriate JHU administrators, who will conduct a behavioral threat assessment, in accordance with their policies and procedures. Should they require any support, the JHPD will assist, as requested.

Blueprint for the Policy Development Process

The draft JHPD policies (hereinafter referred to as “directives”) shared for community feedback are based on examples of 21st century best practices in public safety policy, identified through extensive benchmarking of university and municipal law enforcement agencies across the nation. Taken together, they represent a comprehensively progressive approach to policing that prioritizes equity, transparency, accountability, and community-based public safety strategies.

The JHPD’s draft directives embody approaches that community advocates and leading experts have championed locally and in law enforcement reform efforts across the nation. The draft directives have also been developed based on input received through robust community engagement in prior phases of JHPD development, including suggestions received in the legislative process as well as last fall’s Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) public comment period and feedback opportunities.

In addition, the directives were drafted to exceed the minimum requirements of the Constitution and laws of the United States and the State of Maryland, to align with the Community Safety and Strengthening Act (CSSA) and to fulfill the requirements of the MOU between the Johns Hopkins University and the Baltimore Police Department. The Hopkins community and our neighbors throughout Baltimore can help improve and strengthen these directives further through their feedback and input.

Material that was considered in the drafting of the Directive and Procedure Manual, include:

a. Publicly available policies from municipal police departments that have undergone substantial reform efforts, including: the New Orleans Police Department; Seattle Police Department; Portland Police Department; Detroit Police Department; Ferguson Police Department; and Baltimore Police Department;

b. National guidance on best practices and model policies from criminal justice reform efforts, social science research centers, and civil rights organizations, including: the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights; American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), including the ACLU of Massachusetts’s “Racially Just Policing: Model Policies for Colleges and Universities”; the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP); the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF); U.S. Department of Justice Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office); The Justice Collaboratory (The JC) at Yale University Law School; and The Center for Innovation in Community Safety (CICS) at Georgetown Law School.

c. National and local higher education institutions that are based in comparable environments and make policies publicly available, including: Carnegie Mellon University; Morgan State University; Towson University; University of Chicago; University of Cincinnati; University of Maryland, Baltimore County; University of Pennsylvania; and Yale University.

To ensure that the proposed directives captured national best practices in community-focused public safety services, the development team collaborated with independent experts from two organizations: National Policing Institute (the Institute), a non-profit dedicated to advancing excellence in policing through research and innovation, and 21CP Solutions, an expert consulting team of former law enforcement personnel, academics, civil rights lawyers, and community leaders dedicated to advancing safe, fair, equitable, and inclusive public safety solutions. Each directive was reviewed by experts selected by both organizations, who provided feedback, suggestions, and edits that were fully incorporated into the current draft.

Finally, individuals and organizations representing the diversity of the Johns Hopkins University community provided feedback to ensure the policies and procedures reflect and respond to the values of our institution and to our community's public safety service needs.

Now they are available for your review. Johns Hopkins is committed to adopting, incorporating, or otherwise reflecting recommended changes and feedback in the final version of policies so long as feedback is aligned with our values and commitments, permissible within legal parameters, and supported by national best practices for community policing and public safety.



POLICE DEPARTMENT

**BEHAVIORAL THREAT
ASSESSMENT**

**OPERATIONAL
PROCEDURE #418**

Responsible Executive:
Chief of Police
Responsible Office:
Vice President for Public Safety
Approved by:
Dr. Branville G. Bard, Jr.
Issued: [full date]
Revised: [full date]

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Policy Statement

The Johns Hopkins Police Department (JHPD) is committed to providing a safe environment for all students, employees, visitors, and everyone in the Johns Hopkins (JH) community. Whenever a member of the JHPD receives information that someone is exhibiting concerning behavior that may pose a threat to the safety of the JH community, they will consider the information relative to overall campus safety and report it to their supervisor when warranted. This is true whether or not the person exhibiting the behavior is affiliated with JH.

Who is Governed by this Policy

All personnel, including sworn, non-sworn and contractual or voluntary persons in service with the JHPD are governed by this Directive.

Purpose

The purpose of this Directive is to establish the JHPD's role in the Johns Hopkins University (JHU) behavioral threat assessment process. This includes the JHPD's responsibility to identify, investigate, evaluate, and manage "concerning behaviors" (i.e., violence or threats of violence to persons or property that are disruptive to institutional activities) of any person that indicates the proclivity toward, or the potential for, targeted violence that may affect the JH community. (Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) 91.1.6)

Definitions

Concerning Behavior:	Though it is not possible to define all behaviors that might concern community members, this represents a range of behaviors along a spectrum that are beyond a mere suspicion, and due to their nature, propensity, and/or severity, affect or potentially affect the campus or the workplace, generate a concern for personal safety, or result in physical injury to persons or facilities.
Member:	All members of the JHPD, including employees, officers, and volunteers, unless the term is otherwise qualified (e.g., member of the public, member of the Baltimore Police Department, etc.).
Officer:	All sworn police officers, at any rank, as defined by MD Code, Public Safety, § 3-201, in service with the JHPD.
Targeted Violence:	Any incidence of violence where a known or knowable attacker selects a particular target prior to a violent attack.
Threats:	Inappropriate behaviors, verbal or nonverbal communications, or expressions that lead to the reasonable belief that an act has occurred or may occur that may lead to physical harm to the threatener, others, or property.

Policy

As part of the commitment to provide a safe environment to the members of the JH community, it is the policy of the JHPD that officers will follow through on information that someone is exhibiting concerning behavior and shall work to recognize, respond to, and appropriately share information of all threats or concerning behavior, whether the behavior constitutes a crime or not. The JHPD will also make appropriate campus resources aware of affiliates that come to the attention of law enforcement who demonstrate they are at risk physically or emotionally or may be a risk to others. All information that the JHPD gathers and/or shares under this Directive will be in accordance with all relevant JHU policies, as well as standing Federal and State laws regarding privacy and access to information, including the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

Procedures

I. General

- A. Careful analysis of violent incidents shows that violent acts can often be the culmination of long-developing, identifiable trails of problems, conflicts, and disputes.
- Traditional law enforcement activities aim at apprehending and prosecuting perpetrators of violence who have committed crimes. However, the JHPD endeavors to proactively identify potential acts of targeted violence and attempts to reduce or recommend actions to reduce a threat.
- B. It is important for JHPD members to understand the following regarding threats:
- Some persons who make threats ultimately pose threats,
 - Many people who make threats do not pose threats,
 - Some persons who pose threats never make threats, and
 - Being a threat is not the same as making a threat.
- C. All members of the JHPD will be responsible for either taking an initial report or immediately notifying their supervisor when they become aware of any concerning behavior incident on or off duty that involves a member of JHPD, member of the JHU community, or of a situation that could potentially affect the JHU community, regardless of if the incident is happening on or off campus.
- D. All information that the JHPD gathers and/or shares under this Directive will be in accordance with all relevant JHU policies, as well as all standing Federal and State laws regarding privacy and access to information, including HIPAA.

II. Initial Response and Preliminary Investigation

- A. When any call comes in through the Communications Center (CC), the Communications Specialist (CS) shall check the JHPD records systems to determine if active alerts or special response instructions exist in connection with the caller's name.
- If such an alert or instruction exists, the CS shall immediately notify the responding officer(s) and Patrol Supervisor of any name and relevant instructions.
- B. JHPD patrol officers shall be primarily responsible for taking initial reports, answering calls for service, and determining whether the call is for concerning or threatening behavior. JHPD officers shall immediately notify their supervisors of all concerning/threatening behavior incidents.
- C. If the person displaying concerning/threatening behavior is on scene when a JHPD officer arrives, the responding officer(s) will use their training and de-escalation skills to mitigate the immediate threat of violence in conformance with

JHPD Directive #401, De-Escalation.

- If the JHPD officer has reason to believe that the person is experiencing a crisis or a behavioral health issue or impairment, the officer shall follow JHPD Directives #415, Individuals with Behavioral Health Conditions and #417, Emergency Medical Examination & Assistance.

D. JHPD officers shall document all incidents involving concerning or threatening behavior that are reported to or observed by them.

- Certain behaviors/acts will require JHPD officers to document and conduct a preliminary investigation. These include, but are not limited to:
 - Acts of violence,
 - Threats, whether direct, indirect, implied, or veiled,
 - Harassment, in person or otherwise communicated,
 - Homicidal or suicidal thoughts or actions,
 - Intimidation,
 - Stalking or unwanted pursuit, and
 - Behavioral health concerns, including a propensity for violent behavior.
- Other behaviors/acts that may require JHPD officers to document and conduct a preliminary investigation include:
 - Weapons on campus,
 - Belligerence or angry outbursts,
 - Preoccupation with violent themes,
 - Apparent obsession with someone,
 - Domestic disputes,
 - Intentional destruction of personal property, and
 - Uncharacteristic self-isolation or paranoia.

E. JHPD officers shall conduct a thorough **preliminary investigation** to obtain as much detail about the behavior and involved persons as possible.

- As part of the preliminary investigation, JHPD officers shall attempt to determine the existence of the following indicators of risk of violence:
 - Involvement with, possession of, or access to weapons or weapons training.
 - Escalating aggression, which includes an increase in concerning behavior in terms of frequency, intensity, or physical contact.
 - Psychological distress, which may indicate an escalating behavioral health condition such as depression, paranoia, or suicidal or homicidal thoughts. This may include feelings of injustice, humiliation, or anger, and can be the result of drug or alcohol use.
 - Escalating life stressors, which may be indicated by increased

academic pressure, lack of academic progress, loss of funding for research, unemployment, termination, suspension, disciplinary action, negative performance review, unstable employment, demotion, being passed over for promotions or pay raises, or ejection or sanctions from a group.

- Personal stressors, as related to relationships, physical health, financial status, legal issues, family concerns, coping styles, and support system availability.
 - History of violence and conflict, which can be detected by a criminal history, direct communication, or being a victim of or a witness to family violence.
- F.** During the preliminary investigation, JHPD officers should search for necessary information by checking databases and other available resources. These may include, but are not limited to:
- Criminal history check,
 - National Crime Information Center (NCIC),
 - Records Management System (RMS) check,
 - Social networking websites,
 - Statements/interviews from victims or witnesses, and/or
 - Statements/interviews of others, such as co-workers, friends, roommates, supervisors, and resident life staff.
- G.** Officers shall collect evidence or property as needed to complete the preliminary investigation. This may include, but is not limited to:
- Electronic messages, including those from social media, texting apps, email, etc.,
 - Letters or papers, and/or
 - Any other items that may be of evidentiary value.
- H.** The preliminary investigation must be worked until complete, which may require handoff between patrol squads. On duty supervisors shall coordinate the assignment of the preliminary investigation.
- I.** JHPD officers shall complete an Incident Report and supplemental reports in conformance with JHPD Directive #470, Field Reporting System before the completion of their assigned shift. The Incident Report narrative shall include the circumstances and actions, concerning behaviors as reported, specific dates, agencies involved, charges, and convictions, if any.

III. Threat Assessment Review & Actions

When the preliminary investigation into reports of threatening behavior reveals that a multidisciplinary assessment and subsequent review may be necessary to ensure the

safety of the involved person and/or community, the Chief of Police or their designee will notify the appropriate JHU administrators of the concerning behavior so that they may engage in their relevant Behavioral Threat Assessment process. Should JHU’s Behavioral Threat Assessment process identify any criminal behavior or concern, or require JHPD participation, JHPD will be notified by appropriate JHU administrator and will participate or respond as needed.

Policy Enforcement

Enforcement	Police Department managers and supervisors are responsible for enforcing this Directive.
Reporting Violations	Suspected violations of this Directive should be reported to the Office of Chief of Police.

Related Resources

University Policies and Documents	
Operational Procedure #401, De-Escalation	
Operational Procedure #415, Individuals with Behavioral Health Conditions	
Operational Procedure #416, Behavioral Health Crisis Dispatch	
Operational Procedure #417, Emergency Medical Examination & Assistance	
Operational Procedure #470, Field Reporting System	
JHU Campus Safety and Security General Orders C.10, Behavioral Health Crisis Support	
JHU Procedure No. A711, HIPAA Policies for Health Plans Uses and Disclosures, Serious Threat to Health or Safety.	
JHU Procedure No. B711, HIPAA Policies for Health Plans Uses and Disclosures, Serious Threat to Health or Safety.	
JHU Behavioral Health Crisis Support Team, https://publicsafety.jhu.edu/community-safety/initiatives/behavioral-health-crisis-support-team/ .	
External Documentation	
Police Department Forms and Systems	
https://powerdms.com/ui/login	

Contacts

Subject Matter	Office Name	Telephone Number	E-mail/Web Address
Policy Clarification and Interpretation			

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