



# Fitchburg State University Police Department

<b>Subject:</b> THREAT ASSESSMENTS	
Reference: MPAC: N/A IACLEA: 12.1.4	
<b>Effective Date:</b> September 23, 2020	<b>Review Date:</b>
<b>By Order of:</b> Michael J. Cloutier, Chief of Police	

General Order

# 12.2

**PURPOSE:**

This general order provides guidance for members of the Fitchburg State University Police Department when conducting threat assessments. Threat assessment is a violence prevention strategy that involves: determining the seriousness of the threat, and developing intervention plans that protect potential victims and address the underlying problem or conflict that stimulated the threatening or concerning behavior.

The goals of threat assessment are to keep schools safe and to help potential offenders overcome the underlying sources (of their anger, hopelessness, or despair.) Effective threat assessment provides school professionals with useful information about risks and personal resources. Among the other potential risks that can be identified and prevented are suicide, alcohol and drug use, physical abuse, academic challenges, and criminal activity.

Threat assessments will often be done at the request of the University's CARE (Community Assessment and Risk Evaluation) Team, or to assist in identifying an individual who has been brought to the attention of the department for violent, threatening, or concerning behavior who may be a risk to themselves or others.

**POLICY:**

It is the policy of the Fitchburg State University Police Department to conduct a threat assessment in a fair and objective manner and to treat all information as confidential in accordance with other related department policies and relevant laws.

## 12 - Crime Prevention and Community Involvement

### CARE TEAM OVERVIEW:

Fitchburg State University strives to maintain a safe, responsive, and respectful academic community for all of its members. To this end, the CARE Team serves as a vehicle to help ensure that circumstances that may be indicative of a community member who is unsafe, unable to minimally function in the academic environment, or potentially dangerous to other community members are appropriately acknowledged, reviewed, and (as appropriate) acted upon to ameliorate risk.

It is believed that this CARE Team model will allow for more timely and comprehensive responding, without the necessity of being “incident-driven.” That is, mechanisms will exist within the CARE Team to identify and respond to behaviors and concerns that have not yet risen to “incidents,” with the hope that earlier intervention may allow for improved outcomes.

### PROCEDURES:

- A. The University Police Department has several key roles in the university’s CARE Team.
  1. The Chief of Police or Designee attends CARE Team meetings to discuss incidents that are brought to the CARE Team attention.
  2. Officers generate reports for Student Conduct and referrals that involve instances where additional campus services may aid the student during a particular moment or life situation.
  3. The department may be requested by the CARE Team to conduct an individual threat assessment which is a specific process to evaluate a potential threat to the University community.
  4. To be a resource of legal guidance to assist in distinguishing between a violation of law and a violation of policy, as well as to ensure that Constitutional rights of involved parties are protected.
- B. Threat assessments may vary in scope depending on the nature of the behavior, and available information. The University Police Department may collaborate with, and communicate findings to individual team members on a need-to-know basis, and within the perimeters allowed by law. Typically, limited information from a formal threat assessment will be shared with the full CARE Team.
  1. Items generally considered confidential information are:
    - a. C.O.R.I information ( refer to **G.O. 11.3.1 DJCIS CORI POLICY**)
    - b. Information pertaining to Mental Health or Medical History
    - c. Confidential Police Reports
    - d. Other items which would fall under an exemption to the Public Record Law

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- C. When a member of the Fitchburg State University Police Department is requested to conduct a threat assessment, on behalf of the CARE Team, or as part of a department's investigation, it will entail the following:
1. CJIS work-up (See attached Background Investigation/ Threat Assessment Worksheet)
  2. Open source information
  3. Publicly available social media
  4. Information from other CARE Team members or university officials
- D. Information obtained from the initial assessment may lead the investigator to also utilize:
1. MOSIAC software,
  2. COPLINK,
  3. NESPIN,
  4. T.L.O.,
  5. Fusion Center,
  6. Contacting other law enforcement agencies for reports and/ or calls for service,
  7. Contacting former schools,
  8. Faculty, or
  9. Known associates.
- E. Once information is obtained on an individual, officers shall generate a report in the Record Management System.
1. Use an Offense Report (OF) format with the heading of Threat Assessment.
  2. Narrative shall include:
    - a. Who the subject of the threat assessment
    - b. Who requested the threat assessment
    - c. Whether any information was found that would warrant further review or not.

## 12 - Crime Prevention and Community Involvement

- i. Officers should avoid specifically listing the information or providing an opinion on whether an individual is a threat or not.
  3. All printouts and material used during the threat assessment shall be placed in the case folder and submitted for a supervisor's review.
  4. Officer conducting the threat assessment shall submit their report to a member of Command Staff, who will:
    - a. Update the Chief of the officer's finding.
    - b. Update the CARE Team, if assessment was conducted at the CARE Team's request.
    - c. Provide guidance on any further steps necessary to mitigate any potential threats.
- F. Once a case management plan is made by the CARE Team, the University Police Department may be requested to assist in keeping the peace.
1. Officers may stand by while the university administrator meets with the person.
  2. Their primary role is to ensure the safety of the administrator, and all involved parties.

Approval:

  
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Chief of Police

09/23/2020  
Date