



**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.  
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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 else in the Johns Hopkins 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 Johns Hopkins 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 Johns Hopkins.

**Who Is Governed by This Policy**

All personnel, including sworn, nonsworn, 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 (JH) 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 indicate the proclivity toward, or the potential for, targeted violence that may affect the Johns Hopkins community. (Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) 91.1.6)

## Definitions

<b>Concerning Behavior:</b>	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, 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.
<b>Member:</b>	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.).
<b>Officer:</b>	All sworn police officers, at any rank, as defined by MD Code, Public Safety, § 3-201, in service with the JHPD.
<b>Targeted Violence:</b>	Any incidence of violence where a known or knowable attacker selects a particular target prior to a violent attack.
<b>Threats:</b>	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 Johns Hopkins 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 who 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 or shares under this Directive will be in accordance with all relevant Johns Hopkins 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 the JHPD, a member of the Johns Hopkins community, or a situation that could potentially affect the Johns Hopkins community, regardless of whether the incident is happening on or off campus.
- D.** All information that the JHPD gathers or shares under this Directive will be in accordance with all relevant Johns Hopkins policies, as well as all standing federal and state laws regarding privacy and access to information, including HIPAA.

## **II. Initial Response & Preliminary Investigation**

- A.** When any call comes in through the Communications Center, 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 officers 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 or threatening behavior incidents.
- C.** If the person displaying concerning or threatening behavior is on scene when a JHPD officer arrives, the responding officers 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 Directive #415, Individuals With Behavioral Health Conditions; JHPD Directive #416, Behavioral Health Crisis Dispatch; and JHPD Directive #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 and 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 and 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.** Members shall adhere to the requirements of this Directive and the requirements of JHPD Directive #106, Fair & Impartial Policing; JHPD Directive #107, Interactions With LGBTQ+ Individuals; JHPD Directive #109, Procedural Justice; JHPD Directive #420, Domestic Violence, Stalking & Harassment; JHPD Directive #460, Criminal Investigations; and JHPD Directive #465, Response to Crimes of Sexual Violence, to ensure that victims and those reporting threatening behavior feel

confident that their concerns are being taken seriously and are provided a response that demonstrates that their safety is a primary concern.

- F.** 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, 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.
- G.** 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,
  - Records Management System,
  - Social networking websites,
  - Statements/interviews from victims or witnesses, and

- Statements/interviews of others, such as coworkers, friends, roommates, supervisors, and resident life staff.
- H.** 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
  - Any other items that may be of evidentiary value.
- I.** 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.
- J.** 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**

- A.** 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 or community, the Chief of Police or their designee will notify the appropriate Johns Hopkins administrators of the concerning behavior so that they may engage in their relevant behavioral threat assessment process. Should JH's behavioral threat assessment process identify any criminal behavior or concern, or require JHPD participation, the JHPD will be notified by the appropriate Johns Hopkins administrator and will participate or respond as needed.
- B.** Should the preliminary investigation into reports of threatening behavior reveal that a multidisciplinary assessment and subsequent review are not necessary, the JHPD shall consider whether referrals to appropriate Johns Hopkins administrators, behavioral health, or other resources are needed, and make appropriate referrals and notifications.

### **IV. Training**

- A.** The Director for Public Safety Training shall ensure that all members, as part of their General Acceptance Program training, receive training regarding this Directive, Johns Hopkins Human Resources and Student

Affairs behavioral threat assessment processes, and when and how to co-respond with or make a referral to the Behavioral Health Crisis Support Team.

## Policy Enforcement

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

## Related Resources

<b>University Policies and Documents</b>	
Conduct & Responsibility #106, Fair & Impartial Policing	
Conduct & Responsibility #107, Interactions With LGBTQ+ Individuals	
Conduct & Responsibility #109, Procedural Justice	
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 #420, Domestic Violence, Stalking & Harassment	
Operational Procedure #460, Criminal Investigations	
Operational Procedure #465, Response to Crimes of Sexual Violence	
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, <a href="https://publicsafety.jhu.edu/community-safety/initiatives/behavioral-health-crisis-support-team/">https://publicsafety.jhu.edu/community-safety/initiatives/behavioral-health-crisis-support-team/</a>	
<b>External Documentation</b>	
<b>Police Department Forms and Systems</b>	
<a href="https://powerdms.com/ui/login">https://powerdms.com/ui/login</a>	

## Contacts

Subject Matter	Office Name	Telephone Number	Email/Web Address
Policy Clarification and Interpretation	Policy Management	(667)306-8618	<a href="mailto:jhpdpolicyinquiry@jh.edu">jhpdpolicyinquiry@jh.edu</a>