

Middlesex Community College
STUDENT SUICIDE PREVENTION PROTOCOL

PURPOSE

The purpose of this protocol is to provide education and guidance to faculty, staff, students, and other members of the College community to help prevent student suicide. All suicidal behavior or threats should be taken seriously and immediately referred in accordance with this protocol. **In the case of an emergency, please dial 911 immediately then contact Public Safety.**

DEFINITIONS

Suicide: Death from an injury which is self-inflicted and by which the student intended to kill him/herself.

Suicidal Behavior: Any potentially injurious behavior which is self-inflicted and by which a student intends, or gives the appearance of intending, to kill himself or herself.

Suicidal Ideation: Any self-reported thoughts or feelings about engaging in suicidal behavior.

Suicide Plan: A proposed method of self-inflicted injury through which the potential and intentional outcome is death.

Active Suicidal Ideation with Specific Plan and Intent to Act: Thoughts of killing oneself with details of plan fully or partially worked out and student has some intent to carry it out.

Active Suicidal Ideation with Some Intent to Act, without Specific Plan: Active suicidal thoughts of killing oneself and student reports having some intent to act on such thoughts, as opposed to "I have the thoughts but I definitely will not do anything about them."

Actual Knowledge: The direct and clear awareness of a fact or circumstance, as opposed to constructive (inferred or implied) knowledge. What a person "must have known" as opposed to "should have known."

PROTOCOL

This Protocol shall be followed in the event a College employee has actual knowledge that a student:

- a) Is actively engaged in suicidal behavior;
- b) Has engaged in suicidal behavior while enrolled at the College or recently¹ before matriculation²;
or
- c) Has stated plans or intentions to commit suicide, including active suicidal ideation with specific plan and intent to act or active suicidal ideation with some intent to act, without a specific plan.

Where the College has actual knowledge that a student has engaged in suicidal behavior and is currently hospitalized, these protocols shall be activated (under procedures for Previous Suicidal Behavior) in the event the student seeks to return to the College.

¹ "Recently" is not defined within a specific timeframe and will be reviewed in context with other factors.

² "Matriculation" should be interpreted broadly and not be limited to full-time students.

PROCEDURES

Active Suicidal Behavior

- Any member of the College community who has actual knowledge that a student is actively engaged in suicidal behavior shall immediately contact emergency personnel by calling **911** then Public Safety at (Bedford) 781-589-0234 or (Lowell) 781-589-1384.
- Contact the **Dean of Students** as soon as safety personnel have been notified at 781-760-1901.
- If the Dean of Students is not available, contact the Assistant Dean of Students at 781-879-7950.
- The Dean of Students, or the designee, shall attempt to contact the student's emergency contact of record or another emergency contact identified by the student.
- A student who has engaged in active suicidal behavior shall be required to be assessed by a licensed mental health professional and provide documentation per the College's Readiness to Return Policy³. Documentation will be reviewed by the Dean of Students, or designee, and/or a member of the Student Assessment and Intervention Team (SAIT).

Previous Suicidal Behavior OR Active Suicidal Ideations with Stated Plans or Intentions

- Any member of the College community who has actual knowledge that a student has engaged in suicidal behavior while enrolled at the College or recently before matriculating shall contact the **Dean of Students** immediately at 781-760-1901.
- Any member of the College community who has actual knowledge that a student has stated plans or intentions to engage in suicidal behavior shall contact the **Dean of Students** immediately at 781-760-1901.
- If the Dean of Students is not available, contact the Assistant Dean of Students at 781-879-7950.
- Based on the information received, the Dean of Students, or designee, shall determine whether the protocol should be activated. In doing so the Dean or designee may attempt to meet with the student and/or consult with a member of the SAIT.
- If the protocol is activated, the Dean of Students, or designee, shall attempt to contact the student's emergency contact of record or another emergency contact identified by the student.
- The Dean of Students, or designee, may further consult with the SAIT to determine an appropriate medical referral, help identify support strategies, and/or develop a follow-up action plan for the student.
- When it is determined that a student has engaged in suicidal behavior while enrolled at the College or recently before matriculating or that a student has stated plans or intentions to engage in suicidal behavior, the student shall be required to be assessed by a licensed mental health professional and provide documentation per the College's Readiness to Return Policy. Documentation will be reviewed by the Dean of Students, or designee, and/or the SAIT.

³ This process accommodates students at risk of harm to self or others in order to provide them with the necessary tools and resources to be successful.