** Diocese of St. Petersburg Threat Protocol for Student Issues**

“Threats” are verbal or written statements, actions, photos, social media posts, or other means of expression made by an individual using aggressive/violent language and/or imagery in a context indicating that the individual may pose a risk to themselves or others. An expression of intent to harm someone is considered a threat regardless of whether it is communicated to the intended target(s) and regardless of whether the intended target is aware of the threat. Behavior that a reasonable observer would regard as threatening should be initially treated as a threat and reported to school leadership.

Analyzing a threat always involves a judgement of the known facts of the situation. **At any time, school or diocesan officials should contact the police directly if they believe that a threat is imminent or if it appears that a crime has been committed. In all cases, Catholic school personnel will cooperate fully with law enforcement officials.**

This procedure is used when the situation involves students. If the situation involves parents, guardians, volunteers, employees, or other adults, the school should immediately notify the OCSC and police, if warranted.

All media inquiries throughout the process should be directed to Teresa Peterson, Executive Director of Communications for the Diocese, at tlp@dosp.org

**Initial Steps for All Situations**

1. Threat is reported to an employee at a Catholic school or the Office of Schools and Centers (OCSC)
2. School leadership, the Pastor (if applicable), and the OCSC should be notified immediately
3. School should complete the **Diocese of St. Petersburg Threat Report (see pages 5-6)** and send to the Office of Catholic Schools as soon as possible.
4. School leadership should attempt to get as much information as quickly as possible using the **Diocese of St. Petersburg Interview Questions (see pages 7-8)**.
5. School should send completed Interview Questions and any other materials to the Office of Catholic Schools.
6. School leadership, Pastor, and OCSC immediately **determine an initial threat level and action plan.** Incidents will be given one of three threat levels and initial actions taken accordingly.
7. Go to Level I (page 2), Level II (page 3), or Level III (page 4)

**Level I**

Violent words or images may have been used but they were taken out of context. There is no specificity and participants understood the situation to be non-threatening.

1. School interviews students and notifies students’ parents or guardians
2. Student may be placed on home instruction or suspension, depending on the situation.
3. Threat assessment team is contacted, and meeting scheduled within 24 hours.
4. Threat Assessment Team will complete the **DOSP Threat Assessment Team Meeting Report (see pages 9-11) and schools will implement the recommendations.**

**If the threat is found to be credible**

* 1. School notifies the student’s parents or guardians
  2. School may notify the police
  3. Parents of any students directly involved or impacted should be contacted and given appropriate level of information about how the school is addressing the situation. Detailed disciplinary information about a student should not be shared with other students or other parents.
  4. OCSC will inform the Vicar General and DOSP Director of Communications.
  5. School employees and school parents may be notified with general information. Parent notifications should be approved in advance by the OCSC and Office of Communications.
  6. School follows discipline policy in the student handbook.

**If the threat is found to be non-credible**

* 1. School notifies the students’ parents or guardians
  2. Issue is handled by the school according to the discipline policy in the student handbook. In addition, the pastor, chaplain, or a school counselor may be asked to work with the student.
  3. Parents of any students directly involved or impacted should be contacted and given appropriate level of information about how the school is addressing the situation. Detailed disciplinary information about a student should not be shared with other students or other parents.
  4. Police may be notified at the discretion of the school and OCSC leadership.
  5. School employees and school parents may be notified with general information at the discretion of the school and OCSC leadership. Parent notifications should be approved in advance by the OCSC and Office of Communications.
  6. The threat level may be escalated upon further investigation of the incident or the receipt of additional information.

**Level II**

Violent words or images were used and there’s a lack of clarity about the intent. There is no specificity about a time or place, but participants share some concern that it could be threatening.

1. School interviews students and contacts students’ parents or guardians
2. Student immediately placed on home instruction or suspension, depending on the situation.
3. Threat assessment team is contacted, and meeting scheduled within 24 hours.
4. Threat Assessment Team will complete the **DOSP Threat Assessment Team Meeting Report (see pages 9-11) and schools will implement the recommendations.**

**If the threat is found to be credible**

* 1. School notifies the police
  2. School notifies the student’s parents or guardians
  3. Parents of any students directly involved or impacted should be contacted and given appropriate level of information about how the school is addressing the situation. Detailed disciplinary information about a student should not be shared with other students or other parents.
  4. OCSC will inform the Vicar General and DOSP Director of Communications.
  5. School employees and school parents will be notified with general information. Parent notifications should be approved in advance by the OCSC and Office of Communications.
  6. School follows discipline policy in the student handbook.
  7. If student is not expelled, s/he must complete a threat evaluation before returning to school.
  8. School may issue no trespass or restraining order as appropriate and will alert all personnel with factual information and instructions to call 911 if individual is on campus.

**If the threat is found to be non-credible**

* 1. School contacts student’s parents or guardians
  2. Issue is handled by the school according to the discipline policy in the student handbook. In addition, the pastor, chaplain, or a school counselor may be asked to work with the student.
  3. Parents of any students directly involved or impacted should be contacted and given appropriate level of information about how the school is addressing the situation. Detailed disciplinary information about a student should not be shared with other students or other parents.
  4. Police may be notified at the discretion of the school and OCSC leadership.
  5. School employees and school parents may be notified with general information at the discretion of the school and OCSC leadership. Parent notifications should be approved in advance by the OCSC and Office of Communications.
  6. The threat level may be escalated upon further investigation of the incident or the receipt of additional information.

**Level III**

Violent words or images are specific and detailed. Targets and timeframes are specified. Violent actions may accompany the use of violent words or images.

1. School immediately interviews students and contacts students’ parents or guardians. If the school leadership decides that interviewing the student(s) may pose a risk to anyone, they should immediately notify the police.
2. Student immediately placed on home instruction or suspension, depending on the situation.
3. School notifies the police if it appears a crime was committed.
4. Threat assessment team is contacted, and meeting scheduled within 24 hours.
5. Threat Assessment Team will complete the **DOSP Threat Assessment Team Meeting Report (see pages 9-11) and schools will implement the recommendations.**

**If the threat is found to be credible**

* 1. School notifies the police with updated information
  2. School notifies the student’s parents or guardians
  3. Parents of any students directly involved or impacted should be contacted and given appropriate level of information about how the school is addressing the situation. Detailed disciplinary information about a student should not be shared with other students or other parents.
  4. OCSC will inform the Vicar General and DOSP Director of Communications.
  5. School employees and school parents will be notified with general information. Parent notifications should be approved in advance by the OCSC and Office of Communications.
  6. School follows discipline policy in the student handbook.
  7. If student is not expelled, s/he must engage in counseling and complete a threat assessment and evaluation before returning to school.
  8. School may issue no trespass or restraining order as appropriate and will alert all personnel with factual information and instructions to call 911 if individual is on campus.

**If the threat is found to be non-credible**

* 1. School contacts student’s parents or guardians
  2. Issue is handled by the school according to the discipline policy in the student handbook. In addition, the pastor, chaplain, or a school counselor may be asked to work with the student.
  3. Police may be notified at the discretion of the school and OCSC leadership.
  4. School employees and school parents may be notified with general information at the discretion of the school and OCSC leadership. Parent notifications should be approved in advance by the OCSC and Office of Communications.
  5. The threat level may be escalated upon further investigation of the incident or the receipt of additional information.

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| **DIOCESE OF ST. PETERSBURG THREAT REPORT** | |
| A threat is an expression of intent to harm someone that may be spoken, written, gestured, or communicated in some other form, such as via text message or email. | |
| **Name of person reporting threat:** | **Date/time threat reported:** |
| **Affiliation of person reporting threat:** ❑Student ❑Parent ❑Staff ❑Other: | |
| **Contact Information of person reporting threat:** | |
| **Name of person receiving the report:** | |

**INCIDENT or BEHAVIOR OF CONCERN**

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| **Name of person allegedly making threat:** | **Date/time of incident:** |
| ❑Student ❑Parent ❑Staff ❑Other\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | **Status:** ❑Current ❑Former |
| **Identification:** ❑Male ❑Female Age: Grade, if student: School program, if student:  **School Program:** | |
| **Emergency Contact:** | **Relationship:** |
| **Home Address:** | **Phone:** |
| **Location where incident occurred:** ❑ School Building or Grounds ❑School Bus/Other Travel ❑School-Sponsored Activity  ❑Digital communication such as text or post ❑Other\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | |
| **Summary of the incident or alleged threat.**  What was reported? Include who said or did what to whom. Who else was present? (Attach additional pages if necessary) | |

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| **ASSESSMENT FINDINGS** (All sources are not needed in most cases.) | | |
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| **Sources of Information** | **Was information reviewed?** | **Relevant Findings** (use additional pages as needed) |
| **Prior threats** | ❑Reviewed ❑Not applicable ❑ Not available |  |
| **Prior discipline incidents** | ❑Reviewed ❑Not applicable ❑ Not available |  |
| **Academic records** | ❑Reviewed ❑Not applicable ❑ Not available |  |
| **Parish Records/contacts** | ❑Reviewed ❑Not applicable ❑ Not available |  |
| **Other records** | ❑Reviewed ❑Not applicable ❑ Not available |  |
| **Records from other schools** | ❑Reviewed ❑Not applicable ❑ Not available |  |
| **Records from outside agencies** (e.g., social services or mental health) | ❑Reviewed ❑Not applicable ❑ Not available |  |
| **Law enforcement records** (criminal history, contacts, firearms purchases, etc.) | ❑Reviewed ❑Not applicable ❑ Not available |  |
| **Employment/Christian Service records** | ❑Reviewed ❑Not applicable ❑ Not available |  |

**Diocese of St. Petersburg Interview Questions: Person who allegedly made threat or engaged in threatening behavior**

**Name of Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Name of Person being interviewed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Location, Date, and Time of Interview: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Use these questions as a guide to interview the person making the threat. Ask other questions as appropriate. Try to use open-ended questions rather than leading questions. Adjust spacing below as needed.**

1. **Do you know why I want to talk to you? What happened today when you were [place of incident]? (Record person’s exact words with quotation marks for key statements if possible.)**
2. **What exactly did you say? And what exactly did you do?**
3. **What did you mean when you said or did that?**
4. **How do you think [person who was threatened] feels about what you said or did? (Probe to see if the subject believes it frightened or intimidated the person.)**
5. **What was the reason you said or did that? (Probe to find out if there is a prior conflict or history to this threat.)**
6. **What are you going to do now? (Ask questions to determine if the subject intends to carry out the threat.)**

**Diocese of St. Petersburg Interview Questions: Alleged Target, Witness, or Person with Relevant Information**

**Name of Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Name and Relationship of Person being interviewed: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Contact Information: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Location, Date, and Time of Interview: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Use these questions as a guide to interview the person targeted by the threat. Ask other questions as appropriate. Try to use open-ended questions rather than leading questions. If target is a minor, record parent under emergency contact. Adjust spacing below as needed.**

1. **Do you know why I want to talk to you? What happened today when you were [place of incident]? (Record person’s exact words with quotation marks for key statements if possible.)**
2. **What exactly did (subject) say? And what exactly did (subject) do? Is there tangible evidence?**
3. **What did you think he or she meant when he or she said or did that? (Does target believe that subject intends to carry out the threat?)**
4. **How do you feel about what (subject) said or did?**
5. **What was the reason (subject) said or did that? (Probe to find out if there is a prior conflict or history to this threat.)**
6. **What are you going to do now? (Ask questions to determine how target plans to respond to the threat and assist in planning a safe and non-provocative response.) What do you think he/she will do now?**

**DOSP Threat Assessment Team Meeting Report**

**Date and time of meeting: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Name of school and person alleged to have made threat:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

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**Members present on call or in person: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

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| **KEY OBSERVATIONS**  These items can help assess the threat level but must be considered in the broader context of the situation and other known facts. Regard these items as a checklist to make sure you have considered these aspects of the threat, but they are not to be summed or used as a score. | | |
| **Threat is likely to be less serious:** | | |
| 1. Subjects admits to threat (statement or behavior). | ❑Yes ❑ Partially ❑No ❑Don’t know/Not available |  |
| 1. Subject has explanation for threat as benign (such as joke or figure of speech). | ❑Yes ❑ Partially ❑No ❑Don’t know/Not available |  |
| 1. Subject admits feeling angry toward target at time of threat. | ❑Yes ❑ Partially ❑No ❑Don’t know/Not available |  |
| 1. Subject retracts threat or denies intent to harm. | ❑Yes ❑ Partially ❑No ❑Don’t know/Not available |  |
| 1. Subject apologetic or willing to make amends for threat. | ❑Yes ❑ Partially ❑No ❑Don’t know/Not available |  |
| 1. Subject willing to resolve threat through conflict resolution or some other means. | ❑Yes ❑ Partially ❑No ❑Don’t know/Not available |  |
| **Threat is likely to be more serious:** | | |
| 1. Subject continues to feel angry toward target. | ❑Yes ❑ Partially ❑No ❑Don’t know/Not available |  |
| 1. Subject expressed threat on more than one occasion. | ❑Yes ❑ Partially ❑No ❑Don’t know/Not available |  |
| 1. Subject has specific plan for carrying out the threat. | ❑Yes ❑ Partially ❑No ❑Don’t know/Not available |  |
| 1. Subject engaged in preparation for carrying out the threat. | ❑Yes ❑ Partially ❑No ❑Don’t know/Not available |  |
| 1. Subject has prior conflict with target or other motive. | ❑Yes ❑ Partially ❑No ❑Don’t know/Not available |  |
| 1. Subject is suicidal. (Supplement with suicide assessment.) | ❑Yes ❑ Partially ❑No ❑Don’t know/Not available |  |
| 1. Threat involved use of a weapon other than a firearm, such as a knife or club. | ❑Yes ❑ Partially ❑No ❑Don’t know/Not available |  |
| 1. Threat involves use of a firearm. | ❑Yes ❑ Partially ❑No ❑Don’t know/Not available |  |
| 1. Subject has possession of, or ready access to, a firearm. | ❑Yes ❑ Partially ❑No ❑Don’t know/Not available |  |
| 1. Subject has or sought accomplices or audience for carrying out threat. | ❑Yes ❑ Partially ❑No ❑Don’t know/Not available |  |
| 1. Threat involves gang conflict. | ❑Yes ❑ Partially ❑No ❑Don’t know/Not available |  |
| 1. Threat involves peers or others who have encouraged subject in making threat. | ❑Yes ❑ Partially ❑No ❑Don’t know/Not available |  |
| Other relevant observations | | |

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| Actions recommended by the committee: |