

LEVELS OF RISK/CONCERN

The chart below provides guidelines on the various levels for consideration. This is not prescriptive and may not address every variable, thus professional judgment is still warranted.

| LEVEL OF RISK/CONCERN | DEFINITION |
|-----------------------|--|
| Low | <p>Individual/situation does not appear to pose a threat of violence or serious harm to self/others, and any exhibited issues/concerns can be resolved easily.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Threat is vague, indirect, inconsistent, and implausible. • Information contained within the threat lacks detail or realism; no “true” threat. • Misunderstanding of what was communicated. • Taken out of context. • Student lacks developmental understanding. • Available information suggests that the person is unlikely to carry out the threat or become violent. • No identified grievances; thought was in passing to a specific circumstance/made in heat of the moment. • Subject is remorseful. • Supports are available and accessible. • Can be resolved with clarification, explanation, retraction, and/or an apology. • Managed through existing educational programming already in place. |
| Moderate | <p>Person/situation does not appear to pose a threat of violence, or serious harm to self/others at this time but exhibits behaviors that indicate potential intent for future violence or serious harm to self/others; and/or exhibits other concerning behavior that requires intervention.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Threat is plausible but lacks specifics. • No clear indication the student has taken preparatory steps, although there may be ambiguous or inconclusive references pointing to that possibility. • Some grievances but does not view situation as helpless • Moderate or lingering concerns about a student’s potential to act violently but willing to access supports. Open to help. • Has at least some protective factors and supports present. |
| High | <p>Person/situation appears to pose a threat of violence, exhibiting behaviors that indicate both a continuing intent to harm and efforts to acquire the capacity to carry out the plan; and may also exhibit other concerning behavior that require intervention.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Threat is specific and plausible. There is an identified target or strong indication of target(s). • Information suggests concrete steps have been taken to act on the threat and has means (e.g., acquired or practiced with weapon, has victim under surveillance) but no plans for immediate execution of plan. • Information suggests a strong concern about a student’s potential to act violently in absence of interventions. • Strong grievance; intent on violence as only solution. • Minimal to no supports; resistive to problem solving/interventions. |
| Imminent | <p>Person/situation appears to pose a clear and immediate threat of serious violence toward others that requires containment and action to protect identified or identifiable target(s); and may also exhibit other concerning behavior that require intervention.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same indicators as high risk but immediate containment is needed to address safety and/or mental health issues. • Notify law enforcement immediately. |

Adapted from: VA Center for School and Campus Safety (2016); Amman, et al (2017)