

Florida Harm Prevention and Threat Management Manual

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INTRODUCTION

In 2023, the legislature amended Section 1001.212(12), F.S., to task the Department of Education's Office of Safe Schools with developing a statewide behavioral threat management operational process, a Florida-specific behavioral threat assessment instrument, and a threat management portal. The threat management process, as described in this manual, is designed to identify, assess, manage, and monitor threats to schools, school staff, and students.

The goal of all school safety efforts is to *prevent* violence or harm to members of the school community. Threat management uses a methodology that identifies students exhibiting threatening or other concerning behavior, gathers information to assess the risk of harm to themselves or others, and identifies appropriate interventions to prevent violence and promote successful outcomes. The process applies a non-punitive assessment to distinguish between innocuous and serious situations. The aim of the threat management process is to intervene at the earliest stage to provide assistance to students and to alter or disrupt concerning behavior for the benefit of the student and school.

DEFINITIONS

1. **Baseline Behavior:** A typical or stable pattern of emotional, social, and behavioral functioning observed over time and across settings. It provides a reference point for assessing whether current behaviors represent stability, improvement, or escalation. Determining baseline behavior requires recent, corroborated information, such as interviews, collateral reports, or observations. Without recent data, classifying behaviors as baseline is considered an assumption rather than a verified finding.
2. **Concerning Behavior:** An observable behavior that elicits concern in others regarding the safety of an individual or those around them. Concerning behavior typically deviates from the person's baseline behavior, but it is important to note some baseline behaviors rise to the level of concerning behavior. Some individuals may pose a threat or escalate risk even while appearing consistent with their baseline. Concerning behavior for one person may be "normal" behavior for another person. Concerning behavior is a spectrum that can include lower-level concerns, such as unusual interests in violent topics, conflicts or grievances between classmates, increased anger, increased substance use, or other noteworthy changes in behavior (e.g., depression or withdrawal from social activities), and prohibited behaviors that are objectively concerning and should trigger an immediate response, such as threats, weapons violations, and other aggressive or violent behaviors.
3. **Concerning Communication:** Unusual, bizarre, threatening, or violent communications made by an individual or group. Concerning communications may include explicit threats or allude to violent intentions; violence as a means to solve a problem; justification of violent acts; unusual interest in weapons; personal grievances; or other inappropriate interests. Concerning communications may be expressed verbally, visually, in writing, electronically, or through other means. Concerning communications may be considered threatening, even if they do not involve a direct and explicit threat of violence. Concerning communications may also allude to hopelessness or suicide.
4. **Education Records:** Any records or documents, including information derived from those records or documents, that are directly related to a student and are maintained by an educational agency or institution, or by a party acting for the agency or institution. 34 C.F.R. s. 99.3. In most cases, this includes student health and mental health records maintained by an educational agency or institution. Law enforcement unit records, as defined by 34 C.F.R. ss. 99.3 and 99.8, are not considered education records.
5. **Imminent Threat:** An imminent threat exists when a situation, including the person's prohibited objective behavior, poses a clear and immediate threat of serious violence toward self or others that requires containment and immediate action to protect an identified or identifiable target.
6. **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA):** The IDEA is a federal law that makes a free appropriate public education (FAPE) available to eligible children with disabilities and ensures that special education and related services are provided to those children.
7. **Individual Educational Plan (IEP):** A written plan for each child eligible under the IDEA that governs how the district will educate that student. The parents, student (if appropriate) and a team of educators and professionals, known as the IEP team, develop the IEP, which details education and related services the student will receive and outlines required modifications, accommodations and behavioral interventions.

8. **Level of Concern:** The classification of an individual is based on their presenting risk and needs and balanced against protective factors. Levels of concern are classified as Low, Medium, or High:
- a. **Low Level of Concern:** A Low level of concern designation is appropriate where a person poses a threat of violence or exhibits other concerning behavior that is minimal and it appears that any underlying issues can be resolved easily. This level means the concern for future violence toward another person is low. There may nonetheless be significant concerns about the person but at that time, the concern for violence toward another is at the low end of the spectrum. Factors to consider in designating a Low level of concern are:
- A communication has been received or reported that causes some concern about potential for violence; however, it may be confusing, unrealistic, or improbable (e.g., “I will plant a nuclear bomb at work.”) or makes no allusion to violence at all.
 - A clear grievance may not be stated or implied. If the student seems to have developed a grievance, it may not be to the level where violence appears likely in addressing it.
 - The threat or other behavior may serve as venting rather than actually warning of future violence.
 - Even though the student may have made a threat, it may appear through their actions and communications that they appear to be seeking a peaceful resolution of an issue.
 - The communication or reporting person may not provide details to establish credibility or viability of the threat.
 - The communication may reference information that is inaccurate about the target, suggesting a lack of inside knowledge.
 - The student is highly unlikely to have access to the means or the potential target to carry out the threat.
 - The communication is vague, indirect, or suggests a lack of commitment to follow through on a threat.
 - The method of delivery is indirect (e.g., a mailed or emailed letter versus hand-delivered communication to the target).
 - Acting out violently may not currently be an acceptable means for them to achieve justice; this may be influenced by moral codes, spiritual/religious beliefs, a fear of legal sanctions, or other reasons.
 - There does not appear to be a pressing timeframe/deadline for resolution of the student’s grievance.
 - The student may have exhibited few or no warning behaviors.
 - The student may not have a significant number of risk factors, and there are protective factors (e.g., parental support, counseling, peer relationships) in place that mitigate the risk of violence.

b. **Medium Level of Concern:** A Medium level of concern designation is appropriate where the person does not appear to pose an immediate threat of violence, but the person exhibits behaviors that indicate a potential intent to harm or exhibits other concerning behavior that requires intervention. This level suggests that violence toward another may occur, and although the situation is not urgent, violence cannot be ruled out. Factors to consider in designating a Medium level of concern are:

- The student has a defined grievance and seems to be considering violence as an option for resolution or as a means to achieve justice.
- There may be no sense of urgency in the communication; the student may still be pursuing peaceful alternatives to resolving their grievance. If a deadline is given, it may allow time for the threat assessment team to respond and find a resolution to the grievance.
- The student may not have decided about whether to act out violently (e.g., “I don’t want to hurt them, but no one is helping me.”)
- The student may have surpassed some of the low level of concern factors, or there is an absence of significant protective factors (e.g., parental support, peer relationships).
- Others may have articulable concerns about the student acting-out violently.
- The student may exhibit a cluster of warning behaviors, potentially combining both expression and action.
- The student may be engaged in the research and planning phase of a possible attack (e.g., information gathering and basic research pertaining to a target).
- The student may have an increased number of stressors or risk factors (e.g., acting out violently, disappointment/failure, a paranoid personality disorder, substance abuse, or instability in employment and relationships). At this point in time, these factors may or may not be appropriately managed by the student or those around the student.
- There may be significant information lacking from the investigation about the student, the potential victim, the context of the threat, or other substantial aspects, which make pinpointing a level of concern difficult. Critical factors which could impact the assessment one way or another are missing.

c. **High Level of Concern:** A High level of concern designation is appropriate where the person poses a threat of violence, exhibits behaviors that indicate both a continuing intent to harm and an effort to acquire the capacity to carry out a plan, and may also exhibit other concerning behavior that requires immediate intervention and protective measures for the target. This level suggests the student of concern is reaching a critical point on the pathway to violence from which they perceive it may be difficult to turn back. A High level of concern requires immediate and continuing attention from threat management resources to ensure violence does not occur. Factors to consider in designating a High level of concern are:

- The communication may reflect an increase in intensity or severity in the tone and content—particularly in a series of communications, as well as the student’s use of multiple methods of delivery (e.g., in-person, telephone, social media, mail, electronic, etc.).
- The language of the threat or other concerning behavior appears less emotionally driven and more action-oriented, suggesting that the student is operating in a predatory manner, as opposed

to an emotional, reactive, or impulsive mode. The student has the means and ability to carry out the threat.

- The student conducted research on the target and has inside, personal, or background information on potential victims. It strongly suggests the student has knowledge necessary to approach and attack.
 - The communication may indicate directions are being received from a higher power or that the student is experiencing delusions that encourage violent action.
 - The communication may be directed and fixated on a cause or a person. There is a terminal theme to the communication, as if the relationship between the communicator and the target will soon be over.
 - The student may convey that action may be taken to end the grievance and achieve resolution.
 - The student may feel violence is the only available method of achieving justice or appears willing to accept all negative consequences resulting from violence.
 - Highly concerning communications do not generally name the precise time, place, or target in advance. However, communications may reference a timeframe/deadline or suggest the student is losing patience.
 - The student appears to have begun preparing or finalizing plans for a violent act. Such preparations may include weapons acquisition or training/practice that are out of character for the individual and an escalation from their norm. Evidence suggests the student may increase their focus and time spent on research and planning (e.g., surveillance, suspicious investigating, or approaches to the target location.)
 - The student may have virtually or actually rehearsed the attack as a means to ensure they have both the ability and the internal will to commit violence.
 - The student exhibits highly concerning warning behaviors. Suicidal/homicidal ideation is likely present.
 - The student may exhibit a combination of serious mental illness, substance abuse or dependence, a history of violence or family of origin violence exposure, or other risk factors.
 - The student of concern may desire recognition and fame and believe that violence can help achieve this.
 - Stressors in the student's life appear to be escalating and the student's ability to cope appears diminished.
- d. **Unfounded Determination:** An Unfounded determination means that there is not a sufficient factual basis to support the allegation, or it can be determined that the threats were never made; what was said was clearly not a threat; or the incident/behavior of concern did not happen or rise to the level of posing a threat or concern of harm to the school community. The reporting person may simply have been mistaken about the behavior or based upon known facts about the situation, behavior, and context, no risk of violence exists. This Unfounded summary disposition should only be used when it is clear and articulable that there is no basis for concern. The case should be advanced to the next step for further evaluation if there is any doubt.

9. **Manifestation Determination:** When a student receiving special education services is being considered for a change in placement due to a behavioral issue, including a threat to others, there must be a determination whether the IEP or 504 Plan was being implemented correctly at the time of the behavior, and whether the behavior was a manifestation of the student's disability. A manifestation means that the behavior had a direct and substantial relation to the disability.
10. **Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504):** Section 504 is a federal civil rights law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in programs or activities that receive federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Education. Section 504 requires school districts to provide FAPE to each qualified student with a disability, which includes the provision of regular or special education and related aids and services designed to meet the student's individual educational needs as adequately as the needs of nondisabled students are met. Students have a 504 Plan that provides accommodations and removes barriers so that students with disabilities can learn alongside their peers in general education.
11. **Student of Concern:** Any student reported to the Chair, or Vice Chair who exhibits any behavior or communication that may constitute a threat or concern regarding school safety.
12. **Student Support Management Plan (SSMP):** The SSMP uses direct and indirect interventions to help create an environment less likely to produce violence. The SSMP is implemented by the School Based Threat Management Team (SBTMT) imposing requirements on the student. Under the SSMP, a student of concern may be required to refrain from certain conduct or may be required to engage in certain actions that are designed to prevent harm to others. The SSMP is established for a specified period based on the level of concern and is reviewed each month by the SBTMT.
13. **Threat:** A threat is communication or behavior indicating that an individual poses a danger to the safety of school staff or students through acts of violence or other behavior that would cause harm to self or others. A threat includes communication or behavior characteristic of a person who is on the pathway to violence. The threat may be expressed or communicated behaviorally, orally, visually, in writing, electronically, or through any other means. Communication or behavior is considered a threat regardless of whether it is observed by or communicated to the target of the threat, or to a third party, and regardless of whether the target of the threat is aware of the threat. The school personnel's personal knowledge of the person making the statement or exhibiting the behavior, as well as the person's age and history of exhibiting such behaviors or making such statements, are factors that should be considered in determining whether the communication or behavior constitutes an actual threat.
14. **Threat Assessment Instrument:** The threat assessment instrument is used to assess concerning behavior and threats. The instrument is comprised of an intake and disposition form; interview forms for student of concern, parent/guardian, and witness/target of violence; faculty/staff questionnaire; and mental health assessments used to help evaluate whether behaviors or communications indicate that a student poses a risk of harm and what services are appropriate to mitigate that risk. The threat management process results in comprehensive information gathering from multidisciplinary sources, including law enforcement, mental health, and school records.

15. **Threat Management:** The threat management process is a systematic, fact-based method designed to identify, using the threat assessment instrument, whether behaviors or communications constitute a concern for violence or harm to another person. Upon a determination that a risk of violence exists, the threat management process then results in determining the level of concern and appropriate management of the person posing the concern to mitigate the risk of harm and remove them from the pathway to violence. The SSMP is part of the threat management process. The threat management process is ongoing and ends only when the SBTMT deems it appropriate under the circumstances, or responsibility is transferred to another SBTMT.
- a. **Threat management is not a means to profile the next school shooter.** There is no profile of a school shooter or student attacker. The threat management process focuses on behavior-based prevention, not a prediction. Because a student has been the subject of threat management, does not automatically mean the student is a potential shooter or attacker; it simply means that a threat or concerning behavior (whether minor or serious) was reported and evaluated through the threat management process.
 - b. **Threat management is not an emergency or crisis response.** If there is an indication that violence is imminent, such as when a person is at school with a gun or other weapon, school staff must take immediate action by notifying law enforcement and following the school's emergency response plans.
 - c. **Threat management is not a disciplinary process.** School policy and procedures regarding discipline and referrals to law enforcement should be followed regardless of the threat assessment's outcome. Someone other than the threat management team will decide whether school discipline is appropriate. Information learned during the threat management process may be used in disciplinary or criminal proceedings, when appropriate.
 - d. **The initial threat evaluation process may consider whether behavior constitutes a threat of self-harm because it is established that threats of self-harm may be a precursor to harm toward others.** However, threat management is not to be used for suicide or self-harm assessment, services, or a mental health related safety plan. In cases where a threat to harm others may be accompanied by a threat to harm oneself, threat management should only address the harm toward others and the threat management team should coordinate with those providing self-harm intervention services.

THREAT MANAGEMENT ROLES **AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Every school district is responsible for ensuring the integrity of the threat management process during the school year, including summer school, including assignment of the following roles and responsibilities:

Primary District Threat Management Coordinator (Primary DTMC): A person in each school district designated by the superintendent, or lead administrator where there is no superintendent, to oversee the district's harm prevention and threat management program. The Primary DTMC is the direct liaison between the school district and the Department of Education's statewide threat management coordinator. Pursuant to Rule 6A-1.0019, F.A.C., the Primary DTMC is responsible for ensuring the fidelity of the district's threat management program, which includes ensuring that all school threat management team personnel are appropriately trained. The Primary DTMC also serves on the District Threat Management Team.

Secondary District Threat Management Coordinator (Secondary DTMC): A person in each school district designated by the superintendent, or lead administrator where there is no superintendent, to provide support to the district's threat management process at the discretion of the Primary DTMC. The Secondary DTMC also serves on the District Threat Management Team.

District Threat Management Team (DTMT): Rule 6A-1.0019, F.A.C., and the Florida Model require each district superintendent, or lead administrator where there is no superintendent, to establish a DTMT, which is a multidisciplinary team that will receive referrals from the SBTMTs and assess serious situations. The DTMT must include the DTMCs, persons from school district administration and persons with expertise in counseling, instruction, and law enforcement. The Primary DTMC must Chair the DTMT. The DTMT may provide ongoing support and recommendations to the SBTMT as needed. The DTMT will also support the charter schools sponsored by or under contract with their school district.

School -Based Threat Management Team (SBTMT): Section 1006.07(7), F.S., and Rule 6A-1.0019, F.A.C., require each school (as defined in rule) to have a SBTMT. The SBTMT is a multidisciplinary team at the school level and is comprised of at least four members with expertise in counseling; school instruction; law enforcement; and a school administrator. The SBTMT must also consult with an instructional or administrative staff member with personal knowledge of the student of concern that is being evaluated by the team. Additional members of the team may be assigned by the school principal, or equivalent, as long as these four required roles are filled. Required team members must meet the following:

- **Counseling:** The counseling team member must be a school-based mental health services provider that is able to access student mental health records. This person must be a school psychologist certified under Rule 6A-4.0311, F.A.C., a school social worker certified under Rule 6A-4.035, F.A.C., a school counselor certified under Rule 6A-4.0181, F.A.C., or a mental health professional licensed under Chapter 490 or 491, F.S., who is employed or contracted by a district to provide mental health services in schools. This must not be the school principal, or equivalent.
- **Instruction:** The instruction team member must be a person who meets the definition of instructional personnel under Section 1012.01(2)(a)-(d), F.S., or someone who holds a current Florida Educator Certificate under Section 1012.56, F.S. This must not be the school principal, or equivalent.

- **Administration:** The administration team member must be a person who meets the definition of administrative personnel under Section 1012.01(3), F.S. This must not be the school principal, or equivalent, unless they are the only administrator at the school, because the principal has administrative oversight of the SBTMT.
- **Law Enforcement:** The law enforcement team member must be a sworn law enforcement officer, as defined by Section 943.10(1), F.S., including a School Resource Officer, school-safety officer, or other active law enforcement officer. At a minimum, a law enforcement officer serving on a threat management team must have access to local Records Management System information, the Criminal Justice Information System, and the Florida Crime Information Center and National Crime Information Center databases. Officers serving on school-based threat management teams must also have clearance to review Criminal Justice Information and Criminal History Record Information. This must not be the school principal, or equivalent.
 - A school guardian, as defined under Section 1006.12(3), F.S., or a school security guard, as defined under Section 1006.12(4), F.S., may not serve as the law enforcement member of a threat management team. However, because of their role and need for situational awareness, school guardians and security guards may be appointed to the SBTMT by the principal or equivalent.
 - Because all SBTMT members must be trained in the threat management process, calling a patrol officer who has not been trained in the Florida Model to serve *ad hoc* as the law enforcement member of an SBTMT meeting is not permitted. Charter schools will likely have to meet with the sheriff or police chief to have a law enforcement officer designated for their school who will serve on the SBTMT.
- **Personal Knowledge:** If none of the designated SBTMT members are familiar with the student of concern being assessed, the SBTMT Chair must assign a member of the school's instructional or administrative personnel, as defined in Section 1012.01(2) and (3), F.S., who is familiar with the student being evaluated to consult with and provide background information to the SBTMT. Consulting personnel do not have to complete Florida Model training and must not participate in the decision-making process. Consulting personnel are assigned on a case-by-case basis.

SBTMT Chair and Vice-Chair: The principal, or lead administrator, of each school is required to appoint a Chair and Vice-Chair of the SBTMT. The Vice-Chair performs the Chair's duties in the Chair's absence or unavailability. The SBTMT Chair is the point person at each school for threat management and receives initial reports of all threats and concerning behavior that may result in harm toward self or others (although imminent threats must always be first reported directly to law enforcement). The SBTMT Chair is responsible for assessing and triaging each reported threat or concern and determining whether it has a factual basis and whether the matter should be summarily closed or reviewed by the entire SBTMT.

THEORY OF THREAT MANAGEMENT **AND ANALYSIS OF CONCERNING BEHAVIOR**

Best Practices and Research in Threat Management

Threat management is a proactive approach to preventing violence and other unwanted outcomes, and the procedures outlined in this manual incorporate best practice guidelines in the prevention of violence and threat management. Much of the research that establishes threat management best practices was conducted by the U.S. Secret Service's National Threat Assessment Center (NTAC) and the FBI's Behavioral Threat Assessment Center (BTAC). Collectively, resources produced by NTAC and BTAC provide research-based guidance for school threat management teams in the identification and reporting of threatening and concerning behavior, the assessment processes, and case management.

It is important to recognize that threat management is not punitive but that a student's underlying conduct may violate laws or school district regulations. When a student violates laws or regulations it may be appropriate, or required in some cases, that punitive action occur. However, any punitive action for underlying misconduct must be distinct from and not associated with the threat management process.

AN IMMINENT THREAT TO LIFE OR PHYSICAL SAFETY MUST IMMEDIATELY BE REPORTED TO LAW ENFORCEMENT.

Reporting and Identifying Concerning Behavior

All threats or reports of concerning behavior should be taken seriously and thoroughly reviewed to determine their merit and the level of concern. Not every concerning behavior is a threat, but every threat is a concerning behavior. Threats made anonymously and through electronic communication must be assessed no differently than those made in-person or where the reporting party is identified. It is critically important to gather as much information as possible to understand what is happening with a student of concern. Research on best practices suggests the following as critical to successful threat management:

- The continuum of identifiable indicators of violent intent, or warning behaviors, should be well defined and broadly known to all students, parents and school personnel. This set of indicators is often referred to as the *pathway to violence* (which is explained below). Early recognition of the warning signs is essential to successful intervention.
- Reporting mechanisms should be known by all students, parents, and staff, easy to understand and use, and offer a variety of means to report threats, including anonymous reporting.
- The school community should feel confident that reports will be taken seriously and handled appropriately.
- Building rapport can facilitate information-gathering efforts. Threat management team members should demonstrate their goal is to support students who may be struggling, while ensuring that the student and school are safe. When teams have established this rapport, parents or guardians may be more likely to share their own concerns, and the student may be forthcoming about frustrations, needs, goals, or plans.
- Reports made, information gathered, and intervention strategies taken should be documented in a shared electronic information system where available.
- Regular training for all stakeholders should take place, including staff, administrators, students, parents, guardians, and law enforcement personnel.

Stressors

Most people learn to process and cope with negative experiences through healthy responses. However, individuals most at risk for perpetrating targeted violence do not possess healthy coping skills. Instead, they tend to obsess over injustices and are unable to withstand rejections or triggering events. The more stressors and triggers that exist in a person's life, the more difficult it becomes to cope and the greater the chance the person may enter the pathway to violence. A stressor can be anything that causes tension or anxiety for a student, such as:

- Bullying
- School or work-related failure or disappointment
- An unhappy home environment
- Social isolation
- Peer rejection
- Sudden change in peer group
- Self-isolation
- Financial distress (primarily family related)
- Relationship issues
- Material or status losses in family, peer, intimate, occupational and self-image settings; and
- Potential future events, such as divorce (parents), terminal illnesses, chronic pain and health issues.

Pathway to Violence

Research suggests that an individual on the pathway to violence tends to cover a series of steps; however, the pathway to violence is not identical for everyone. The process may be linear or steps may be co-mingled. Time spent at each step may vary. Most often, deeply held grievances are the first step on the pathway to violence. Motivators can include:

- Need for revenge for a perceived injury or other grievance
- Quest for justice (as subjectively defined by the individual)
- Desire for notoriety or recognition
- Desire to solve a problem perceived to be unbearable, and
- Desire to kill or be killed.

The steps on the pathway to violence may include:

- Grievance (i.e., personal grievance or humiliation based upon real or perceived injustices)
- Ideation (i.e., idea that violence is an acceptable, or the only, means to achieve justice)
- Research and planning (i.e., when, how, where, etc.)
- Preparation (i.e., equipment, skills, resources)

- Probing (i.e., testing the plan in some fashion), and
- Breach and attack (i.e., circumvention of security measures at the target location and engaging in a preplanned or opportunistic attack).

Factors that Enhance the Probability to the Pathway to Violence

Research has established that offenders may not make specific or direct outward threats toward their targets, but they do display identifiable indicators of violent intent prior to perpetrating an attack. Therefore, the lack of a specific threat should not drive the decision whether there is a possibility of harm to another person. While an expression of intent to inflict harm is an obvious identifier, a person on the pathway to violence may be identified by the presence of other factors, along with other subtle concerning warning behaviors which need further exploration. Threats and these additional factors or behaviors enhance the probability that someone may be on the pathway to violence.

These factors may include, but are not limited to:

- **A history of violence** (i.e., history of past violence to include violence towards animals, childhood exposure to violence, past violence against or resistance to law enforcement);
- **Health/mental health factors** (i.e., substance use, personality disturbance, severe mental illness, history of attempting suicide or inflicting self-harm);
- **Access to weapons** (i.e., access, familiarity, or fascination with firearms, stabbing instruments, or explosives);
- **Problematic behavioral history** (i.e., history of stalking, harassing, threatening behavior, worrisome online behavior, or non-compliant behavior); and
- **Lack of social/environmental positive supports** (i.e., unhealthy support system, isolation, instability, demonstrated lack of effective coping mechanisms).

Warning Behaviors

Predicting the occurrence or timing of a violent act is impossible; however, warning behaviors demand particular attention in gauging whether an act of violence may occur. Warning behaviors are changes in behavioral patterns that suggest an increased concern for violence. These can also help to assess the potential for imminent violence. While not required before commencing the threat management process, action should be taken when prohibited behavior occurs or a behavior is exhibited by a student of concern that causes fear in others, regardless of whether the behavior is listed below. The presence of one or more warning behaviors may indicate the need for threat management because the person is on the pathway to violence. At the same time, there may be innocuous explanations for these behaviors. Knowledge of the student's baseline behavior is important in determining the significance of any indicator.

Warning behaviors may include, but are not limited to:

- Student of concern engages in research, planning, or preparation (e.g., researching/obtaining weapons, selecting potential targets, conducting a rehearsal, engaging in an attack);
- Fixation warning behaviors such as an increasing preoccupation with a person or cause;
- Fascination with violence or weapons, military, or law enforcement paraphernalia, suggesting a warrior mentality and a desire to copycat previous attackers;

- Acts of aggression committed for the first time to test one's ability, such as animal cruelty, assault, firearm discharge, arson, vandalism, or rehearsed violence with inanimate objects;
- Leaked information to a third-party regarding thoughts, characterized by overt threats or by indirect expressions, can provide clues regarding an individual's thoughts, feelings, or an intention to harm someone;
- Implicit or explicit communications of a desire to do harm or kill;
- An approach or attempt to gain proximity to an intended target through trespassing, stalking, burglaries, or other criminal mischief, as escalation, pre-attack surveillance, or a final act of preparation;
- A burst of energy in would-be offenders, such as frequent trips, errands, purchases, or communications, has been noted to occur in the hours, days, or weeks prior to a targeted violence incident;
- End of life planning or terminal behaviors that may indicate last resort thinking and a plan to end one's life in the near future;
- Other last resort behaviors can include communications or actions indicating increasing desperation or distress, such as indicating that time is running out, exhibiting drastic changes in appearance, or a sudden onset of reckless behaviors;
- Sudden cessations of medications or other substance use or sudden withdrawal from typical life patterns or obligations can signal that a person is making final preparations for an attack; and
- Giving away personal belongings.

Protective Factors

Protective factors may prevent or inhibit a student of concern from thinking about or carrying out an act of violence. Threat management teams should consider the following protective factors when deciding whether a person poses a concern and assigning a level of concern:

- Pursuit of non-violent, legally and socially sanctioned methods of conflict resolution;
- Sense of humor;
- Positive, realistic future short and long-term goals;
- Persons, things, or circumstances of sufficient value to the person that reduce the likelihood of violence;
- Supportive family (e.g., provides healthy structure/supervision);
- Healthy social supports (e.g., positive influences, religious affiliations, community group or club);
- Positive coping mechanisms (e.g., exercise, healthy interests, hobbies); and
- Access and receptiveness to assistance (e.g., mental health, financial, medical).

Considerations for Level of Concern Determination

Threat assessment is always necessary when a report is received because there is no demographic profile for a violent offender. SBTMTs must consider the totality of the circumstances including concerning behaviors, stressors, warning behaviors, pathway to violence, factors that enhance the probability to the pathway to violence, and protective factors present in a student of concern's life. Once the team has gathered all available information, they can begin to assess whether a threat or other concerning behavior is present and if so, determine the level of concern. **There is no “crystal ball” and threat management teams must simply use the best information available to make the best possible decisions.**

The threat management process involves first determining whether there is merit to the claim and if so, the SBTMT will then determine the level of concern and what action is necessary to ensure school safety. Human judgment, applied to the totality of circumstances surrounding the threat or concerning behavior must drive the threat management team's ultimate decision regarding the level of concern. The level of concern that a student poses can change over time due to the evolving nature of concerning behaviors, surrounding circumstances, and attempted interventions.

Also know that behavioral changes may occur in the student of concern when he or she becomes aware of the threat management process. Behavioral changes may include deception, hiding behaviors, acceleration of their plan, or increased feelings of persecution.

Sometimes the behavior that initiated the threat management process results in suspension or expulsion from school. When this is contemplated or occurs, teams and school administrators should consider how it might affect their ability to monitor the student. Removing a student from school does not eliminate the threat to the school or the community at-large and can exacerbate the situation. Best practices for effective threat management includes developing strategies to stay connected to the suspended or expelled student to determine whether the student's situation is improving or if the behaviors of concern are escalating so that they can respond appropriately.

Barriers to Threat Management Process Engagement

There are barriers that may hinder the effectiveness of the threat management process, particularly when analyzing indicators of potential violence. Some of these barriers can include: a lack of robust knowledge regarding threat management policies and procedures; fatigue and desensitization of SBTMTs due to the volume of cases being assessed, especially very minor incidents; limitations on open communication among involved entities; and limited or misinformation regarding the impact of mental health factors. To help overcome some of these barriers, effective policies, team structure, training, and open communication are all needed. A school culture of shared responsibility that empowers people who witness warning behaviors to come forward to report their concerns is necessary for an effective threat management process. A culture of shared responsibility is created by environments that foster positive connections among all persons. Safe school climates, which encourage positive, trusting relationships among classmates and their teachers, and break down “codes of silence” are a crucial component of preventing targeted violence at schools.

STANDARDIZED THREAT MANAGEMENT

OPERATIONAL PROCESS

This section outlines the essential framework for threat management teams to conduct school-based threat assessments and manage threats or address other concerning behavior in Florida schools.

Reporting Responsibility for Members of the School Community

Where an imminent threat to life or physical safety exists, school personnel must immediately report the matter to law enforcement.

For instances of self-harm, there must never be any delay in reporting to the appropriate entity.

Each school district must provide multiple avenues for information affecting school safety to be easily conveyed and received. The FortifyFL anonymous reporting app and various other options are provided so that potential threats can be easily reported. School personnel are responsible for knowing the reporting options in their districts.

If you see something, say something. Effective threat management relies on all school employees, volunteers, and service providers reporting any threat or concerning behavior. All students, parents, guardians and caregivers are *strongly encouraged* to report any threat or concerning behavior.

Reports of concerns that may represent a threat to the community or school must be reported to the Chair of each school's SBTMT for intake, initial evaluation, and an initial merit determination. The Chair must be well identified to everyone on each school campus.

All required reporting and documentation relating to threat management must be performed within FSTMP. Descriptions of and required data elements for Florida's Harm Prevention and Threat Management Instrument Forms A-H can be found in Appendix A of this document.

The school-based threat management process involves:

Step 1: Report - Concerns are Reported to Chair

Concerning communications or behavior may be personally received or observed by school personnel, or personnel may receive reports from others. Regardless of the source, school personnel must immediately report any behavior or communications that may constitute a threat or concern regarding school safety to the SBTMT Chair. Before or after school hours, school personnel should immediately report the situation to law enforcement for evaluation if appropriate, and report it to the Chair as soon as possible but no later than immediately upon returning to school on the next school day. There should be no unnecessary delay reporting a threat or other concerning behavior. Before and during school hours, if a school administrator receives the information before the SBTMT Chair, the time for the Chair of the SBTMT to review the report and complete the Intake and Case Disposition form (Form A) begins at that time. If a school administrator receives a report after school hours of any behavior or communications that may constitute a threat or concern regarding school safety, the school administrator should immediately report the situation to law enforcement for evaluation if appropriate and report it to the Chair no later than immediately upon returning to school on the next school day. The time for the Chair of the SBTMT to review the report and complete the Intake and Case Disposition form (Form A) begins at that time. The Chair must use the Intake and Case Disposition form (Form A) in Florida Safety and Threat Management Portal (FSTMP) to document the receipt of the threat or concerning behavior.

Step 2: Initial Chair Determination - Is There a Factual Basis?

The Chair will initially evaluate the report to determine whether there appears to be a factual basis that warrants further review. This determination must be completed in time for the SBTMT to meet the following school day, if necessary. Unless the student or parent refuses, the Chair should speak with the student of concern in all cases when making this determination. If the student or their parents or guardian refuse to allow the student to be spoken with, then the refusal must be documented in FSTMP. This initial conversation to make a factual basis preliminary determination should be documented using the Intake and Case Disposition form (Form A).

2A. Summary Closure and Unfounded Allegations

If the Chair determines that there is not a sufficient factual basis to support the allegation, the Chair may summarily close the matter as Unfounded, as defined in rule.

This disposition is appropriate only when it is clear there is no factual basis; the case should be advanced to the next step if there is any doubt. When using this summary disposition, the Chair must complete the Intake and Case Disposition form (Form A) in FSTMP as soon as possible, but within one school day of receiving the report of concerning behavior. In FSTMP, the principal must review the decision to close the case as soon as possible but within two school days, and the DTMC must review the case as soon as possible but within two school days after its review by the principal.

Step 3: Type of Harm Determination - Self-Harm, Harm Toward Others, or Both

If the Chair determines there is a factual basis for the reported threat or concerning behavior or decides that there is not enough information to summarily close the case as Unfounded, the next step is to determine whether the concern is one of self-harm, harm toward others, or both. If the threat or concerning behavior contains a threat of self-harm, it must be immediately referred to the appropriate entity to conduct a self-harm assessment. There must never be any delay in reporting a threat of self-harm to the appropriate entity that can assess the threat and provide protective services.

3A: Refer and Close: If the threat is self-harm only, with no other indicators of concern regarding potential harm toward others, then no further action is required by the Chair other than to appropriately document the referral on the Intake and Case Disposition form (Form A) and summarily close the matter in FSTMP. For this summary disposition, the closure by the SBTMT Chair must be documented in FSTMP. In FSTMP, the principal should review the decision to close the case as soon as possible but within two school days, and the DTMC should review the case as soon as possible but within two school days after its review by the principal.

Step 4: SBTMT Referral Decision - Is Review by Full SBTMT Appropriate and Necessary?

In making the determination whether to refer the matter to the SBTMT, the Chair should consider all relevant factors, including: the nature of the threatening or concerning behavior; circumstances surrounding the behavior; the person's age and ability to carry out a harmful act; the person's known baseline behavior; and the person's history, or lack thereof, regarding similar concerning communications or behaviors, special needs manifestations, or other behaviors as reflected in school records. If the threat of self-harm includes a potential risk of harm toward another person, or the matter is solely a risk of harm toward another person, and the Chair does not close as Low (see below), then the Chair must refer to the SBTMT.

4A: Low Level Closure: If the Chair determines that the matter does not warrant review by the SBTMT and it should be summarily closed, then the Chair must assign the case a Low level of concern. The Chair may refer the student for services, as appropriate, that are not part of an SSMP. The Chair should document the case on the Intake and Case Disposition form (Form A) in FSTMP, including the reasons for not referring it to the SBTMT and if there was a referral to services, identify which services. For this summary disposition, the closure by the SBTMT Chair must be documented in FSTMP. In FSTMP, the principal should review the decision to close the case as soon as possible but within two school days, and the DTMC should review the case as soon as possible but within two school days after its review by the principal. The Chair should also refer the matter for

review under the student code of conduct or other disciplinary process as appropriate regardless of whether the matter is referred to the threat management team. Whether the matter is referred to the threat management team has no impact on whether it is a School Environmental Safety Incident Reporting (SESIR) reportable event.

Step 5: Preliminary SBTMT Meeting - SBTMT Implements an Interim SSMP

If the Chair refers the matter to the SBTMT, the team must convene no later than the next school day after the time for the Chair to review the report has begun. (See page 17 for additional guidance.) The SBTMT must implement an interim SSMP and document using the SSMP Implementation and Monthly SSMP Monitoring form (Form H) in FSTMP. The primary goal of the interim SSMP is safety for the school, students, faculty, and student of concern. If a student has a 504 Plan or an IEP, which may include a behavior intervention plan (BIP), the SBTMT should consult with the school's ESE specialist to ensure compliance with IDEA and Section 504.

The SBTMT remains responsible for threat assessment, interim SSMP implementation, and safety monitoring. The SBTMT may implement immediate safety measures necessary to protect the school community; however, any action that constitutes or may constitute a disciplinary removal or change in placement results in a need to review for compliance with IDEA or Section 504. Manifestation determinations and placement decisions are conducted through the IEP or Section 504 process and are not made by the SBTMT.

Step 6: Collect Information and Conduct Interviews

The Chair must determine whether an SBTMT member has personal knowledge of the student of concern and if not, identify a member of instructional or administrative personnel with personal knowledge of the student to consult with the SBTMT.

The SBTMT will obtain background information from school records, law enforcement records, and mental health providers, as available, to evaluate more thoroughly the threatening or concerning behavior and determine whether a threat toward others or actionable concerning behavior actually exists.

Note: The questions on all interview forms or questionnaires are intended to help guide the interview process but should not be read verbatim and are not a script; interviewers must use their best judgement and knowledge of the situation to ask appropriate questions and should document additional information learned.

This detailed information collection should be documented utilizing the forms in FSTMP to include questionnaires and interviews with the student of concern (Initial Interview of Student of Concern Form B); people familiar with the student, including parents and guardians (Parent/Guardian Interview Form C); witnesses to and the target of the threat (Witness/Target Interview Form D); and all the student's teachers (Faculty/Staff Questionnaire Form E). There should also be a review of formal academic, disciplinary, and law enforcement records, and social media postings. It is recommended that the school have an established process with the county sheriff or other police agencies through which the threat management team receives a comprehensive background report regarding the student of concern. Information regarding the totality of the circumstances, including concerning behaviors and protective factors, should be analyzed in the context of the student of concern's age and development to determine the credibility and seriousness of the threat.

As deemed appropriate, a school-based mental health services provider on the SBTMT may complete mental health interview forms of the student of concern, as well as the parent or guardian (Parent/Guardian Mental Health Interview Form F and Student of Concern Mental Health Interview Form G) in FSTMP. The purpose of the mental health interview is to help the SBTMT determine appropriate services that may benefit the student as part of the SSMP when applicable.

Steps 7-10: SBTMT Final Disposition and Level of Concern

Distinguishing the appropriate concern level is critical because it will determine the response to the reported threat or concern. The SBTMT must meet as soon as possible after it has acquired all necessary information, but no later than two school days after the preliminary meeting and determine that the case was Unfounded or assign a level of concern. Any extension of this timeline must be approved by the school principal or higher authority and the extension granted may not exceed two school days. Additional extensions must be approved by the DTMC and may be granted for a maximum of one school day each and only due to exigent circumstances. All extensions must be documented on the Intake and Case Disposition form (Form A) in FSTMP. There are four possible dispositions.

Close as Unfounded

To assign a disposition of Unfounded, the SBTMT must determine after its information gathering that the threat(s) never occurred, what was said was clearly not a threat, or the incident of concern did not happen or rise to the level of being a threat. In sum, an Unfounded, threat has no factual basis for the allegation. The reporting person may simply have been mistaken about the concerning behavior. No threat management action is needed when a threat allegation is deemed Unfounded. The SBTMT's decision to close the matter as Unfounded should be documented using the Intake and Case Disposition form (Form A) in FSTMP. In FSTMP, the principal should review the decision to close the case as soon as possible but within two school days, and the DTMC should review the case as soon as possible but within two school days after its review by the principal.

Low Level of Concern (With or Without SSMP)

Low levels of concern in a school setting are generally expressions of anger, frustration, fear, or anxiety that are noticeable but do not represent a serious concern. The person may retract the threat or offer an explanation or apology that indicates no future intent to harm. A Low level of concern is also where the person does not appear to pose a threat of violence and any underlying issues can be resolved easily. If the level of concern is designated as Low, the SBTMT team may decide to close the matter without any referral to services, refer the student to services without a formal SSMP, or place the student on an SSMP that may include services. The SBTMT's decision to close the matter as Low should be documented using the Intake and Case Disposition form (Form A) in FSTMP. If the SBTMT implements a final SSMP they must document it using the SSMP Implementation and Monthly SSMP Monitoring form (Form H) in FSTMP. In FSTMP, the principal should review the decision to close the case as soon as possible but within two school days, and the DTMC should review the case as soon as possible but within two school days after its review by the principal.

Medium or High Level of Concern (with SSMP)

If the case is not closed as Unfounded or determined to be a Low level of concern, the SBTMT must assign a level of concern of either Medium or High. Medium and High levels of concern reflect an intent to harm others. These typically, but not always, include warning behaviors such as planning and preparation, recruitment of accomplices, and acquisition of a weapon. A Medium concern level is where the person does not appear to pose a threat of violence at that time but exhibits behaviors that indicate a continuing intent to harm or a potential for future violence. A High concern level is where the person 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. If the level of concern is designated as Medium or High, it must result in final SSMP. The SBTMT's decision to close the matter as Medium or High should be documented using the Intake and Case Disposition form (Form A) in FSTMP. The SSMP must be documented using the SSMP Implementation and Monthly SSMP Monitoring form (Form H) in FSTMP. In FSTMP, the principal should review the decision to close the case as soon as possible but within two school days.

Review and Referral by the DTMC for Medium and High Levels of Concern

If the SBTMT determines that the level of concern is Medium, the DTMC upon review may refer the case to the DTMT for its consideration. If the SBTMT determines that the level of concern is High, then the DTMC must refer to the DTMT for review. The purpose of the DTMT review is for the DTMT to determine if the requirements of the SSMP meet the needs of the student. The DTMT may modify interventions or supports on the SSMP as needed. The DTMT must convene to consider the case within two school days of receiving the referral from the DTMC. The DTMT may provide ongoing support and recommendations to the SBTMT as needed.

All Steps - Required Review by Principal and DTMC: All SBTMT final decisions and recommendations described in the steps above must be reported to the school principal, who must review the team's documents to ensure completeness and fidelity, and the principal will determine whether he or she concurs with the team's decisions. The DTMC must also review SBTMT's decisions. In FSTMP, the principal must review the team's decision as soon as possible but within two school days of receipt of the decision of the SBTMT, and the DTMC must review the case as soon as possible but within two school days after its review by the principal. If there is disagreement at any level of review about decisions made and the participants cannot come to a consensus, then the matter must be automatically referred to the DTMT and it will make the final decision.

Monitoring of the SSMP: The SBTMT is required to meet monthly, assess each SSMP for its effectiveness, and make modifications as appropriate, as described in the section below.

THE STUDENT SUPPORT MANAGEMENT PLAN (SSMP)

The Student Support Management Plan is not punitive or part of a disciplinary process. The SSMP is a student support and management plan that uses direct and indirect interventions to help create an environment less likely to produce violence. The SSMP identifies mandatory action steps that are needed to ensure school safety and responses that can help support the student of concern and make positive outcomes more likely. The action steps selected will comprise the SSMP. The resources and other support the student needs will differ depending on the information gathered during the assessment, including the mental health interviews when applicable and identified protective measures.

Creating the SSMP

The SBTMT should develop the SSMP with input from the student and the student's parent or guardian, including but not limited to information learned during the mental health interviews, if they are conducted. Some actions may need to be taken immediately, while others (e.g., IEP meetings) may need to occur at a later time. The SBTMT will identify in the SSMP any long-term action that requires gradual implementation and continual monitoring. Any disciplinary referrals should be noted in the SSMP for future situational awareness only because the SSMP is not disciplinary in nature. The SBTMT will also identify any protective actions to be taken with potential victims of the threat or any students impacted by the threat or concerning behavior. The SSMP must include a timeline for plan monitoring and completion. The SSMP should contain accountability measures to ensure it is an effective plan.

Some of the possible resources and supports that may comprise the SSMP include, but are not limited to:

- Holding parent/guardian conferences to discuss the SSMP
- Implementing anti-bullying best practices that provide consequences for the aggressor, as well as support for the victim
- Consideration of potential schedule changes
- Assigning a mentor
- Providing mental health and resiliency support
- Consideration regarding extracurricular activities
- Requiring regular meetings with a counselor at school
- Referring the student to outside mental or behavioral health services
- Requiring daily searches
- Requiring social media monitoring
- Requiring a teacher or staff to escort the student throughout the school campus
- Restricting the use of computers or other electronic devices
- Short-term and long-term goal-setting

When writing SSMP interventions for students with disabilities, the SBTMT should consult the school's ESE specialist to ensure compliance with IDEA and Section 504. Safety planning and IDEA/Section 504 compliance must occur in parallel.

The SSMP requirements will be documented on the SSMP Implementation and Monthly SSMP Monitoring form (Form H). The SSMP must be consistent with the following minimum timeframes for SSMP implementation and monitoring:

- Low level of concern: 90 calendar days minimum
- Medium level of concern: 180 calendar days minimum
- High level of concern: 365 calendar days minimum.

The requirements of an SSMP are established by the SBTMT and must be adaptable to meet the needs of the situation. The specific frequency of contact with the student during the SSMP period will vary based on the need to adequately monitor the student and ensure others' safety. SSMPs should be coordinated with law enforcement regarding off-campus threat management when appropriate. The SBTMT is required to meet monthly, assess each SSMP for its effectiveness, and make modifications as appropriate. Modifications to the SSMP will be documented on the SSMP Implementation and Monthly SSMP Monitoring form (Form H) in FSTMP. The monthly assessment, or more frequently as determined by the SBTMT, must occur for the duration of the monitoring period.

SBTMT and DTMT members follow established policies and procedures, consistent with Sections 1006.07(7) and 1012.584, F.S., for referrals to school-based, community, or healthcare providers for mental health services, evaluation, or treatment as part of the SSMP. If an immediate mental health or substance abuse crisis is suspected, school personnel must follow existing policies to engage resources, including, but not limited to, law enforcement officers who have been trained in crisis intervention.

Continuing Review of Student Support Management Plans

Within 30 days before the end of the initial SSMP monitoring period for the assigned level of concern, the SBTMT must consider the matter again and assess whether to close the case upon expiration of the monitoring period or extend the SSMP. If the decision is to extend the SSMP, requirements may be added or deleted and documented on the SSMP Implementation and Monthly SSMP Monitoring form (Form H) in FSTMP.

Any SSMP reassessment may not result in the initial level of concern category being changed to a lower level based on subsequent circumstances; however, the SSMP's requirements may be modified downward as the matter is periodically reviewed. The matter may also be reconsidered at any time based on new or additional information and the level of concern may be increased. If the level of concern is increased, then the SSMP must be modified and documented as appropriate with the new level.

If a student is facing possible assignment to an alternative school, suspension, or expulsion as a consequence of their actions, the school should consider ways in which these can be safely enacted and identify resources that may assist the student during this time. These necessary events may actually exacerbate the pathway to violence and trigger violence, and the school should actively consult with law enforcement because the school-based threat may become a community-based threat. Consultation must be consistent with FERPA and related laws.

PARENTAL NOTIFICATION

There are multiple laws and rules that address requirements for parental notification, including Sections 1002.20, 1001.42(8), 1006.07(7), and 1014.04, F.S. This part of the manual, however, is limited to the parental notification requirements for threat management. The importance of parental notice cannot be overstated in the threat management process. Explaining the purpose of threat management and the concerning behavior to a parent or guardian provides them with the opportunity to support the student and provides an opportunity for the school community to enlist the support of a parent in threat management process itself. Because parental involvement in threat management can improve outcomes, the SBTMT should consider involving parents and guardians throughout the process.

The minimum notification requirements are set forth below.

- **Where a report of concern includes an identified student target, the Chair must make a reasonable effort to notify the parent of the targeted student before the end of the school day that the report was received unless the Chair has determined the concern is Unfounded.**
- If the Chair of the SBTMT determines that the reported behavior is Low level of concern and summarily closes the report, (Step 4A) the Chair or his designee must use reasonable efforts to notify the parent or guardian of the student of concern on the same day as the report is closed.
- If the Chair does not summarily close the case and refers it to the SBTMT, reasonable efforts must be made to notify the student of concern's parent on the same day the SBTMT meets to assign the interim SSMP (Step 5).
- If the level of concern is High, the Chair or his designee must notify the superintendent or his designee to ensure that the notice requirements of Section 1006.07(7)(e), F.S., are met. This section provides as follows:

Upon a preliminary determination that a student poses a threat of violence or physical harm to himself or herself or others, a threat management team shall immediately report its determination to the superintendent or his or her designee. The superintendent or his or her designee or the charter school administrator or his or her designee shall immediately attempt to notify the student's parent or legal guardian. Nothing in this subsection precludes school district or charter school governing board personnel from acting immediately to address an imminent threat.

- Parents or guardians must also be notified if the threat management process reveals information about their student's mental, emotional, or physical health or well-being, or results in a change in related services or monitoring, including but not limited to implementation of an SSMP.
- Reasonable efforts must be made to notify the student of concern's parents or guardians on the same day the SBTMT concludes final disposition (Steps 7-10).
- Once an SSMP is finalized and anytime it is substantively revised, the SBTMT Chair or designee must provide a copy of the SSMP to the student of concern's parent or guardian. The targeted student's parent or guardian should also be informed that an SSMP has been implemented.

The timelines for notice may be modified where the team reasonably believes and documents that disclosure by the time designated above would result in abuse, abandonment, or neglect, as defined in Section 39.01, F.S.

“A reasonable effort to notify” a parent or guardian means the exercise of reasonable diligence and care to make contact with the student’s parent or guardian, typically through the contact information shared by the parent or guardian with the school or school district. The SBTMT Chair or designee must document all attempts to make contact with the parent or guardian on the Intake and Case Disposition form (Form A) in FSTMP.

THREAT MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

When threat management is necessary it must be conducted for all students regardless of whether they have a disability. Threat management must always be based on an individualized assessment that is based on current information and should not be based on generalizations or stereotypes about the effects of a particular disability. Threat management teams should direct their attention to symptoms and behaviors, rather than formal diagnoses, to assess a concern for violence. The SBTMT directs threat assessment actions, interim SSMP implementation, and safety monitoring.

Issues involving students with disabilities and threat management are fact-specific and may require consultation with ESE experts at the school or district level. Alignment between the student's IEP or 504 and the SSMP is essential. The SSMP will specify safety protocols, ensuring they are consistent with the accommodations outlined in the IEP or 504 plan.

If an interim SSMP action includes or may result in disciplinary removal or change in placement, the district should consult with ESE specialists, and may need to consult with local legal counsel, to ensure compliance with IDEA and Section 504. Manifestation determinations and placement decisions occur through the IEP or Section 504 process and are not made by the SBTMT. In addition, behaviors exhibited by a student with a disability need to be evaluated in the context of that student's known baseline of behavior.

Best Practices for Interviewing Students with Disabilities

The threat management process may be intimidating for students, and there are additional considerations that should be part of the process when working with a student with a disability to make them feel comfortable and obtain accurate information. These best practices can be used in all student interactions, but may be particularly effective with students with special needs:

- Utilize adults who are familiar with the student's unique needs and levels of functioning.
- Stay calm, supportive, and ask the student what would make them feel most comfortable.
- Consider the student's sensory needs. It may be easier for the student to function in a quiet, small environment with soft lighting and without distractions.
- Ensure the environment is quiet, comfortable, and conducive to productive dialogue. Be patient and allow the person to respond without interrupting or finishing their sentence for them.
- Speak directly to the student and not to an individual who may be providing assistance, such as a paraprofessional, tutor, or sign-language interpreter. Respect the student's preferred manner of communication and allow for sufficient processing time.
- Rephrase, rather than repeat, sentences that the student does not understand.
- Gauge the pace, complexity, and vocabulary of your speech according to theirs.
- Phrase questions in a neutral way to elicit accurate information. Students with disabilities may be anxious to please and may tell you what they think you want to hear. To verify responses, try repeating each question in a different way.
- Provide the plan for the interview prior to beginning, if appropriate under the circumstances, to include concrete steps for the process, and offer the opportunity to ask clarifying questions.

- Consider that the student may engage in some behaviors that may be interpreted as non-compliant but may be a product of the student's disability. Work with the IEP team or others who know the student well to utilize strategies that typically work to gain their cooperation.

REQUIRED THREAT MANAGEMENT TIMELINES

For ease of reference, some of the threat management timelines are set forth below. Please be aware that additional timelines are found in the section entitled “Standardized Threat Management Operational Process.” Some of the timelines refer to a school day; a school day is measured beginning with the next school day after the day of the event or triggering action. As an example, if the matter is closed on a Tuesday, the principal must review it within two school days of closure. Wednesday is day one and Thursday is day two.

1. School personnel **MUST immediately** report any behavior or communications that may constitute a threat to school safety to the Chair of the SBTMT.
2. The Chair of the SBTMT must review a report of concerning behavior and complete the Intake and Case Disposition form (Form A) in FSTMP to determine if the matter should be referred to the SBTMT. This determination must be completed in time for the SBTMT to meet the following school day if necessary. If a school administrator receives the report of concerning information before the SBTMT Chair, the time for the Chair of the SBTMT to review the report and complete the Intake and Case Disposition form (Form A) begins at the time the administrator receives the report.
 - a. If the Chair of the SBTMT determines that the report of concerning behavior can be closed without referral to the SBTMT, the principal should review the decision to close the case **as soon as possible but within two school days of receiving notification of case closure** and the DTMC should review the case **as soon as possible but within two school days** after its review by the principal.
 - b. If the Chair of the SBTMT determines that the report of concerning behavior has a factual basis, but the threat is related to self-harm only, the Chair must **immediately** refer the student to the appropriate entity to conduct a self-harm assessment and close the case. The principal must review the case **as soon as possible but within two school days** of receiving notification of case closure and the DTMC must review the case **as soon as possible but within two school days** after the review by the principal.
3. If the Chair of the SBTMT refers the matter to the SBTMT because it appears to constitute a threat of harm toward another person, the team **MUST** convene for an initial meeting **no later than the next school day** from the day the initial report was received by the Chair or administrator to an interim SSMP.
4. The SBTMT must meet a second time **as soon as possible** after it has acquired all necessary information, **or within two school days** after the initial team meeting, whichever is earlier.
5. An extension of the requirement that the SBTMT meet a second time within two school days to consider the matter **MUST** be approved by the school principal or higher authority and the **extension may be granted for a maximum of two school days**. After the initial extension, the time can be extended in one day increments based upon exigent circumstances.
6. If the SBTMT determines that the level of concern is High, the case must automatically be referred to the DTMT for review. DTMT must convene to consider the case **within two school days** of receiving the referral from the DTMC.
7. If the principal or DTMC returns the report of concerning behavior back to the Chair of the SBTMT for further consideration, the Chair must make any corrections and resubmit as soon as possible, but **no later than two school days** from the date returned by principal or DTMC.

TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

School Based Threat Management Teams (SBTMT) and District Threat Management Teams (DTMT)

- All SBTMT or DTMT members must complete Florida Model Day One training.
- School principals, SBTMT Chairs and SBTMT Vice-Chairs must complete Florida Model Day One training, followed by additional training specific to their role.
- SBTMT and DTMT members who have been fully trained in a previous school year must complete an annual refresher training provided by the Office within the first sixty (60) calendar days of school. Any DTMT or SBTMT member who does not complete the annual refresher within the first sixty (60) calendar days of school must not serve on the SBTMT or DTMT in any capacity until such time as they retake and successfully complete Day One Florida Model Training.

District Threat Management Coordinators (DTMCs)

- Primary and Secondary DTMCs must complete additional training specific to the coordinator role. DTMC training must be completed prior to being designated as a DTMC.
- DTMCs must attend the annual, in-person refresher training provided by the Office of Safe Schools. DTMCs who do not attend the annual refresher training must no longer continue in the role of DTMC.

Florida Model Trainers

- All Florida Model Trainers must complete additional training specific to the Trainer role before they can train SBTMTs and DTMTs on the Florida Model.
- Florida Model Trainers must conduct a minimum of one training every school year.
- Florida Model Trainers must attend the annual, in-person refresher training provided by the Office of Safe Schools. Trainers who do not attend the annual refresher training must no longer continue in the role as Florida Model Trainer.

MAINTENANCE OF RECORDS AND INFORMATION SHARING

Documentation and Maintenance of Threat Management Records

All threats, concerning behaviors or concerning communications reported to the SBTMT Chair must be documented using the Intake and Disposition form (Form A). Interview forms, staff questionnaires, and the SSMP review form should be used as needed during each case being assessed but are not required in every instance.

Completed threat management instrument forms (Forms A-H) and related documentation are considered “Category A” records under Rule 6A-1.0955, F.A.C. Records that fall under Category A must be kept current while the student is enrolled and retained permanently. The required retention of these records is satisfied by uploading all threat management records to the FSTMP. Threat management records include all corresponding documentation and information required by the Florida Model relating to the reporting, evaluation, intervention, and management of threat assessment evaluations and intervention services.

Record and Information Sharing

Pursuant to Section 1006.07(7), F.S., school threat management records, including threat assessment reports, all corresponding documentation, and the completed threat management instrument forms required by Rule 6A-1.0019, F.A.C., are considered education records. In most cases, student health and mental records maintained by a K-12 school are also considered education records (*see additional guidance on this issue* below). Access to and disclosure of education records is governed by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and its implementing regulations (20 U.S.C. § 1232g, 34 C.F.R. Part 99), related state laws (Sections 1002.22, 1002.221, and 1002.222, F.S.), Rule 6A-1.0955, F.A.C., and district or school policy. FERPA provides parents and eligible students (those who are 18 or attending postsecondary institutions at any age) the right to inspect and review education records, to control or limit certain disclosures of information contained therein, and to challenge information contained in those records. Because threat assessments and related threat management records meet the definition of education records, parents can review these records upon request.

While disclosure of education records generally requires written consent, there are several exceptions set forth in the FERPA regulations that detail when records and information may be shared without consent. Commonly used exceptions relevant to the threat management process are the disclosure of directory information, disclosure to school officials, and disclosure related to a health or safety emergency. Specific guidance from the U.S. Department of Education can be found at the links provided or by contacting the Office of Safe Schools at FloridaModel@fldoe.org:

- [Guidance: FERPA, HIPAA, and Student Health Records](#)
- [Guidance: School Resource Officers, School Law Enforcement Units, and FERPA](#)
- [Guidance: FERPA and Disclosures Related to Emergencies and Disasters](#)

Questions regarding access to and disclosure of records by the threat management team are often fact-specific and should be discussed with local legal counsel. Such discussions should involve careful review of any interagency agreements that may be in place to allow the SBTMT or DTMT access to records, including but not limited to the district and individual user access agreements for the FSTMP. Generally, if records are shared the names and identifying information of students other than the student of concern must be redacted, consistent with FERPA and district policies. School administrators must ensure compliance with all Florida law and FERPA requirements. Consult with your school administration or legal advisor for guidance on compliance with public record requests.

School Administration must provide applicable education records to threat management teams during the threat management process and this dissemination is broader than the FERPA health and safety exception cited above. In general, members of the threat management teams will meet the definition of a “school official” under FERPA, which will allow them to access needed information to carry out their duties without consent. Further, under Florida law all members of the SBTMT and DTMT, including school administrators and teachers, may have access to criminal history record information from law enforcement officers. No member of the threat management team may disclose or use such information beyond the threat management process, unless another exception permitting such disclosure is present. Florida law also provides that all state and local agencies and programs (e.g., DOE, DJJ, DOH, etc.) may share with each other, and the threat management teams, records or information that are confidential if the records are reasonably necessary to ensure access to appropriate services for the students and to ensure safety of the student and others. Because record sharing between agencies may involve compliance with other state and federal laws or regulations, or interagency agreements, it is best to consult your local counsel or administration on such matters.

Transferring Student Records

Section 1003.25, F.S., and Rule 6A-1.0955, F.A.C., establish certain requirements for maintaining and transferring records of students who transfer from school-to-school and district-to-district, including threat management records. The law requires that student records be transferred within five school days of receipt of the request for records from the new school or district, or receipt of the identity of the new school and district of enrollment, whichever occurs first. Student records must contain verified reports of serious or recurrent behavior patterns, including threat assessments and intervention services, and psychological evaluations, including therapeutic treatment plans and therapy progress notes created or maintained by school staff.

Transferring these records as soon as possible is important so that the receiving school can assume threat management responsibility for the student. It is required under Section 1006.07(7), F.S., that the SBTMT of the transferring school maintain responsibility for the student on an SSMP until responsibility is formally accepted by the receiving school.

APPENDIX A

FLORIDA HARM PREVENTION AND THREAT MANAGEMENT INSTRUMENT

Florida Harm Prevention and Threat Management Instrument; Intake and Disposition - Form A

The School Threat Management Intake and Disposition Form will be used to document a report of concern about a student's behavior that may pose a risk to school safety. The form commences the threat management process. This form is to be completed by the SBTMT Chair using information from the individual(s) making the report. This form will also be used to document the case disposition. The SBTMT Chair or Vice Chair must complete all applicable fields.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INCIDENT (STEP 1)

- Student demographics (i.e., name, FLEID, age, sex, race, DOB, grade, IEP, 504 Plan, BIP, ELL)
- Basic incident information (i.e., date, time, location, report received by, imminent threat, law enforcement involvement, method of receiving, reporter's affiliation, reported to school administrator, SBTMT Chair name, district number, school name, MSID, narrative of reported concern)
- Parent/guardian notification (i.e., method, date, time, name, reason for no notification)
- People contacted by Chair and information gathered
- SBTMT Chair conversation with Student of Concern (i.e., date, time, narrative, actions taken, feedback gathered)

INITIAL CHAIR DETERMINATION (STEP 2)

- Action by Chair
- Referral to full SBTMT
- Factual basis determination
- Principal and DTMC approval for Unfounded

TYPE OF HARM (STEP 3)

- Type of harm classification
- Self-Harm referral information
- Principal and DTMC approval for Self-Harm only

SBTMT REFERRAL DECISION (STEP 4)

- Decision for review by full SBTMT
- Designation of Low Level of Concern with explanation
- Referral for services information (i.e., date, time, type of services)
- Principal and DTMC approval for no referral to full SBTMT

PRELIMINARY SBTMT MEETING (STEP 5)

- Referral to full SBTMT information (i.e., date, timeline, SBTMT members, title, role)
- Implementation of interim SSMP

SBTMT BACKGROUND INFORMATION ASSIGNMENT (STEP 6)

- SBTMT assignments for information gathering (i.e., law enforcement, school, mental health, interviews,
- Information obtained
- Totality of the circumstances

SBTMT FINAL DISPOSITION AND LEVEL OF CONCERN (STEPS 7-10)

- SBTMT final determination information (i.e., meeting date, level of concern, factual basis for determination)
- Principal and DTMC approval for final determination
- Final SSMP implementation information (i.e., date, referral to DTMT, modification)
- Principal and DTMC approval for case closure

Florida Harm Prevention and Threat Management Instrument; Initial Interview of Student of Concern - Form B

The following questions are provided to guide an interview of the student of concern. Ask the questions in a conversational manner and do not simply read the questions verbatim. The questions are provided as topic guides to ensure completeness of the interview and the interviewer retains complete discretion regarding how best to conduct the interview under the circumstances presented. Write a summary of the student's responses in your own words. You may include brief quotes if appropriate.

BASIC FORM INFORMATION

- Student demographics (i.e., name, FLEID, school name, grade)
- Interview details and information (i.e., date, time, location, interviewer(s), interviewer(s) title)

FORM QUESTIONS

- Do you know what happened and why we are talking today? (If the student does not reply or states that they do not know, why you are talking with them then you should explain the concern expressed about their words or actions that led to this interview.)
- Please explain why you said or did the things we are discussing today. (Determine whether there is a history of conflict between the student and others, especially if there is a direct threat against another person.)
- What do you think led to doing or saying the things that we are discussing here today?
- Have you shared or discussed your plans with anyone? If so, who and when?
- Is there anyone who has agreed to help you carry out your plan or intentions?
- What are you thinking now about harming others?
- Are you going to do anything now that would harm someone else?
- Do you have access to guns or other weapons? If so, what type of guns or weapons and where are they kept? Do you have interest in making weapons or incendiary devices?
- If the student made a threat or stated a plan of violence, ask the following: Do you have specific plans or have you taken any steps to carry out a plan of violence/threat?
- Do you have access to what you would need to carry out your threat or plan?
- What can be done so that you do not want to hurt someone else?
- When you encounter problems with other people how do you typically solve those problems? When you become angry or frustrated, what do you typically do?
- Have you experienced bullying? Are you currently experiencing any interpersonal difficulties?
- Do you ever think about hurting yourself? If yes, explain:
- Are you experiencing any difficulties in your home environment? If yes, please tell me what they are.
- Are you on social media? If yes, which apps/sites and what are your usernames?
- Who are your closest friends? Do you feel like you have people who support you?

- Do you have any future goals or something you are looking forward to? (i.e., long-term goals, short-term goals, future plans)
- What are your interests? (i.e., sports, technology, music)
- What can we put in place to help you become successful?
- Is there anything else we should know?
- Other comments?

Florida Harm Prevention and Threat Management Instrument; Initial Interview of Student of Concern's Parent/Guardian - Form C

The following questions are provided to guide an interview of the student of concern's parent/guardian. Ask the questions in a conversational manner and do not simply read the questions verbatim. The questions are provided as topic guides to ensure completeness of the interview and the interviewer retains complete discretion regarding how best to conduct the interview under the circumstances presented. Write a summary of the parent/guardian's responses in your own words. You may include brief quotes if appropriate.

BASIC FORM INFORMATION

- Student demographics (i.e., name, FLEID, school name, grade)
- Interview details and information (i.e., parent/guardian name, date, time, location, interviewer(s), interviewer(s) title)

FORM QUESTIONS

- Are you aware of the incident involving your son/daughter that we are investigating? (If the parent/guardian does not know why you are talking with them, then you should explain the concern expressed about their son/daughter. Have the parent/guardian explain what they know about the incident.)
- Please describe your family structure (who lives in your home, are there custody agreements, etc.).
- Have there been any significant incidents in your child's life?
- Is there any history of violence in your child's life?
- Does your child have any difficulty controlling anger or impulses?
- Have you heard your child talking about violent topics or acts?
- Has your child's behavior ever made you or anyone else afraid?
- If your child was mad at someone, do you believe that they are capable of reacting violently? If yes, describe.
- Has your child ever told you they have been bullied or harassed?
- Has your child's behavior changed recently, for good or bad? If yes, describe.
- Do you know if your child has access to what they would need to harm someone else? Do you believe your child is capable of carrying out a threat and harming someone else?
- Does your child have access to guns or other weapons? If so, identify the guns or weapons and where they are kept.
- What do you think led to your child doing or saying the things that we are discussing here today?
- Do you know anyone who would help your child carry out a plan to harm others?
- Has your child now, or in the past received therapy, counseling, or mental health services outside of school?
- Is your child on social media. If yes, which apps/sites and what are their usernames?
- Who does your child confide in or trust to share information with?
- Do you have any knowledge of your child's use of drugs or alcohol?

- Tell me about your child's future goals or something they are looking forward to.
- What are your child's interests?
- What are interventions we could put in place to help your child be successful?
- Is there anything else not asked that I should know?

Florida Harm Prevention and Threat Management Instrument; Witness/Target Interview - Form D

The following questions are provided to guide the interview of a person(s) who may have witnessed an incident, was a target or intended target of an incident, or has personal knowledge of a threat or other concerning behavior by a student of concern. This form is not used to interview teachers, staff, parents, or guardians, unless the teacher/staff is the target or witness of the threat, as there are specific forms for those interviews. Ask the questions in a conversational manner and do not simply read the questions and record verbatim answers. Provide summaries of the person's responses but quotes may be used as applicable. The questions are provided to ensure completeness and the interviewer retains complete discretion regarding how best to conduct the interview under the circumstances presented.

BASIC FORM INFORMATION

- Student demographics (i.e., name, FLEID, school name, grade)
- Interview details and information (i.e., witness/target name, date, time, location, interviewer(s), interviewer(s) title)

FORM QUESTIONS

- Do you know the student we are asking you about today? If so, how do you know them and describe your relationship with them?
- Have you ever thought that the student was scary, or have they done anything that worried you?
- Are you aware of anything that has happened that has made the student mad or angry?
- Have you heard the student talking about violence or violent acts?
- Do you know of any violent acts by the student, such as damaging property or harming an animal?
- Do you know if the student has access to what they would need to carry out a violent attack? Do you believe the student is capable of carrying out a threat of violence toward others?
- Do you know if the student has access to guns or other weapons? If so, have the witness identify the guns or weapons and where they might be kept.
- What do you think led to the student doing or saying the things that we are discussing here today?
- Do you know anyone who would help the student carry out a plan to harm others?
- Are you aware whether the student we are discussing is on social media. If yes, which apps/sites and what are their usernames? Identify which social media sites you interact with the student on. Have they posted anything concerning?
- Identify the person who the student would most likely confide in or would trust to share personal information with.
- Do you have any knowledge of the student's use of drugs or alcohol?
- Is there anything else not asked that I should know?

Florida Harm Prevention and Threat Management Instrument; Faculty or Staff Questionnaire - Form E

Concerns have been raised about whether a student's statements and actions may affect school safety. We are assessing these concerns and need your input because you have familiarity with the student. Our goal is to prevent harm and provide support for the student if appropriate. It is important that we learn your candid observations about the student's behavior. Please answer the following questions to the best of your knowledge.

BASIC FORM INFORMATION

- Student demographics (i.e., name, FLEID, school name, grade)
- Faculty or staff information (i.e., name, date prepared)

FORM QUESTIONS

- Do you have any knowledge of the student engaging in behavior, especially aggressive behavior, that gives you concern for the safety of the student or others? If yes, explain.
- Do you have any knowledge regarding the student's use of drugs or alcohol?
- Have you observed or do you have any knowledge of the student engaging in disruptive classroom behavior?
- Describe the student's school attendance, school achievement, and productivity. Please elaborate on any changes in these areas. Also, please describe the student's level of class participation.
- Describe the student's social skills and peer relationships. How does the student interact with other students? Does the student socially isolate or have there been peer group changes? Do you have knowledge of the student being bullied or bullying others?
- Are you aware of any grievances that the student has with school personnel or other students?
- Does the student have any difficulty controlling impulses, anger, or other emotions?
- Do you have any knowledge regarding the student being fascinated with weapons or acts of violence?
- Do you know whether the student has access to guns or other weapons?
- Do you know whether the student has created any concerning writings or drawings? If yes, explain.
- Does the student blame others for things that the student perceives as wrong? How does the student accept criticism?
- Are you afraid of the student? If yes, explain why? Do you know any other staff member or student who is afraid of the student? If yes, identify them by name.
- Has the student's demeanor or behavior changed recently? This can be a positive or negative change. If yes, explain.
- Does the student appear anxious or sad? If yes, explain.
- Are you aware of any stressors in the student's life? If yes, explain.
- What do you know about the student's home environment? Do you know whether the student has experienced any difficulties in their home environment?
- Please provide any other information that you feel is beneficial to evaluating whether the student poses a concern for school safety.

Florida Harm Prevention and Threat Management Instrument; Mental Health Parent/Guardian Interview - Form F

Directions: The mental health parent/guardian interview is used when deemed necessary in potential High and Medium level of concern cases. It is not used in every case. The main purpose of this interview is to help determine the appropriate services for the student. A mental health services provider on the SBTMT must complete this interview with the parent/ guardian. An additional school staff member may participate, if warranted. Please make every effort to establish rapport and engage the parent as an ally. Explain to the parent that the purpose of the interview is to help their child be safe and successful at school. Please use this as a guide to interview the parent/guardian and try to use open-ended questions rather than leading questions. Ask follow-up questions as appropriate. This is a guide, so not all questions have to be asked. As a mental health professional, you determine which questions are appropriate based on the circumstances of each case.

BASIC FORM INFORMATION

- Student demographics (i.e., name, FLEID, school name, grade)
- Interview details and information (i.e., date, time, location, interviewee, interviewer, etc.)

FORM QUESTIONS

- As you know, we are quite concerned about (Student Name) and the current situation. What is your view on what is happening? (If the parent/guardian is unaware of the concerns, explain the threat or concerning behavior that led to this interview.)
- Has your child behaved this way/talked about things like this before? (Ask about previous school concerns.)
- How does your child appear to get along with their peers? Who are their close friends? Do they seem to have a large or small group of friends? Has their social group changed recently? Do they maintain long-term friendships or seem to frequently change their friends?
- How do you feel about your child's choice of friends?
- Does your child appear to be isolating themselves from others?
- Has your child reported being teased, intimidated, rejected, or bullied in some other way?
- Are you aware of any recent relationship breaks (with a girl/boyfriend or best friend) in your child's life?
- Does your child currently participate in any community/extracurricular activities? If no, did they used to belong to any groups/teams?
- Do you know how (Student Name) is doing in school in terms of grades? Behavior?
- What are your child's feelings towards school? Have you noticed any changes in your child's attitude towards school in the past several months? Does your child appear to be apathetic towards school? Have they been having difficulties at school?
- Who lives in the home?
- How has he/she been getting along with all family members? (Ask about parents/guardians and siblings.)
- How is discipline typically handled in your home? Are there differences of opinion?
- How much time do you typically spend with your child during the week? What do you typically do together?

- Is there adult supervision available after school and on weekends?
- What music does your child listen to? What do they like to watch on TV/phone/computer? Do you know what they do on the internet/social media?
- Does your child display a high interest level in social media, violent video games, movies, music, television, or internet sites? If so, please explain.
- Has your child shown an interest in any reports of targeted violence in the media, extremist groups, or murder?
- Do you supervise your child's television and internet use?
- Does your family own guns or other weapons? Does your child have access to any weapons in the home? Outside of the family home? Does your child have experience with weapons or guns? Does your child have an interest or fascination with weapons or guns? If yes to any of these questions, please describe.
- Are there any important events that have affected you family/child? (Ask about any recent/pending changes such as: move, divorce/separation, losses, financial/employment status, or any involvement with law enforcement/the courts.)
- Has your child experienced any disappointment or setbacks? (Ask about disappointments that may include family relations, intimate/peer relations, school/occupational, self-image status.)
- Has your child ever been a victim of abuse?
- Has your child been exposed to violence in the home or in the neighborhood? If yes, please explain.
- Has there been any physical or verbal aggression displayed by your child with peers or family?
- Does your child tend to do things without considering the consequences of their actions first? (To evaluate impulsivity.)
- How does your child typically express anger? (Give examples such as acting out, passive-aggressive behaviors, and internalizing behaviors.)
- Has your child ever engaged in any troubling behavior, such as following, stalking, or harassing someone? If yes, please describe.
- Has your child displayed destructive behavior toward property at home or in the community?
- Has your child intentionally inflicted harm on any animals or other children? If yes, please describe.
- Do you have any suspicions that your child may be using drugs or alcohol?
- Has your child been involved with law enforcement or the courts in the past?
- What has your child's mood been like in the past few weeks? Is this different from their baseline?
- Has your child been unusually nervous, anxious, irritable, or short-tempered? If so, please describe.
- Has your child had problems with sleep? Appetite? Energy level? Concentration? If yes, please describe.
- Has your child had any hospitalizations or any serious illness? Have they had any recent medical treatment or are they taking medications? Do they have any current or past medical diagnoses?
- Has your child ever seen a therapist/counselor due to their mood or behavior? (Ask about both school and community providers.)

- Has your child displayed any self-injurious behaviors or made suicide threats? Has your child ever been hospitalized under the Baker Act?
- Does your child appear to overreact to criticism or authority? Does your child demonstrate severe rage for seemingly minor reasons?
- Have you observed any behaviors that you thought were very odd or ever bizarre? (Probe for possible symptoms of psychosis such as hallucinations or delusional beliefs.)
- Is there any history of mental health concerns on either side of the family?
- Has your child expressed feelings of being mistreated or have they had any longstanding conflict (e.g., grudges, grievances) with a peer, teacher, or other individual? If yes, please describe.
- Has your child told you of any plans or a desire to harm or kill others? If yes, have they shared a specific plan?
- What do you think caused your child to make the reported threat/engage in the behavior that caused the school to become concerned?
- Has your child made any threats to harm others in the past?
- Have you seen any drawings, writings, internet posts (e.g., poems, letters, social media comments) by your child that were violent or threatening in nature? If yes, please describe.
- Does the threat or reported concerning behavior seem consistent with your child's behaviors/actions as of late?
- How concerned are you that your child might follow through with violent actions? What past behaviors or incidents support your concern?
- What do you think can help decrease the likelihood of your child attempting to follow through with violent action? Is there anything that you feel might increase the likelihood?
- Who does your child have to talk to or assist them when having problems? Will these individuals be available to them with this current situation? (Determine what supports or stabilizing factors may be available or in place, such as mental health professionals, peer groups, family support, religious groups, etc.)
- Are there any steps that you think can be taken by the school, yourself, or (Student Name) to make things better for them? (Let them know their concerns are taken seriously and help them come up with strategies to address their child's needs.)
- **Close with a statement that describes short-term next steps and express gratitude to the parent/guardian for their support and follow through. You may wish to inform the parent/guardian that if any emergency situation comes up at home, they should immediately contact law enforcement.**
- Is there anything else not asked that I should know?

Florida Harm Prevention and Threat Management Instrument; Mental Health Student of Concern Interview - Form G

Directions: A mental health services provider on the SBTMT must complete this interview with the student of concern. An additional school staff member may participate, if warranted. The purpose of this interview is to maintain the safety and well-being of the student and others. Therefore, this interview has two objectives:

- 1) Intervention or referral needs. Assess the student's present mental state and determine whether there are urgent mental health needs that require attention, such as risk of suicide, homicide, psychosis, or rage. Beyond these immediate needs, consider whether there are other referral or support needs.
- 2) Threat reduction. Gather information on the student's motives and intentions in making the threat or exhibiting the concerning behavior to understand why they are acting in a certain manner. Identify relevant strategies or interventions that have the potential to reduce the risk of violence. Please begin by attempting to establish rapport, then use these interview questions as a guide to interview the student who either made a threat or exhibited a behavior of concern. Try to use open-ended questions rather than leading questions. Consider the developmental level of the student and adjust the language of the questions accordingly. Ask follow-up questions as appropriate. This is a guide, so not all questions have to be asked. As a mental health professional, you determine which questions are appropriate based on the circumstances of each case.

BASIC FORM INFORMATION

- Student demographics (i.e., name, FLEID, school name, grade)
- Interview details and information (i.e., date, time, location, interviewer(s), interviewer(s) title)

FORM QUESTIONS

- What is your understanding of why you have been asked to meet with me?
- We are concerned about behavior that has been reported. What's your side of it?
- What is your understanding of why the adults at school are concerned?
- In order to help me better understand this situation and be able to help you, I am going to ask you some more questions.
- What do you typically do after school? Do you have any hobbies or interests?
- Are you involved with any groups or teams outside of school? If not, why?
- What are your favorite movies/video games/TV shows/music groups/internet sites? (Look for themes of violence or interest/fascination with mass shootings or other targeted violent attacks.)
- Do you have any social media accounts? What kind of pages or people do you follow? (Look for themes of violence or interest/fascination with mass shootings or other targeted violent attacks.)
- Who are your friends? How long have you been friends with them? Do you have a best friend? How long have you been best friends? Have you had a problem with any of your friends recently?
- How would you describe the kids at your school? Are there any groups of kids that you don't get along with? (To identify potential targets.)
- How would your classmates describe you? Is that an accurate description? Do you feel they misunderstand you?

- Do you get teased or bullied by other children? Is there anyone who makes you feel afraid? (Probe for concerns at school and outside of school.)
- Have you recently ended a relationship with a girlfriend or boyfriend? Have you recently ended a good friendship? If yes to either, what happened?
- Have you been pulling away from your friends or do you feel isolated recently?
- Who do you live with (parent/guardian)? How well do they know you? What are their work hours? (These questions will provide information regarding supervision available to the child.)
- Do you do any family activities together? How often? What do you typically do?
- Does anyone in your family seem sad or angry?
- Have you experienced any recent changes in your life? Do you foresee any upcoming changes in your life? (Ask about family move, death of family or friend, parents/guardians separating or divorce. Also ask about potential losses or disappointments that may include family relations, intimate/peer relations, school/occupational, self-image/status.)
- Do you think you are treated fairly by your parents and at school?
- Do your parents/guardians ever have to punish you? Usually for what reasons? How do your parents/guardians typically punish you?
- Do your parents/guardians know what you watch on TV/your phone/your computer? Do your parents know what you do on the internet/social media?
- Have you tried using any drugs or alcohol? Are you using any drugs or alcohol now? (If yes, ask what and how often they are using.)
- Do you have difficulty in school? (If yes, query about specific areas of difficulty.)
- How important is it to you to do well in school?
- How do your parents/guardians react to your school performance? Do you worry that your parents/guardians will punish you for doing poorly in school?
- Have you ever hurt an animal while playing around? Have you ever hurt any animals on purpose? (If yes, ask for details.)
- Have you ever damaged your own property or someone else's property? (If yes, ask for details.)
- Do you ever pick on or bully other children? (If yes, ask for details.)
- Have you ever seen or heard of someone being seriously hurt? Have you ever seen or heard of violence in your neighborhood? How did that make you feel?
- Have you ever purposely hurt someone in the past? (If yes, ask for details.)
- Do you get into fights? In school? Outside of school?
- Do you feel it is necessary to get back at someone when they hurt you or do something to you? (If yes, ask for details.)
- Have you ever followed, stalked, or harassed someone? (If yes, ask for details.)

- Have you ever been in trouble with the police? If yes, what happened?
- Have you thought about or wished you could hurt someone else? (If no, go to next section. If yes, ask the following questions.)
- How often do you have those thoughts and how close have you come to acting on them? (Probe for details regarding who, how, when, and where.)
- How do you think others view you when you make a threat or behave aggressively?
- Do you have access to a weapon? (If yes, find out what type of weapon, location, and if they have shown it to anyone.)
- Have you ever brought a weapon to school? Did you show it to anyone or tell anyone you had it on you?
- What steps have you taken to carry out your plan? Have you ever practiced your plan? If yes, what did you do and how did it make you feel?
- Have you told anyone about this desire to hurt others or your plan to do so?
- How do you feel most days of the week? Do you ever feel upset, worried, sad, or depressed? Do you know why?
- Do you ever feel that no one cares about you or loves you? (If yes, ask for details.)
- What makes you angry? Are you angry at anyone right now? What do you do when you get angry? Has your temper ever gotten you in trouble?
- Do you have any difficulties with sleeping, eating, or concentrating? (If yes, ask for details.)
- Do you ever feel lonely? Do you prefer to be alone? (If yes, ask for details.)
- Do you blame yourself for things that happen?
- How do you handle or deal with stress or anger? (Inquire about coping skills such as journaling, exercise, reaching out to social supports, use of drugs/alcohol, etc.)
- Have you had any unusual experiences lately? Have you heard things that others cannot hear or seen things that others cannot see? (Probe for delusions/hallucinations and details related to those symptoms.)
- Have you ever thought of hurting yourself or ever hurt yourself on purpose (e.g., cutting, burning, etc.)?
- Have you had any thoughts about killing yourself? (If no, go to next section. If yes, ask the following questions.)
- Do you feel like that right now?
- Have you thought about how you might do this?
- Have you decided when you would do this?
- Have you taken any steps to get the things you need to do this? (Look for examples such as giving away valuables, obtaining means to carry out the act, writing a will or suicide note, etc.)
- Why did you want to (or try to) kill yourself?
- What made you decide not to kill yourself?

- Who do you have to talk to or assist you with this situation? (Determine what supports or mitigating factors may be available or in place such as mental health professionals, peer groups, family support, religious groups, etc.)
- What could the school, your parents, or you do that could make things better? (Let them know their concerns are taken seriously, and help the student come up with strategies to address their legitimate concerns.)
- Given where things stand right now, what are you thinking about or planning to do at this point?

Florida Harm Prevention and Threat Management Instrument; SSMP Implementation and Monthly SSMP Monitoring - Form H

When the SBTMT places a student on an SSMP, the SBTMT is required to meet monthly, at a minimum, and assess the efficacy of the SSMP. If the SSMP is having the desired results, then no modifications to the SSMP are necessary. The SBTMT may in its discretion eliminate or modify SSMP requirements. However, if desired results are not being obtained through the SSMP, then the SBTMT should consider modifying or adding requirements to the SSMP. If at the end of the minimum monitoring period the SBTMT determines that it is appropriate to terminate the SSMP, then the case should be closed. This Form is used to document all interim and final SSMPs and to document monthly meetings to evaluate the student's case. The SBTMT Chair or Vice Chair must complete all applicable fields.

INTERIM SSMP

- Student demographics (i.e., name, FLEID, school name, grade)
- Basic SSMP information (i.e., date, SBTMT members, role)
- Requirements imposed by interim SSMP (i.e., discipline consequences, student safety, other, attendance)
- Update to IEP, 504, or BIP

FINAL SSMP

- Basic SSMP information (i.e., date, SBTMT members, role)
- Monitoring period end date
- Requirements imposed by final SSMP (i.e., academic, attendance, discipline consequences, protective factors/resilience interventions, referral for mental health services, student safety, other)
- Termination or extension of SSMP
- Date copy of SSMP provided to student of concern's parent