

**Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services
Center for School and Campus Safety**

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MEMO To: Virginia Public School Superintendents, Administrators, School Counselors, School Resource Officers, and Threat Assessment Team Members

CC: VCSCS Staff

From: Brad Stang, VCSCS Threat Assessment Program Coordinator

Date: November 20, 2020

Subject: **Threat Assessment and Management in Virginia's Public Schools: Model Policies, Procedures, and Guidelines – Release of Third Edition**

The DCJS Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety (VCSCS) is pleased to announce the release of the third edition of the *Threat Assessment and Management in Virginia's Public Schools: Model Policies, Procedures, and Guidelines*. Since 2013, in accordance with the *Code of Virginia*, [§ 9.1-184](#), VCSCS has developed and provided model policies and procedures to help local school boards establish and operate threat assessment teams to support the safety and well-being of their students and staff.

School division policies must be consistent with these model policies developed by the DCJS Virginia Center for School and Campus Safety (see [§ 22.1-79.4](#)). The DCJS model adheres to legislative requirements and is a synthesis of current best practices or standards of practice in threat assessment and management in school settings. The DCJS model is available for use, free of charge, for both public and private schools in Virginia.

Some important updates to note include an updated *Classifying/Priority Level of Concern* classification system to rate threat levels.

- With this system, threat assessment teams are encouraged to focus on the overall level of concern associated with a case, not solely on the dangerousness/risk of the subject of concern. This will help teams better understand the impact of the threat or concerning behavior and holistically address the impact across all domains.
- These updated levels also help teams classify and rate a threat where there is no known threat or concern and is otherwise a routine issue the team and school can address in another manner (this was not the case in the previous editions).
- The nexus between self-harm, threat assessment, and suicide risk assessment is also addressed in this update.
- There is also more guidance and clarification provided to the *Threat Assessment and*

Management Forms to help guide teams in the process. The updated guide also provides additional resources and guidance to create a more robust document for schools in Virginia.

In addition, with the new classifying/priority level classification system, the VCSCS will need to address how schools report the current threat assessment ratings in this year's School Safety Audit. We will be providing further guidance and a crosswalk document to help Virginia's schools in this process, as we get closer to the audit.

You can find the link to the updated Model Policies, Procedures, and Guidelines [here](#), as well as the link to the updated Model Threat Assessment and Management Form [here](#).

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