

Vehicles, Uniforms and Equipment (VUE) Workgroup

Draft Guidelines and Recommendations

Introduction

The University of California (UC) Community Safety Plan seeks to transform UC's culture, policies, and practices to ensure all members of the community feel welcome, are respected and protected from harm. The Community Safety Plan creates a structure for achieving that goal by transforming UC's culture, policies and practices by re-envisioning safety.

In this work, the UC Community Safety Plan, among other actions, called for the formation of a systemwide workgroup that includes students, faculty and staff to recommend uniform, equipment and vehicle standards for every tier in the safety model including for police officers, public safety officers, and mental health responders. To this end, the University of California, Office of the President (UCOP) formed the Vehicles, Uniforms and Equipment (VUE) workgroup to recommend systemwide guidelines and standards.

Systemwide standardization of the visual identification and equipment of public safety personnel is important given that members of the UC community often visit and work at multiple University locations. The UC community and nonaffiliates must be able to easily identify safety personnel at any campus or University location, both to ensure that individuals know who to approach in the case of an emergency, but also so that individuals feel welcomed, respected, and are protected from harm.

The VUE workgroup began its work in late October, 2021 with its first workgroup meeting in November. The workgroup quickly split into subgroups to analyze current VUE policies and practices at all campus and medical center locations. Meeting monthly, the workgroup developed the following guidelines and recommendations through member consensus.

High-level VUE guidelines for the working group's recommendations are found in Part I. Next, Part II provides an overview of the current systemwide tiers of public safety. Finally, specific VUE workgroup recommendations are described in Part III.

Ultimately, these recommendations are a starting point for the change envisioned by the UC Community and Safety Plan, and should be seen as a living document and process. It will be refined based on feedback and data and under the guidance of the Systemwide Director of Community Safety.

More information on the work of the UC Community Safety Plan can be found at:

<https://www.ucop.edu/community-safety-plan/>

Part I – VUE Guidelines

The Vehicles, Uniforms, and Equipment (VUE) workgroup, after analyzing and evaluating existing standards and needs of campus and medical center safety personnel established the following high-level VUE guidelines:

Differentiation of Public Safety Tiers

Each tier of public safety providers must be distinguishable from another tier and easily identifiable.

Complementary

The VUE for all tiers must be complementary and work together to maintain safety and to ensure that tiered response models are holistic and inclusive.

Consistency

Tiers with a similar function and responsibility should be consistent in VUE across the University.

Emerging Practices

When considering future changes to VUE, emerging practices from both campuses and medical centers and the wider community should be evaluated and adopted.

Feel Safe and Be Safe

The VUE for any tier should balance the need for personnel safety and what is the least tactical options for completing the responsibilities assigned to them.

Minimize Militarized Appearance

All campuses and medical centers should work to minimize the perceived appearance of militarized public safety personnel and increase the visibility of unarmed safety personnel and services.

Part II – A Review of Functions for Systemwide Tiers

As part of the workgroup’s review, information was collected and analyzed from each campus and medical center to understand existing and planned tiers of public safety providers. The goal of this was to understand the functions of public safety personnel and to evaluate similarities and differences across the University. This was then used to guide the recommendations made in Part III.

The VUE workgroup was not charged with, and did not, define either the tiers or their functions. Each campus and medical center, as directed by the UC Community Safety Plan, is undertaking this within their holistic tiered response model.

Individual campuses and medical centers have established what an individual public safety tier’s responsibility is. Not all campuses and medical centers have or will have the same tiers of public safety providers. As such, what is described here is a high-level consolidated summary of the functions of public safety providers as evaluated by the workgroup based on reviewing campuses’ public safety providers and tiered response models.

Table 1: A Review of Systemwide Tiers Based Upon Campus Reporting

Sworn-Peace Officers	Security and Public Safety Services
Student Safety Partners (Students)	Mental Health and Student Service Professionals

Sworn-Peace Officers

University of California police officers are trained and certified by the California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training and authorized as sworn-peace officers as provided by California law. They provide 24/7 response to emergency calls, crime in progress, suspect on scene, violence or reports of violence, insufficient information to determine the nature of a call, and some non-emergency calls. Police officers assigned to patrol armed and wear police protective equipment, and may drive a distinctly marked patrol vehicle with emergency equipment (e.g. lights & siren). They are the primary response to violent crime on campus and at medical centers and enforce local, state, and federal laws. They also investigate crimes and conduct arrests.

Security and Public Safety Services

Unarmed non-sworn employees, such as parking enforcement or security personnel, who provide and perform a variety of functions with the primary role of maintaining safety and

security at both campus and medical center locations. They are often assigned to fixed locations or buildings, and when needed, work special events providing traffic and pedestrian control and visible presence at functions. Additional responsibilities also include unverified alarm response, lost and found support, location checks, crime prevention, and general campus and public assistance. While they do not arrest powers, they may provide guidance and instruction to the community about campus rules and regulations.

Student Safety Partners (Students)

Student employees that handle student safety escorts (e.g. night walks), often working as a liaison between students and professional campus safety functions. Campuses often also utilize these student employees as office and administrative support within the police departments. Students also patrol campus for “observe and report” security, reporting safety hazards, and provide some services such as building unlocks and lockups. They also support large events through traffic and crowd assistance and provide general campus and public assistance.

Mental Health and Student Service Professionals

Professionally trained staff that provide a variety of mental health and student services, both in urgent crisis and ongoing, location-based situations such as student residence halls. These individuals include mental health and social service providers, CARE advocates, and residency hall professional staff. They support the UC community holistically and inclusively, as part of multidisciplinary teams that triage behavioral health crises, conduct wellness checks and safely connect individuals to coordinated care, including health and social support resources.

Part III – VUE Recommendations

1. All public safety providers who are not sworn-police officers will not have badges, stars, patches, or other overt VUE similarities to those of police officers.
2. Campuses will not call any public safety personnel, other than sworn-police officers, “officers.”
3. Seeking to decrease the visibility of public safety individuals who look like sworn-police officers, no other public safety personnel will look, carry equipment, or drive vehicles substantially similar to those of sworn-police officers.
 - a. Parking enforcement personnel uniforms should consist of a polo-style uniform with the words “PARKING” printed across their back. Their vehicles shall be clearly identifiable as parking enforcement.
4. Campuses should evaluate a sworn-police officer role to respond to calls for service that do not require a visibly armed and traditionally uniformed sworn-police officer and to serve in a campus and community affairs-related position. These officers’ uniforms

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should be distinguishable from those of regular patrol police officers, such that uniforms should be a polo shirt or plain clothes.

5. Load-bearing vests will not be issued as standard equipment for new hires of sworn-police officers.
 - a. Understanding the potential needs for load-bearing vests (not limited to ergonomic, officer safety, etc.), such vests will be approved on a case-by-case basis by the Police Chief or designee.
6. Less than lethal weapons shall be required equipment for all sworn-police officers and carried on their person as required equipment.
7. Any marking of "POLICE" must identify that the police officer, equipment, or vehicle is that of the University of California, such that a marking, badge, or insignia shall say "UC POLICE" or "CAMPUS POLICE" or "UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA POLICE", or similar.
8. Sworn-police officer patrol cars should be distinguishable from local law enforcement authorities, with patrol cars displaying "University of California Police" or the campus name with any marking of police.
 - a. Campuses and medical centers are encouraged to move from a black and white patrol car to a solid white patrol car to distinguish the vehicle from local law enforcement.
9. Campuses and medical centers should develop procedures to determine if a fully-uniformed patrol police officer is needed for specific events and functions. For example, plain-clothed police officers providing security and protection services for visiting dignitaries.
10. Medical centers should reimagine security services by having a public safety ambassador wearing a professional blazer-style uniform and more typical safety or security personnel wearing a utility-style uniform.
11. Given the importance of unarmed security and public safety services as part of the UC Community Safety Plan and each location's tiered response models, campuses and medical centers with personnel in this tier shall adopt the minimum for systemwide consistency:
 - a. These personnel shall be unarmed.
 - b. Identification: non-sworn safety personnel with a primary role of ensuring safety and security shall be identified systemwide as "University of California Security Services". Campuses will not identify these individuals as officers, but as protective services, community partners, public safety partners, or another similar title.

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- c. Uniform: clearly distinguishable from sworn-police officers, such as khaki utility pants and a light blue uniform or polo shirt; and insignia that identifies the individual as “University of California Security Services”.
 - d. Equipment: wearing a duty belt to hold a radio, flashlight, and a self-defense device such as pepper spray.
 - e. Vehicles: any vehicle for UC protective services should be identifiable as such, and not have stars or other markings similar to those of sworn-police officer patrol cars.
12. Mental health and student service professionals responding to a known mental health emergency call as part of a campus’ tiered response model must wear professional, clinical, or similar uniforms.
 - a. They must wear a hanging style photograph identification badge, which shall indicate that they are mental health, clinical professionals, or another type of safety responder.
 - b. The equipment they carry should be directly related to their responsibilities within the campus' tiered response model.
 - c. If they are required by the campus to carry equipment on their person, a smock-type vest of a sand or khaki color is recommended with insignia identifying them as mental professionals.
13. Student Safety Partners should highlight their role as student-peers trained to provide safety escorts to fellow students. Their uniforms should consist of polo-style shirts with no stars, badges, police department patches, or logos. The University crest and campus colors should be utilized as a part of the uniform.
 - a. Campuses that use the word officer in the identification of these personnel should work to reimage these positions as student safety partners.
 - b. When providing safety escorts, a hanging style photograph identification badge must be visible indicating that they are students.
 - c. Their uniforms should have reflective or other high-visibility elements for night-time safety.
14. Any changes to VUE for public safety personnel shall be made in consultation with the campus’ responsible administration officer and with the systemwide director of campus safety.