Florida's Harm Prevention and Threat Management Model

Role Specific Training for SBTMT Chairs, Vice-Chairs, and Principals

Review of Acronyms Used in the Florida Threat Management Manual

DTMC – **D**istrict **T**hreat **M**anagement **C**oordinator

DTMT – **D**istrict **T**hreat **M**anagement **T**eam

SBTMT – **S**chool **B**ased **T**hreat **M**anagement **T**eam

SSMP – **S**tudent **S**upport **M**anagement **P**lan

SBTMT Members

SBTMT Members Must Include:

- **School Administrator** (must **NOT** be the Principal)

- **Expertise in Counseling**: Certified School Psychologist, Certified School Social Worker, Certified School Counselor or Licensed Mental Health Professional

- **Expertise in School Instruction:** meets the definition of instructional personnel under Section 1012.01(2)(a)-(d), F.S., or holds a current Florida Educator Certificate

- **Certified Law Enforcement Officer** (guardians do not qualify)

We refer to these members as the "core four."

SBTMT Roles

Remember, other staff members may serve on the SBTMT. The requirement of the "core four" members is the minimum personnel who must serve on the team.
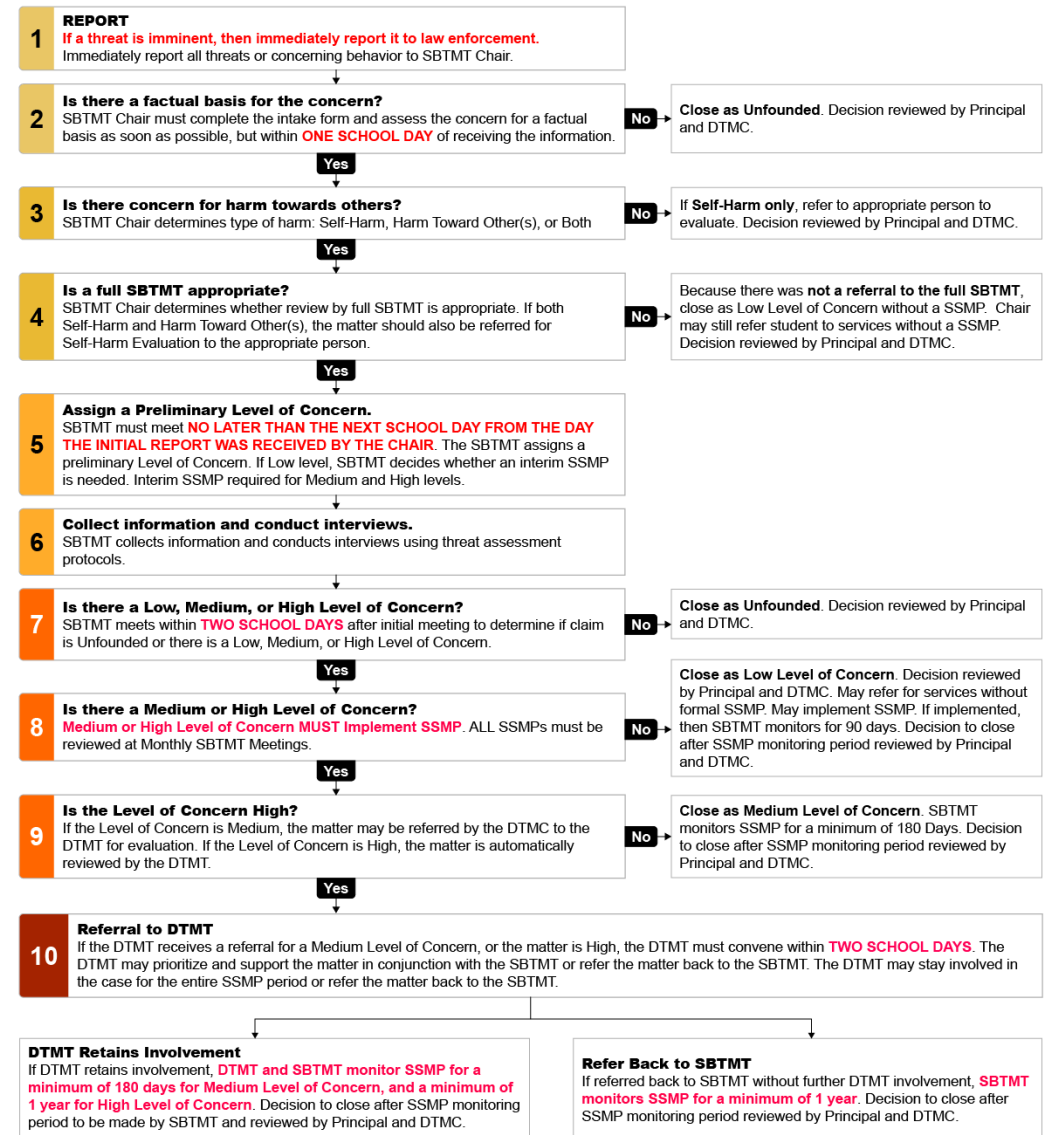
It is also required that there be one person with personal knowledge of the student of concern on the SBTMT.

If an SBTMT member does not know the student of concern, then an instructional or administrative staff member must be appointed to advise the SBTMT regarding the student of concern.

Review of the Standardized Threat Management Operational Process

Florida Harm Prevention and Threat Management Workflow

The primary goal of all school safety efforts is to prevent violence or harm to members of the school community. Effective threat management is the single greatest opportunity to prevent a school attack. The threat management process is a systematic, fact-based method designed to first identify whether behaviors and/or communications constitute a concern for violence or harm to another person. This flowchart is not all encompassing but should act an aid for members to effectively work through the process of threat management. For further details, definitions, or explanations refer to the Florida Threat Management Manual.

1 REPORT
If a threat is imminent, then immediately report it to law enforcement.
Immediately report all threats or concerning behavior to SBTMT Chair.

2 Is there a factual basis for the concern?
SBTMT Chair must complete the intake form and assess the concern for a factual basis as soon as possible, but within ONE SCHOOL DAY of receiving the information.
— No → Close as Unfounded. Decision reviewed by Principal and DTMC.
Yes

3 Is there concern for harm towards others?
SBTMT Chair determines type of harm: Self-Harm, Harm Toward Other(s), or Both
— No → If Self-Harm only, refer to appropriate person to evaluate. Decision reviewed by Principal and DTMC.
Yes

4 Is a full SBTMT appropriate?
SBTMT Chair determines whether review by full SBTMT is appropriate. If both Self-Harm and Harm Toward Other(s), the matter should also be referred for Self-Harm Evaluation to the appropriate person.
— No → Because there was not a referral to the full SBTMT, close as Low Level of Concern without a SSMP. Chair may still refer student to services without a SSMP. Decision reviewed by Principal and DTMC.
Yes

5 Assign a Preliminary Level of Concern.
SBTMT must meet NO LATER THAN THE NEXT SCHOOL DAY FROM THE DAY THE INITIAL REPORT WAS RECEIVED BY THE CHAIR. The SBTMT assigns a preliminary Level of Concern. If Low level, SBTMT decides whether an interim SSMP is needed. Interim SSMP required for Medium and High levels.

6 Collect information and conduct interviews.
SBTMT collects information and conducts interviews using threat assessment protocols.

7 Is there a Low, Medium, or High Level of Concern?
SBTMT meets within TWO SCHOOL DAYS after initial meeting to determine if claim is Unfounded or there is a Low, Medium, or High Level of Concern.
— No → Close as Unfounded. Decision reviewed by Principal and DTMC.
Yes

8 Is there a Medium or High Level of Concern?
Medium or High Level of Concern MUST Implement SSMP. ALL SSMPs must be reviewed at Monthly SBTMT Meetings.
— No → Close as Low Level of Concern. Decision reviewed by Principal and DTMC. May refer for services without formal SSMP. May implement SSMP. If implemented, then SBTMT monitors for 90 days. Decision to close after SSMP monitoring period reviewed by Principal and DTMC.
Yes

9 Is the Level of Concern High?
If the Level of Concern is Medium, the matter may be referred by the DTMC to the DTMT for evaluation. If the Level of Concern is High, the matter is automatically reviewed by the DTMT.
— No → Close as Medium Level of Concern. SBTMT monitors SSMP for a minimum of 180 Days. Decision to close after SSMP monitoring period reviewed by Principal and DTMC.
Yes

10 Referral to DTMT
If the DTMT receives a referral for a Medium Level of Concern, or the matter is High, the DTMT must convene within TWO SCHOOL DAYS. The DTMT may prioritize and support the matter in conjunction with the SBTMT or refer the matter back to the SBTMT. The DTMT may stay involved in the case for the entire SSMP period or refer the matter back to the SBTMT.

DTMT Retains Involvement
If DTMT retains involvement, DTMT and SBTMT monitor SSMP for a minimum of 180 days for Medium Level of Concern, and a minimum of 1 year for High Level of Concern. Decision to close after SSMP monitoring period to be made by SBTMT and reviewed by Principal and DTMC.

Refer Back to SBTMT
If referred back to SBTMT without further DTMT involvement, SBTMT monitors SSMP for a minimum of 1 year. Decision to close after SSMP monitoring period reviewed by Principal and DTMC.

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Yes

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Determining Level of Concern

Unfounded

Low

Medium

High

SBTMT Chair and Principal Responsibilities

It is essential that the Florida Model as set forth in the Manual is followed. It is also important everyone meet all timelines and deadlines required under the Florida threat management process.

It is the SBTMT Chair and Principal's responsibility to ensure that the process is followed and deadlines are met.

All timelines are established in the Manual.

Timelines:

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 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 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 district threat management coordinator 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 .
3. If the Chair of the SBTMT refers the matter to the threat management team 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 assign a preliminary level of concern and consider implementing 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 threat level 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 SBTMT.

SBTMT Chair

Every school is required to have a SBTMT and every SBTMT is required to have a Chair and Vice-Chair who functions as chair in the Chair's absence.

The Chair and Vice-Chair are each one of the "core four" statutory members of the SBTMT who fulfill the required additional leadership responsibilities on the SBTMT.

SBTMT Chair

The SBTMT Chair:

- Is the point person at each school for threat management;

- Receives initial reports of all threats and concerning behavior;

- Is responsible for assessing and triaging each reported threat or concern; and

- Determines whether each threat or concern has a factual basis and whether it should be summarily closed or referred to the full SBTMT.

SBTMT Chair

The SBTMT Chair is one of the most important positions in the Florida threat management process because the Chair ensures the effectiveness and efficiency of the process.

The Chair's role as "gatekeeper" is paramount because the Chair decides which cases go to the full SBTMT and which cases are summarily closed as unfounded or Low level of concern that does not necessitate further action.

Not every reported concern needs to go through the full threat management process.

SBTMT Chair

In addition to initial intake responsibilities, the Chair must guide the SBTMT and direct the threat management process, including the development of the SSMP.

Ensuring the SBTMT's resources are used wisely and appropriately are essential to the success of Florida's school-based threat management program.

The Chair is also largely responsible for notifying parents of any specific, intended victim and parents of the student of concern.

School Principal

Each school's Principal has an equally important role in effective threat management.

- The Principal selects the SBTMT members and names the Chair and Vice-Chair.

- The Principal is the first reviewing and approving authority for decisions made by the SBTMT Chair and the full SBTMT.

- The Principal is tasked with overseeing their school's SBTMT and ensuring fidelity in the threat management process. The Principal cannot "rubberstamp" the SBTMT's decisions.

Decision Making

- Decision making is necessary in all aspects of the threat management process. In the threat management context, decision making involves managed risk.

- There is risk in every decision made because of the nature of threat management—risk that we make the wrong decision that results in a bad outcome and others will second guess.

- We have to accept there is risk and make the best decisions we can with the information we have.

Decision Making

- Decisions need to be made from the inception, when information about concerning behavior or a threat is first received, all the way through the decision to close the case post-SSMP.

- The crucial decision points during the threat management process are:
  - The SBTMT Chair's decision whether to summarily close the case in its early stages;
  - The SBTMT's level of concern determination, and what requirements or restrictions to implement under an SSMP; and
  - The decision to close the case after the requisite case management period under the SSMP.

Decision Making

- There is no crystal ball. Decision making can be hard because:

  - Information received is often general or ambiguous.

  - Sometimes little is known of the history of the student of concern, especially outside of school.

  - Essential details are lacking.

  - People are reluctant to cooperate and mitigate other's conduct.

- One of the most difficult, but crucial decision-making times in the threat management process is at intake when the SBTMT chair must decide whether to summarily close the case or refer it to the full SBTMT for consideration.

- To be effective, the Chair has to be thoughtful, apply their training, and use their experience and best judgment.

Considerations for Decision Making

- Identify the who and what. Who is involved and what is the issue?
- Besides the student of concern, are there others you need to speak with?
- Gather relevant information.
- Weigh the facts as you know them against what you don't know.
- What are your options? What are the pros and cons to each of these options?
- Consider the consequences of your decision. Evaluate the possible outcomes.
- Should you get a second opinion from your DTMC, the Vice-Chair, or another SBTMT Chair?
- Make a decision.
- Implement your decision.

Chair Expectations

The SBTMT Chair must make important decisions: whether there is a factual basis for the concern, whether the concern involves a threat of self-harm or harm to others, whether the matter should be summarily closed or referred to the full SBTMT, etc.

The expectation is that you use your experience, instincts, training, and judgment to make the best possible decisions based on the information you have.

Principal Expectations

- The Principal should support the SBTMT and must also diligently review the SBTMT Chair and the team's decisions.

- Form A is the "case management" form and the Principal must pay close attention when reviewing the form to ensure that proper steps were taken during the threat management process.

- When reviewing, the Principal should ensure the proper people participated on the SBTMT, all timelines were met, proper information was collected and interviews conducted, the level of concern matches the concerning behavior, and the SSMP is appropriate.

Principal Expectations

- Principals should also review SBTMT metrics and look for trends in the Chair or SBTMT's decisions.
  - Is the Chair sending too many cases to the full SBTMT and not using the summary disposition option?
  - Is the Chair summarily closing most cases with few referrals to the full SBTMT?
    - This may be a sign of a decision-making problem.
- Principals should also closely review Form H to ensure proper safeguards have been established in the SSMP.

Questions?

Scenarios