No Communications Orders and No Contact Orders
Frequently Asked Questions
Last updated November 2018

1. **What is a No Communication Order?**

On occasion, one member of the Princeton University community may seek to have no communication with another member of the community. Princeton has a long-standing practice, which is an accepted best practice among higher education institutions, of providing two-way No Communication Orders as an accommodation to individuals who request them for a period of time. They help to ensure an environment in which individuals can focus on and pursue their education and/or work. See attached for a sample No Communication Order.

2. **What is a No Contact Order?**

On occasion, one member of the Princeton University community may seek to avoid being in the same location as another member of the community. Princeton has a long-standing practice, which is an accepted best practice among higher education institutions, of providing two-way No Contact Orders as an accommodation to community members who request them for a limited period of time. They help to ensure an environment in which individuals can focus on and pursue their education and/or work. See attached for a sample No Contact Order.

3. **What is the purpose of these Orders?**

They are intended to forestall future interactions that could be problematic for the individuals, and to protect both of the individuals.

4. **Who can request such an Order, and for what reasons?**

An enrolled student or University employee may request such an Order with respect to another enrolled student or University employee. One may do so due to interpersonal conflicts or situations that they believe are interfering with their educational or work environment.

5. **How do I get a No Communication or No Contact Order?**

If you are interested in obtaining a No Communication or No Contact Order, please contact the following:

- Director of Student Life (undergraduate students)
- Assistant Deans of the Graduate School Lily Secora/Nicole Barkley or Assistant Director of Residential Life Kevin Fleming (graduate students)
- Assistant Dean of the Faculty Alice Seneres (postdocs)
- Senior Associate Dean of Faculty Toni Turano (faculty)
- Human Resources manager (staff)
6. **Might an individual request one of these Orders when it is not necessary or appropriate?**

We trust that these requests are made in good faith, and our history has not shown an abuse of this accommodation.

7. **Are these Orders punitive?**

No. These Orders are not part of the University disciplinary process, and they do not constitute a finding of, or charge of, any violation of University policy. Nor are they intended to be punitive in any way. Rather, they are intended to forestall future interactions that could be problematic for the individuals, thereby protecting both individuals.

8. **But if an Order prohibits me from accessing certain University spaces at certain times, isn’t that a form of punishment?**

We recognize that a No Contact Order does place some restrictions on each individual's movement around campus, but we work with both individuals to ensure that this does not unduly interfere with their educational and/or working experiences.

9. **For employees, how do Workplace No Contact Orders or No Communication Orders relate to National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) requirements?**

Workplace No Contact or No Communication Orders are not intended to discourage or prohibit concerted activity under Section 7 of the NLRA. If you have any questions in that regard, please contact Bridget Walsh, Labor Relations Manager, Office of Human Resources.

10. **How long will these Orders be kept in place? What if I want to extend an Order?**

No Communication Orders will typically be kept in place for twelve months, but may be modified and/or extended as the University administrator issuing the Order deems necessary.

No Contact Orders will typically be issued for three months, but may be modified and/or extended as the University administrator issuing the order deems necessary.

If the requesting party wishes to request an extension of a No Communication or No Contact Order, they should contact the University administrator who initially issued the Order (see FAQ number 5 for additional information) at least two weeks in advance of the date on which the Order is set to expire. The administrator will review the request and may seek to speak with both parties (separately) as part of their review.

11. **In terms of No Contact Orders, if both individuals regularly access the same physical place(s), how will it be determined which individual has priority to access that space?**
The University administrator issuing the Order will make this assessment on a case by case basis, taking into account the reason access is needed (academic, social, etc.), how often access is needed, etc.

12. **What happens if circumstances change, and the Order in place seems to unfairly burden one individual?**

The University administrator issuing the Order may revisit it at any time to ensure that the involved individuals are being treated fairly. The administrator reserves the right to make adjustments to the Order as the administrator deems necessary.

13. **What if I am still unsure whether or not to get an Order?**

Consider consulting with a confidential resource (such as the SHARE office, Counseling and Psychological Services, or the Office of Religious Life) who can assist you in weighing your options and choosing the services and resources that are right for you.

14. **What is a “skewed” No Contact Order?**

In matters in which members of the University community are found responsible through a formal disciplinary process for sexual misconduct or for violating a previous No Contact Order, a “skewed” No Contact Order can be issued (or prior No Contact Order modified) such that responsibility to avoid the other party falls exclusively on the party found responsible for violating the Sex Discrimination and Sexual Misconduct policy or the prior No Contact Order.
Sample No Communication Order

Dear [individual],

As discussed, I write to inform you that the [Office of the Dean of Undergraduate Students] has issued a No Communication Order, whereby neither you nor [other party] may have any communication with each other in person or through another party, by telephone, letter, e-mail, or other electronic media, or by any other means. This applies on campus and in the local vicinity, at University-sponsored events, and/or through the use of University resources (including electronic). You may not engage in indirect communication via social media or any other means. You must also refrain from any form of harassment, retaliation, or intimidating behavior. If at any time either one of you feels the need to communicate with the other, you may do so only through me or through another administrator authorized by my office.

[Other party] has received the same instructions as you find throughout this letter. If you have any questions, let me know right away.

This No Communication Order will remain in effect until [date], unless I inform you that my office has modified or revoked it.

This Order is not an indication of responsibility for a violation of University policy; rather, it is intended to forestall interactions that could be perceived by either party as retaliatory, intimidating, or harassing. No Communication Orders do not, in and of themselves, become part of the recipient’s permanent University record. However, it is very important that you understand and abide by the above stated conditions, since an infringement of this Order may result in disciplinary consequences.

If you have any questions now or in the future regarding the No Communication Order, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me.

Sincerely,

[University administrator]
Sample No Contact Order

Dear [individual],

As discussed, I write to inform you that the [Office of the Dean of Undergraduate Students] has issued a No Contact Order whereby neither you nor [other party] may have any contact with each other, in person or through another party, by telephone, letter, e-mail, or other electronic media, or by any other means. This applies on campus and in the local vicinity, at University-sponsored events, and/or through the use of University resources (including electronic). You may not engage in indirect communication, including via social media or any other means. You must also refrain from any form of harassment, retaliation, or intimidating behavior. If at any time either one of you feels the need to communicate with the other, you may do so only through me or through a third party explicitly authorized by me.

Furthermore, you must make a concerted effort to avoid any close proximity to [other party], as follows:

- In areas where neither of you is required to be present, if one of you arrives first, the other must leave.
- In areas where you are both required to be present, you must each avoid sitting near the other.
- In areas where their presence is required and yours is not, you may not be present.
- In areas where your presence is required and theirs is not, they may not be present.

[Other party] has received the same instructions as you find throughout this letter. If you have any questions, let me know right away.

This No Contact Order will remain in effect until [date], unless I inform you that my office has modified or revoked it.

This Order is not an indication of responsibility for a violation of University policy; rather, it is intended to forestall interactions that could be perceived by either party as retaliatory, intimidating, or harassing. No Contact Orders do not, in and of themselves, become part of the recipient’s permanent University record. However, it is very important that you understand and abide by the above stated conditions, since an infringement of this order may result in disciplinary consequences. This may include revising the Order such that responsibility to avoid the other party falls exclusively on the party found responsible for violating the Order.

If you have any questions now or in the future regarding the No Contact Order, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me.

Sincerely,

[University administrator]