Notification of a threat situation at the University
- Information for faculty and students -
source: The Police Headquarters Lower Franconia

In the past the media have made numerous notifications regarding threat situations in schools, which unfortunately time and again have led to copy-cat crimes. This explanatory leaflet will provide information to faculty and students and lend some competency in dealing with the notification of threat situations. It is not a conclusive or comprehensive presentation of this complex phenomenon. From criminological research and the experience of the police, it is known that a potential threatening person often exhibits various changes and abnormalities in his/her behavior in advance. These hidden or also open „calls for help“ must be recognized and dealt with quickly. The person in question needs in the first instance to be given immediate assistance by his/her social environment.

Silence in one’s social environment can have fatal consequences!

The possibilities of giving notice of a threat situation are, in these technologically advanced times, quite varied. While some young people only trust sharing their thoughts and plans with a few friends or fellow students, others use letters, SMS messages or e-mails. In some cases the affected persons seek public attention and reveal themselves in internet chatrooms. The danger and serious nature of such comments are difficult to assess. Therefore, students and faculty should make their observations known in a timely manner, also to police. Remaining silent entails an incalculable risk. When reporting a threat situation, one should inform and integrate the local police in a timely manner. Since initially it is not possible to distinguish between a serious threat and a joke, investigations must be carried out, and if necessary, police measures undertaken to determine the concrete risk situation. Also, the notification of a threat situation which isn’t made seriously is punishable: „Disturbance of the public peace by the threat of criminal offences,“ according to Paragraph 126 of the Penal Code. Therefore, thoughtless or joking comments or wordings should be avoided on the internet, as they could be misinterpreted by others.

A threat is never a joke!

Further information regarding the topic of violence at schools can be found on the following website:

www.polizei-beratung.de