Ohio University Guide to Assist Students Who Report Sexual Misconduct

If a student discloses sexual misconduct to you:

STEP ONE: CARE
• Care for the student
• Ensure they are safe
• Provide non-judgmental support
• Do not ask for specific details of the incident – allow the student to decide how much to disclose to you
• Explain to the student your duty to report

STEP TWO: CONNECT
• Connect student with resources listed in this folder

STEP THREE: CONTACT
• University Equity and Civil Rights Compliance
  740-593-9140
  Lindley Hall 006
  Ask for the Title IX Investigator
  Email: equity@ohio.edu

Policy 03.004, Sexual Misconduct, Relationship Violence and Stalking* (www.ohio.edu/policy/03-004.html)
• Sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual misconduct, and stalking, are impediments for Ohio University students and staff to have equal opportunities for accessing education or employment. Therefore sexual misconduct in any form is a Title IX civil rights issue.

Per policy 03.004, immediately upon learning of potential campus sexual misconduct, any employee with a duty to report violations of this policy who receives a complaint of sexual misconduct or who observes or learns of conduct that is reasonably believed to be in violation of this policy, is required to report the alleged conduct to University Equity and Civil Rights Compliance (UECRC).

• All employees have a duty to report unless otherwise specified through professional licensure (example: physicians or mental health providers who are serving in that capacity). The name of the alleged perpetrator is not needed to make this report if the student does not give it to you. However, if the student does reveal this information, you must note it in your report to University Equity and Civil Rights Compliance.

*Proposed policy title revision

The Office of the Dean of Students has developed this information guide to aid faculty and staff as you assist students who report sexual misconduct.
Support Resources

University Equity and Civil Rights Compliance (UECRC)
Title IX Coordinator and ADA504 Coordinator
740-593-9140
Lindley Hall 006
www.ohio.edu/equity

Ohio University Police Department
740-593-1911
88 University Terrace
135 Scott Quad
www.ohio.edu/police

The Ohio University Police Department investigates allegations of sexual misconduct that occur on campus and constitute violations of criminal law. Officers are trained in crisis intervention and sexual assault investigation, and will work to ensure the well-being of the survivor to include assisting him/her to access health care and support services.

Office of Community Standards and Student Responsibility (CSSR)
740-593-2629
349 Baker University Center
www.ohio.edu/communitystandards

Community Standards, along with the Office for Institutional Equity, investigate and resolve allegations of sexual misconduct, stalking, and relationship violence. They also serve as a resource to the campus community in explaining the investigation and resolution process. The staff strive to provide a thorough, timely, and equitable process for all parties involved.

Office of the Dean of Students
740-593-1800
345 Baker University Center
www.ohio.edu/deansofstudents
deansstu@ohio.edu

Staff in the Office of the Dean of Students can help connect survivors of sexual violence with the resources on campus and in the Athens community.

LGBT Center
740-593-0239
JS4 Baker University Center
www.ohio.edu/lgbt
lgbt@ohio.edu

Staff in the LGBT Center can help connect survivors of sexual violence with LGBT-affirming resources on campus and in the Athens community. The center is also committed to providing education on the unique needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and/or transgender survivors as well as advocating for these needs on and off campus.

Confidentiality

Request for Confidentiality

Students may request that their name not be used as part of any investigation that the university may initiate. Requests for confidentiality must be made directly by the student to University Equity and Civil Rights Compliance (UECRC). Referring parties may share that a student wishes to request confidentiality, but it will not be considered a formal request made by the student to UERC.

Therefore, referring parties are to provide UERC with the student’s name. Students requesting confidentiality need to be aware that the inability to use a student’s name can significantly impede the university’s ability to conduct an investigation and, in most cases, the university will be unable to investigate the matter or resolve it through the student conduct process. Additionally, confidentiality can also impact the corrective measures the university is able to put in place.

For example, a no-contact directive could not be issued if the student’s name cannot be shared.

Request for Confidentiality Review

Requests for confidentiality will be reviewed jointly by University Equity and Civil Rights Compliance (UECRC) and Community Standards and Student Responsibility (CSSR).

Some of the reasons a request for confidentiality may be denied include, but are not limited to:

• The reported use of force during the commission of an alleged violation of sexual misconduct, relationship violence, or stalking;
• The reported use of a weapon during the commission of an alleged violation of sexual misconduct, relationship violence, or stalking;
• Significant physical injury resulting from an alleged violation of sexual misconduct, relationship violence, or stalking;
• Or prior allegations (substantiated or not) of sexual misconduct, relationship violence, or stalking made against the alleged perpetrator.

Requesting confidentiality does not relinquish a survivor’s ability to access support resources.
What are the signs that a student may have experienced sexual misconduct?

When sexual misconduct occurs, the aftermath can be devastating to the survivor both in and out of the classroom. Survivors may experience anxiety and fear, difficulty in relationships, and/or a drop in academic performance – some may withdraw, transfer or drop out of school. Additionally, there may be:

- Shock and disbelief
- A feeling of “Why me?”
- Guilt
- Denial
- Flashbacks/nightmares
- Acute distress/severe anxiety
- Confusion
- Multiple fears (of death, rapist, other situations)

Please note: Not all students experience these signs or symptoms, and some may occur because of other issues.

How do you help a survivor of sexual misconduct?

Listen sensitively and carefully. Distressed students need to be heard and helped, but they may have difficulty articulating their feelings. Don’t be afraid to ask them if they are currently under the influence of drugs or alcohol, feel confused, or have thoughts of harming themselves or others.

Avoid escalation. Distressed students can be sensitive and easily provoked. Use a non-confrontational approach and avoid threatening, humiliating, or intimidating responses. Help them connect with the necessary campus resources for assistance.

Help them get help. Refer the student to campus departments or offices that have the expertise and personnel to help them.

Work as a team. Share information and consult with the appropriate university officials to coordinate care and follow-up for the student. Violent, threatening or persistent inappropriate behaviors should always be reported to the Ohio University Police Department and the Office of Community Standards and Student Responsibility.

If a survivor of sexual misconduct turns to you for support:

Don’t be afraid to ask for some help: The Survivor Advocacy Program, the Women’s Center, or the Office of the Dean of Students can put you in touch with a survivor advocate who can offer support and make referrals based on the student’s needs.

Believe the survivor: It’s not your role to question whether the misconduct occurred.

Never blame the survivor: No one deserves to be a victim of sexual misconduct no matter what the circumstances. Even if the survivor feels responsible, say clearly “it wasn’t your fault.”

Help the survivor explore options: Give the survivor the freedom to choose his or her own course of action or path of recovery, even if you would do it differently.

Avoid any re-victimization: Do not treat survivors as incapable of taking care of themselves. Don’t assume control without permission or judge how the survivor handled the situation. Don’t ask questions just out of curiosity. Do NOT make excuses for the perpetrator’s actions.

Reporting Process: As an employee of Ohio University, you have a duty to report sexual misconduct.

- Gather all the details you have about the incident and the involved parties.
  - Call UECRC at 740-593-9140 and state that you wish to make a sexual misconduct report. You will be asked for the details over the phone.
  - OR email the Title IX Investigator at equity@ohio.edu. Please state that you wish to make a sexual misconduct report, and inform us if it involves students. Provide a phone number and a time frame where you can be reached. You will receive a return call and you will be asked for the details in that conversation.
  - OR fill out the online reporting form here: www.ohio.edu/communitystandards/report.cfm
- You do NOT have to make the call while the student is present.
- OIE will contact the student shortly after obtaining the details and schedule a meeting with the student. Investigators will be present from UECRC and CSSR during this meeting.
- Generally investigators will explain the university sexual misconduct resolution process and ask for a detailed account of the incident.
- For further details of the investigation process, please refer to CSSR website: www.ohio.edu/communitystandards