

PROCEDURES FOR VICTIMS OF SEXUAL ASSAULT, DATING VIOLENCE, DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND STALKING

If you become a victim of sexual assault, dating or domestic violence, or stalking, it is important for you to understand that it is not your fault. The individual responsible for the victimization intentionally chose to inflict harm and commit the crime. Healing from these crimes may take time, but it is possible. Reporting any of these offenses is not the same as prosecuting, and the decision to prosecute can be made later. Regardless of your decision to file or not to file an official report with law enforcement, you are encouraged to get assistance and follow the procedures suggested below.

Procedures for Victims of Sexual Assault

- Immediately get to a safe place.
- Call 911.
- Survivors of sexual assault that occurred on campus have the option to contact the local law enforcement jurisdiction to file an official report. Please understand, that the off-campus jurisdiction might refuse to take the report and refer the survivor back to campus police.
- **Contact the Office of Victim Services** at <http://victimservices.cofc.edu/> whether you choose to officially report or not. The Office of Victim Services' philosophy is to work with survivors to ensure that they receive needed resources, services and information. The Office of Victim Services is located in the Lightsey Center, Rooms 101 A - C. Emergency assistance for a victimization that happened within the previous 120 hours/5 days is available by calling 843.953.2273. For non-emergency assistance or general information, please call 843.953.2273 during normal business hours 843.953.2273.
- **Get medical assistance ASAP.** Sexual Assault is an emergency. You may have injuries of which you are not aware. It is important to seek medical treatment from a facility where the staff is specially trained to provide care for sexual assault survivors in order to be examined and treated for any injuries and for exposure to sexually transmitted illnesses.
- **Collect medical evidence.** (If you choose to have evidence collected, the sooner this is done, the more reliable and potentially useful it will be.)

Medical Assistance

It is important to get medically treated after a rape. You have the right to a free sexual assault forensic exam (SAFE) for up to 120 hours (or 5 days) for a sexual assault that occurred in the local area or elsewhere in South Carolina, whether you chose to file an official incident report or not. The SAFE exam is conducted at Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC) which has a team of specially trained Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANE) on call 24/7 to care for victims of sexual assault regardless of gender or gender identity. The sexual assault forensic exam is FREE. South Carolina State Office of Victim Assistance (SOVA) reimburses the hospital for SAFE exam expenses. In the event you do not get the SANE exam, College of Charleston Student Health Services offers testing for sexually transmitted illnesses.

Preserve Evidence

It is important to preserve as much evidence as possible and not change clothes, shower or bathe, douche, drink, eat, smoke, brush your teeth, or use the bathroom unless absolutely necessary before the SAFE exam. These activities can destroy vital evidence. If you've changed your clothes since the assault, and you are reporting the incident to law enforcement, allow them to collect the clothing you were wearing at the time of the assault. If you are not contacting the police, place the clothes you were wearing in a clean, unused paper bag and bring it with you to the SAFE exam. If you do not have a clean, unused paper bag, the Office of Victim Services can provide one to you. The sexual assault nurse examiner will determine if the clothing should be included in the evidence kit.

If you believe you were given a date rape drug wait to urinate until you arrive at the hospital. However, if you can't wait, collect your first urine in a clean container with a lid and take it to the emergency room with you. If you have been vomiting, try to vomit into a clean plastic bag and bring it with you. Be sure to tell the SANE nurse your symptoms and that you believe you were given a date rape drug, and give her the collected urine and/or vomit.

A friend may take you or accompany you to the SAFE exam. The Office of Victim Services is available to assist you, and in most instances provide transportation for you to the SAFE exam. The decision to report the assault to law enforcement authorities is solely up to you. If you file a police report, the police can also transport you to the SAFE exam. If you aren't sure whether you want to officially report the assault, you can report anonymously and have evidence collected and held while you make a decision. Having evidence collected gives you a wider range of options later if you decide to press charges against the assailant(s). The forensic evidence will be stored for one year from the date it is collected to give you time to decide whether you want to convert the anonymous kit to an active law enforcement investigation. Once the medical examination and forensic evidence collection

are completed, the SANE nurse will seal the forensic evidence collection kit with no name, address, or contact information on the outside. Your hospital patient account number will be placed on the outside of the kit for payment by the State Office of Victim Assistance and tracking purposes only. The sealed kit will then be given to law enforcement for storage purposes only.

Reporting Options

- Criminal Process
- Campus Disciplinary Process - if assault was committed by another member of the College of Charleston
- Anonymous Sexual Assault Forensic Exam (SAFE)
- Civil Suit

Resources

Whether you elect to report or choose not to report, GET HELP. The following resources are available:

- **Office of Victim Services**
The Office of Victim Services works with survivors to ensure that they receive needed resources, services and information. The Office of Victim Services is located in the Lightsey Center, Rooms 101 A - C. Emergency assistance for a victimization that happened within the previous 120 hours/5 days is available by calling 843.953.2273. For non-emergency assistance or general information, please call during normal business hours at 843.953.2273.
Website: <http://victimservices.cofc.edu/>
- **Counseling Center**
Free to enrolled College of Charleston students and offers a variety of services and individual counseling sessions. Appointment may be scheduled by calling 843.953.5640.
Website: <http://counseling.cofc.edu/>
- **People Against Rape**
PAR was established in 1974 to assist adult victims of sexual assault in the tri-county community covering Charleston, Dorchester and Berkeley Counties. Their 24 hour hotline number is 1.800.241.7273. Website: <http://www.peopleagainstrape.org/>
- **Office of Equal Opportunity Programs (Title IX)**
This office ensures immediate (non-emergency) response to complaints of sexual harassment. They provide information on all options for complaint resolution; and are responsible for conducting investigations where complaints are made against or involving students, faculty and staff. Appointment may be schedule by calling 843.953. 5754. Website: <http://eop.cofc.edu/index.php>
- **Public Safety**
Campus Police are available 24 hours a day and may be accessed by calling 911. Website: <http://publicsafety.cofc.edu/about/index.php>

Procedures for Victims of Dating Violence and/or Domestic Violence

- Immediately get to a safe place.
- Call 911.
- Survivors of dating violence or domestic violence that occurred on campus have the option to contact the local law enforcement jurisdiction to file an official report. Please understand, that the off campus jurisdiction might refer the survivor back to campus police.
- Contact the Office of Victim Services. The Office of Victim Services works with survivors to ensure that they receive needed resources, services and information. The Office of Victim Services is located in the Lightsey Center, Rooms 101 A - C. Emergency assistance for a victimization that happened within the previous 120 hours/5 days is available by calling 843.953.2273. For non-emergency victim assistance or general information, please call 843.953.2273 during normal business hours.
- Get medical assistance - If you have recently been physically abused (hit, punched, kicked, pushed/thrown down, bitten, burned, strangled, choked or placed in choke hold, or other types of battering) it is important to seek medical care immediately in order to be examined and treated for any injuries, visible and non-visible.

- Preserve Evidence - It is important that you preserve as much evidence as possible. Evidence that is preserved may help to keep your legal options open and may help support your case in the event you elect to pursue prosecution, an order of protection, a restraining order, etc.
- Do not “disturb” or clean up the crime scene before the police arrive.
- Inform the police of any injury you may have, especially ones concealed by clothing, so they may determine how to collect evidence as appropriate.
- Document each and every incident: date, time, witnesses and a description of the incident, and keep this documentation at a location in which the abuser does not have access.
- Keep a copy of the police report(s).
- Do not initiate or receive a call or a visit from the alleged assailant. If you are concerned for your safety, call the Department of Public Safety.

Reporting Options

- Criminal Process
- Disciplinary Process - if assault committed by another member of the College of Charleston
- Restraining Order or Order of Protection
- Civil Suit

Develop a Safety Plan

In the event of an argument or assault, where would you go to minimize your risk? What rooms would you want to avoid (bathrooms may not have exits and kitchens have knives)? Who would you contact? Do you have enough money in a safe place unknown to the abuser in which you could access in an emergency? Contact the Office of Victim Services or My Sister’s House, and someone will assist you with an individualized safety plan.

Resources

Whether you elect to report or choose not to report, GET HELP. The following resources are available:

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Works with victims to insure that they receive needed resources, services and information. Emergency assistance for victimization that happened within the previous 120 hours/5 days is available by calling 843.953.2273. For non-emergency victim assistance or general information, please call 843.953.2273 during normal business hours.
Website: <http://victimservices.cofc.edu/>
- **Counseling Center**
Free to enrolled College of Charleston students and offers a variety of services and individual counseling sessions. Appointment may be scheduled by calling 843.953.5640.
Website: <http://counseling.cofc.edu/>
- **My Sister’s House**
A nonprofit organization that provides services, programs and resources to empower domestic violence victims and their children to live free from abuse. The organization operates an emergency temporary shelter at an undisclosed location for women and their children who flee abusive situations in Charleston, Berkeley and Dorchester counties in South Carolina. 24-hour crisis line: 843.744.3242
Website: <http://mysistershouse.org/>
- **Office of Equal Opportunity Programs (Title IX)**
This office ensures immediate (non-emergency) response to complaints of sexual harassment. They provide information on all options for complaint resolution; and are responsible for conducting investigations where complaints are made against or involving students, faculty and staff. Appointment may be schedule by calling 843.953. 5754. Website: <http://eop.cofc.edu/index.php>
- **Public Safety**
Campus Police are available 24 hours a day and may be accessed by calling 911. Website: <http://publicsafety.cofc.edu/about/index.php>

Procedures for Victims of Stalking

If you are being stalked, you are encouraged to do the following:

- Call the 911 to report each and every incident.
- Survivors of stalking incidents that occurred on campus have the option to contact the local law enforcement jurisdiction to file an official report. Please understand, that the off campus jurisdiction might refer the survivor back to campus police.
- Contact the Office of Victim Services. The Office of Victim Services works with victims to ensure that they receive needed resources, services and information. The Office of Victim Services is located the Lightsey Center, Rooms 101 A - C. Emergency assistance for a victimization that happened within the previous 120 hours/5 days is available by calling 843.953.2273. For non-emergency victim assistance or general information, please call 843.953.2273 during normal business hours.
- Website: <http://victimservices.cofc.edu/>

Stalking Log

Document each and every incident: date, time, witnesses and a description of the incident and suspect.

Develop a Safety Plan

- Do not keep the stalking behavior a secret - tell people and ask for their support.
- Avoid going places alone and use the buddy system - never walk or jog alone at night and always let someone know where you are going and the expected time you will arrive home.
- Use the Cougar Shuttle which is available from 11:00 p.m. until 3:00 a.m. during the spring and fall semesters (888.960.2227)
- Ask for law enforcement to increase patrols near your residence.
- While on campus, use Campus Police escorts (843.953.5609)
- Contact the Office of Victim Services. The Office of Victim Services works with victims to insure that they receive needed resources, services and information. The Office of Victim Services is located in the Lightsey Center, Rooms 101 A - C. Emergency assistance for a victimization that happened within the previous 120 hours/5 days is available by calling 843.953.2273. For non-emergency victim assistance or general information, please call 843.953.2273 during normal business hours.
- Website: <http://victimservices.cofc.edu/>

Preserve Evidence

Evidence of stalking can occur in many forms that may include but is not limited to direct, indirect or third party contact; notes, gifts, and other items left for the victim; use of technology (phone, text, email, social media, etc.) to communicate with the victim. When a stalking incident occurs, it is important to preserve as much evidence as possible which may help support your case in the event you elect to pursue legal action such as prosecution, an order of protection, a restraining order, etc.

Reporting Options

- Criminal Process
- Disciplinary Process - if assault committed by another member of the College of Charleston
- Civil Suit
- Restraining Order or Order of Protection

Resources

Whether you elect to report or choose not to report, GET HELP. The following resources are available:

- **Office of Victim Services**
Works with victims to insure that they receive needed resources, services and information.
The Office of Victim Services is located in the Lightsey Center, Rooms 101 A - C. Emergency assistance for a victimization that happened within the previous 120 hours/5 days is available by calling 843.953.2273. For non-emergency victim assistance or general information, please call 843.953.2273 during normal business hours.
Website: <http://victimservices.cofc.edu/>
- **Counseling Center**
Free to enrolled College of Charleston students and offers a variety of services and individual counseling sessions.
Appointment may be scheduled by calling 843.953.5640.
Website: <http://counseling.cofc.edu/>

- **The Stalking Resource Center** The Stalking Resource Center is a conjoint program between the National Center for Victims of Crime and the U.S. Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women that is committed to promoting awareness, action and advocacy to enhance victim safety and hold stalking offenders accountable.
Website: <http://victimsofcrime.org/our-programs/stalking-resource-center>
- **Office of Equal Opportunity Programs (Title IX)**
This office ensures immediate (non-emergency) response to complaints of sexual harassment. They provide information on all options for complaint resolution; and are responsible for conducting investigations where complaints are made against or involving students, faculty and staff. Appointment may be schedule by calling 843.953. 5754. Website: <http://eop.cofc.edu/index.php>
- **Public Safety**
Campus Police are available 24 hours a day and may be accessed by calling 911. Website: <http://publicsafety.cofc.edu/about/index.php>

Warning Signs of Abusive Behavior

Question relationships with partners who:

- Are unreasonably jealous
- Refuses to take responsibility for their actions
- Breaks or destroys their partner's belongings/property
- Puts down people, including their partner's family and friends
- Try to isolate their partner from family and friends
- Sabotages their partner's work/education (makes them late, initiates arguments/fights before a test, etc.)
- Are physically rough with their partner (push, shove, pull, grab, restrain, etc.)
- Frequently accuses their partner of flirting with others or cheating on them
- Do not care about their partner's opinions or feelings - it is their way or no way
- Blame all arguments and problems on their partner
- Abuse alcohol or other drugs
- Try to control their partner (tells them what to wear, wear to go, how to act, etc.)
- Threaten to kill himself/herself if their partner breaks up with them
- Tell their partner that they are stupid, fat, ugly, no one will want them, etc.
- Are afraid to break up with their partner
- Feel like they are constantly being checked on and must check-in with their partner
- Are walking on "egg shells" because they do not want to do anything to make their partner angry
- Cry a lot, are anxious, afraid, unhappy or depressed
- Have bruises, scratches, lacerations, burns, etc. on their arms, neck, face, or other areas of the body
- Give explanations for injuries that serve as a cover-up to excuse their partner's violent actions

Potential Options for Bystanders

Oftentimes, when a sexual assault or other traumatic event is about to occur, bystanders are close by. Many would be willing to intervene if they had an idea of what they could do. Below are a few ideas of how to get involved. It is important to evaluate the situation and develop a plan before taking action. It is imperative that you intervene ONLY if you can safely do so. Be mindful that your judgment is impaired when you are under the influence of alcohol/drugs - do not intervene if you are intoxicated as this increases your chance of harm.

- Tell the potential perpetrator that the vulnerable person is your significant other, your cousin, little sister/brother, etc.
- Pretend to receive a phone call and tell the potential perpetrator someone called the police who are on their way.
- Pretend to feel sick and tell the vulnerable person you threw up and need them to help you leave.
- Say you see an old significant other, feel uncomfortable, and need someone to stay with you in case they approach you (then leave).
- Create a distraction - Ask for the time. Ask for a menu. Ask for directions. Tell a joke or a story.
- Ask others to get involved without being violent.
- Arrange for the Cougar Shuttle to give the vulnerable person a safe ride home and ensure the potential perpetrator does not get on it at that time.

- If a friend is acting as a potential perpetrator, get them away from the situation by telling them there is another great event to go to, etc. When the two of you are away from the situation and in a safe place, let them know you care about them and do not want to see them get into trouble with the College or possibly arrested because their behavior was in the process of crossing the line to committing a crime.
- If the situation rises to the level of an emergency, call the police. If you do not want others to know, go to a bathroom, closet or outside and make the call.

ADJUDICATION OF VIOLATIONS ON CAMPUS AND WITHIN THE COMMUNITY

Students may be held accountable to both outside authorities and the College for acts that constitute violations of law and of the Honor Code, Student Code of Conduct, Alcohol Policy, or Drug Policy. Radio contact, joint patrols, and a strong partnership with local law enforcement by the campus police allow for greater awareness of incidents occurring off campus and those involved/responsible. Disciplinary proceedings initiated through the College may proceed even if criminal proceedings are pending and will not be subject to challenge on the basis that criminal charges involving the same incident have been dismissed or reduced.

Procedures for the resolution of alleged violations of the Honor Code, Code of Conduct and Alcohol/Drug Policy are outlined in the Student Handbook available at the following web address: <http://deanofstudents.cofc.edu/honor-system/studenthandbook/index.php>

The College of Charleston does not report or have any officially recognized student organizations that have housing facilities off-campus. There are, however, fraternity and sorority houses within the immediate area of campus that are privately-owned. Typically, Campus Police officers are the initial responders to a call from one of these locations. However, City of Charleston Police Department may be called directly for an incident and/or respond in conjunction with Campus Police. Organizations sponsoring off campus events must do so under guidelines outlined in *The Compass: A Guide for Student Organizations* and in compliance with the Code of Conduct.

MISSING RESIDENTIAL STUDENT NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES

If a member of the College of Charleston community has reason to believe that a student who resides in on-campus housing is missing, he or she should immediately notify the Department of Public Safety at 911. The Department of Public Safety will initiate an investigation.

In addition to registering general emergency contact(s), students residing in on-campus housing are informed by Residence Life and Housing at the beginning of the academic year of the option to identify confidentially an individual to be contacted by the College in the event the student is determined to be missing for more than 24 hours. If a student has identified such an individual, the College will notify that individual no later than 24 hours after the student is determined to be missing. A student who wishes to identify a confidential contact can do so by contacting the Residence Life and Housing office. A student's confidential contact information will be accessible only by authorized campus officials and law enforcement in the course of the investigation.

After investigating a missing person report, should the Department of Public Safety determine that the student has been missing for 24 hours, the College will contact the student's designated emergency contact, confidential contact, notify the Executive Vice President for Student Affairs and, if necessary, other law enforcement authorities; and for missing residential students under the age of 21, the College will contact local, state and/or federal authorities and the National Crime Information Center of the Department of Justice no later than 24 hours after the student is determined to be missing. If the missing student is under the age of 18 and is not an emancipated individual, the College will notify the student's parent or legal guardian immediately after the Department of Public Safety has determined that the student has been missing for 24 hours.

The College's Missing Residential Student Policy (Policy 12.2.2) can be found at: <http://policy.cofc.edu/documents/12.2.2.pdf>