

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN (VAWA) ACT
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS REGARDING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, DATING
VIOLENCE, SEXUAL ASSAULT AND STALKING

The institution is committed to the safety and well-being of its campus community. If you experience any type of sexual violation, including sexual violence, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking, please know that you have options, you have rights, and support is available to you.

What are warning signs of abusive behavior, and how can potential attacks be avoided?

Warning signs of abusive behavior include threats of violence, jealousy, and controlling behavior. Potential attacks can be avoided by avoiding unsafe situations.

The following are safety tips that can be used to avoid unshared situations:

- Be aware of your surroundings and avoid isolated areas
- Avoid being alone with someone you do not trust or know well
- Make sure your cell phone is with you and charged
- Use the buddy system when going out or walking at night
- Utilize the institutions security officer to walk you to your car when available
- Do not let others get drinks for you. Always know what is in your drink. Never leave your drink unattended
- Be cautious of those who pressure you to drink more than you want
- Do not give in to guilt, pressure, threats, or embarrassment
- In case of an emergency – Dial 911

What safe and positive options are available for bystanders to prevent harm or to intervene when there is a risk of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault or stalking?

The institution encourages all members of the community to take safe and positive actions to intervene when there is a risk of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking. There is no single “right” way to intervene, and what is appropriate depends on the situation and the individuals involved.

Available intervention strategies can include but are not limited to:

- Asking the individuals involved to stop what they are doing
- Use a distraction in an effort to stop an individual’s activities
- Stepping in and separating the people involved in a non-combative manner ONLY if it is safe to do so
- Ask another bystander, or a number of other bystanders to intervene with you ONLY if it is safe to do so.
- Notify law enforcement by calling 911

What sanctions and protective measures may the institution impose in situations involving domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking?

The institution may impose a range of consequences up to and including termination. In addition to our own internal investigation, the institution encourages anyone who has experienced any of the above to file a police report.

What procedures should victims follow if a sex offense, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking has occurred?

1. Seek medical assistance if needed. Victims of a sexual offense or sexual assault should immediately go to a hospital and tell emergency personnel that a an assault has occurred
2. Report what happened to law enforcement as soon as possible

It is up to the victim to decide whether to notify law enforcement, and the victim may decline to notify law enforcement. The offices identified above are available to assist you in notifying law enforcement if you choose to do so. Alternatively, you may contact law enforcement on your own.

It is important that you preserve evidence as it may be necessary to prove a criminal case, or for obtaining an order of protection. It is important that you contact law enforcement as soon as possible so they can assist you in preserving evidence. Victims of a sexual offense or sexual assault should not bathe, shower, or wash their clothes before going to the hospital.

In Florida, victims may pursue an order of protection from the court prohibiting the accused from communicating with the victim, going to the victim's residence, and taking certain other actions. To pursue an order of protection, victims should contact law enforcement using the information set forth above.

Disciplinary proceedings detail that the accuser and the accused are entitled to the same opportunities and may have others present during an institutional disciplinary proceeding, including the opportunity to be accompanied to any related meeting or proceeding by an advisor of their choice. Following the proceedings The accuser and the accused shall be simultaneously informed, in writing, of The outcome of any disciplinary proceeding that arises from an allegation of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

Will the institution protect the confidentiality of victims?

Other offices on campus cannot provide absolute confidentiality. However, it is the policy of the institution to protect the confidentiality of victims to the extent that it is reasonably practicable. Specifically, the identity of the victim and information relating to the situation will be provided only to those individuals who have a legitimate need to know, or as reasonably necessary for the purpose of investigating or resolving the situation. The institution will not utilize identifying information about the victim in records about the situation any more than is reasonably necessary, and the institution will redact the victim's identifying information before disclosing such records publicly to the extent permissible by law.

What on-campus and community counseling, health, mental health, victim advocacy, legal assistance, and other services are available for victims?

Counseling is available to all students. The institution maintains contacts with various community organizations and agencies to help meet each student's personal needs.

