

support
help

You are
not *alone*

information

heal



**BOSTON COLLEGE
RESOURCES FOR SURVIVORS
OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE**



BOSTON COLLEGE
Division of Student Affairs



August 2022 Edition

Table of Contents

Introduction	4
Who Is This Resource For?	5
After an Assault	6
Immediate and 24-Hour Services	6
Resources for Reporting Sexual Misconduct	8
Confidential Resources	9
Privileged Resources	10
Reporting Options	11
Confidentiality: How Boston College Will Weigh the Request and Respond	12
How to File a Complaint	14
Filing a Complaint within Boston College	14
Filing a Criminal Complaint with Police	14
The University Response	15
Retaliation	16
Supportive Measures	16
Resolution of Complaints	16
Getting Support	17
On-Campus Resources	17
Off-Campus Resources	19
Legal Support and Area Law Enforcement Services	20
How to Help a Friend Affected by Sexual Violence	20
What Is Sexual Misconduct?	21
What Is Consent?	23
Definitions of Incapacitation, Coercion, and Force	23
Understanding the Impacts of Sexual Misconduct	24
What Should I Call What Happened to Me?	24
What about the Way I Feel?	24
Myths and Realities about Sexual Assault	26

Introduction

Boston College strives to eliminate sexual misconduct on campus, prevent its occurrence, and address its effects. *You Are Not Alone* is written for survivors of sexual violence, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, stalking, and intimate partner violence. It is intended to provide support as well as important information about prohibited conduct, available resources on and off campus, and ways to file a complaint in order to assist survivors in the recovery process and in their efforts to heal from this form of violence. If you have experienced sexual misconduct, or know someone who has, please be assured there are people who care about what you have endured.

You are not alone in what happened to you, or in how you feel, no matter what form your experience took. It is important for you to know that the feelings, reactions, and questions you may be experiencing are similar to those of other people who have been victimized through no fault of their own. You, as others have, can learn to regain a sense of power over your life. You may feel very isolated and alone, but there are resources and support available and people ready and able to help you. Sexual misconduct is never the fault of the victim. You are not to blame for what another person has done to you.



Who Is This Resource For?

Supporting All Students

While the needs and issues of different populations on campus may be unique, the resources, supports, policies and processes apply to all Boston College Students. Whether you are an undergraduate student, a graduate student, identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, or questioning (LGBTQ) or cisgender or straight, you receive the same dedicated support and services at Boston College. Emotional support, counseling regarding options, medical treatment, and academic assistance are all available.

FOR LGBTQ STUDENTS | In addition to the complex thoughts and feelings common to many survivors of sexual assault, members of LGBTQ communities may have special concerns. The sexual assault may have happened as part of a hate crime if you were targeted because of your sexual orientation or gender identity. If you have experienced intolerance, hate, or other violence at an earlier time in your life, a sexual assault can add to the pain of the past. You may be worried the assault will “out” you if you talk about it or report it to the police. You may feel like people who are supposed to help you will judge you instead. You may fear that if you reach out for help you will be rejected or misunderstood, which could make the hurt worse.

The Boston College Community understands these concerns and offers many ways to support you on your healing journey. You can call the confidential SANet hotline at 617-552-2211 any time to talk about your concerns and questions as well as explore any of the resources listed in this guide.

FOR MEN | Sexual violence can be devastating, and reactions are often shared by survivors of all genders. You may feel anger, guilt, fear, distrust, loss of control, and symptoms of physical illness. However, there are special issues that may be different for you, such as questions about your sexuality, shame, stigma related to masculinity, or reluctance to be examined for medical procedures. You may hesitate to report the act of sexual violence to the police for fear that they will not believe you. Please know that at no point and under no circumstances does anyone have the right to violate or control another. Please consider contacting the on- or off-campus resources listed in this publication to address any of the concerns you might have in order to take care of yourself.

Sexual misconduct, including sexual assault and harassment of any kind, is prohibited by Boston College and will be responded to accordingly. Boston College strives at all times to maintain a safe environment that supports its educational mission and is free from exploitation and intimidation and discrimination based upon sex and/or gender.

After an Assault

If you or someone you know has been assaulted in the last five days (120 hours), it is strongly recommended that you:

- Try to get to a safe place.
- Call one of the immediate-response or 24-hour services listed below. Taking care of yourself is the first step in the healing process after an assault.
- Try to preserve all physical evidence. Try not to wash your face or hands, bathe, brush your teeth, drink or eat, douche, or change clothes if you can avoid it. If you do change your clothes, put all clothing you were wearing at the time of the assault in individual paper bags (not plastic). It is important to preserve as much evidence as possible should you later decide to pursue criminal charges. (Please note: It is possible that if you have bathed or changed clothes, evidence may still exist; so please do not rule out seeking help.)
- Seek medical attention. This can include going to an area hospital (for which Boston College can arrange transportation) and meeting a sexual assault nurse examiner (SANE) to collect forensic evidence and provide medical care and support to you. SANEs are specially trained nurses who provide immediate, compassionate, and comprehensive medical-legal evaluation and treatment.
 1. Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center ER: 617-754-2323
 2. Brigham and Women's Hospital ER: 617-732-5636
- Reach out to additional resources listed below for ongoing support when you feel ready.

Immediate and 24-Hour Services

Please note: Boston College will make every effort to protect your privacy. Detailed information about the following resources, including levels of privacy, confidentiality, or anonymity, appear in the section entitled “Getting Support” (page 17).

Sexual Assault Network Hotline (SANet): 617-552-2211

The Sexual Assault Network hotline is a 24-hour/7-days-a-week confidential and anonymous resource that is staffed by advocates who are trained to listen, provide options, and support the survivor or friend of the survivor as they embark on the healing process.

- **What Will Happen if I Call the SANet Hotline?**

You will reach a recording that gives you the option to press “1” to speak with a staff advocate or “2” to be connected to the Boston Area Rape Crisis Center (BARCC). All advocates are trained to respond to incidents of sexual violence, stalking, and relationship violence, and to help you understand your options regarding medical attention, legal and judicial procedures, and counseling and support services.

Immediate and 24-Hour Services cont.

How Can SANet Help?

You always have the right to choose which services to utilize. SANet Hotline advocates are available to assist survivors in a variety of ways including connecting callers with:

- Emergency medical services, including accompanying the survivor to the hospital, the police, etc. as requested.
- Guidance and support throughout the University student conduct process and/or the criminal justice process if the survivor chooses to pursue either course of action.
- Information about internal University Stay Away Orders or criminal restraining or harassment prevention orders.
- Assistance with academic concerns.
- Alternative living arrangements if desired.
- Contact with community resources such as rape crisis centers, support groups, etc. if desired.
- General support and assistance as needed.

For more information: www.bc.edu/sanet

Boston College Police Department (BCPD):

617-552-4444 | 617-552-4440 (non-emergency)

BCPD can assist students in filing a criminal report for an incident that occurred either on or off campus. Filing a police report may result in a criminal investigation, but every effort is made to keep the wishes of the survivor as a primary focus. For an assault that occurred off campus, BCPD can connect students to the appropriate municipal authorities. The BCPD can also be reached by activating the blue light boxes located throughout campus.

University Health Services: 617-552-3225

2150 Commonwealth Avenue (St. Thomas More Road entrance)

Medical personnel are available 24 hours a day for immediate and follow-up medical attention during the academic year, with the exception of Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Spring and Easter breaks. Outpatient services remain available Monday – Friday during summer, spring break, and after January 1st to the beginning of spring semester.

University Counseling Services: 617-552-3310

Provides professional and confidential counseling and clinicians are on call for emergencies 24 hours a day.



Administrator On-Call

Available through BCPD (617-552-4444)

The administrator on-call is able to assist with immediate University concerns, such as the issuance of University No Contact Orders and Stay Away Orders.

You can learn more about additional resources available to you in the section entitled “Getting Support” (page 17).

Resources for Reporting Sexual Misconduct

The decision to report sexual misconduct, including sexual assault, harassment, intimate partner violence, stalking, and any other violation of the Student Sexual Misconduct Policy, is yours. Deciding whether to report can be difficult for many survivors, and simply might not be a step that is possible for you right now. However, please know that members of the University Community care about you and there are many resources available to help you in the healing process.

Students affected by sexual violence are strongly encouraged to report these incidents to the Office of the Dean of Students, the Student Affairs Title IX Coordinator, and/or to the Boston College Police Department. Note that you can report your experience to any of these resources without being required to file a complaint, which is explained in the following section.

Boston College encourages students who are victims of sexual misconduct to talk to someone about what happened so they can get the support they need, and the University can respond appropriately.

The report can be made by:

- A person who experienced sexual misconduct; and/or
- A person who has information that sexual misconduct may have been committed by a member of the Boston College community or a participant in a University-sponsored program.



Although everyone is encouraged to report sexual misconduct, a formal complaint of Title IX harassment may be brought only by the person(s) who experienced the misconduct.

Confidential Resources

A Note about Privacy

As a student you may have questions or concerns about your privacy and the information you share. All University employees are expected to ensure student privacy to the fullest extent possible. While Boston College employees have differing obligations or duties with respect to maintaining a victim's confidentiality, the privacy of student information is respected at all times. Even when a victim's complete confidentiality cannot be maintained, information is shared among a small number of University administrators solely to the extent required to help ensure that the University responds appropriately to a report of sexual misconduct. In those limited situations (discussed on page 13) in which the University concludes that it must investigate and take action against an accused student, information may be shared as necessary in connection with the investigation. Boston College encourages victims to talk to someone identified below.

Confidential Resource Provider

Claire Johnson Allen, LICSW, Associated Director, Women's Center
(617) 552-3489

Available as a resource to provide the following types of information to students:

- reporting options and the effects of these options;
- available counseling services;
- available medical and health services;
- supportive measures;
- the student conduct process;
- the legal process.

***Note:** While these professional and nonprofessional counselors and advocates may maintain a victim's confidentiality with regard to Boston College, they may have reporting or other obligations under state law such as mandatory reporting to the Department of Youth Services in cases involving minors; threat of imminent harm to self or others; or the requirement to testify if subpoenaed in a criminal case.

Sexual Assault Network Hotline (SANet): 617–552–2211

SANet is the University's primary confidential resource for students and other members of the Boston College community to report incidents of sexual misconduct and to receive information, resources, and support. SANet is a hotline that is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week during the academic year for anyone affected by sexual violence.

SANet CARE Team: 617–552–8099 | sanet@bc.edu | bc.edu/sanet | Mon.–Fri. 3 p.m.–4 p.m. and by appointment

Located in Maloney Hall 441, the SANet Care Team provides support for victims of sexual misconduct, and can help students explore all options including follow-up medical care, reporting options, counseling, and working with University offices to address remedies as needed.

University Health Services

2150 Commonwealth Avenue (St. Thomas More Road Entrance) | (617) 552–3225

- Open 24 hours a day for patient care and for urgent evaluations during the academic year with the exception of Thanksgiving, Christmas, and spring and Easter breaks.
- Outpatient services are available Monday–Friday during summer, spring break, and after January 1st to the beginning of spring semester.

Privileged Resources

Pastoral and professional counselors, when acting in their professional capacities as described below, are not required to disclose student reports of sexual misconduct without the student's consent.

A pastoral counselor is an employee of the University who is associated with a religious order or denomination, recognized by that religious order or denomination as someone who provides confidential counseling and who is functioning within the scope of that recognition as a pastoral counselor. **Contact Rick Rossi: 617–552–6592 Monday – Friday during business hours.**

A professional counselor is an employee of the University whose official responsibilities include providing psychological counseling, and who is functioning within the scope of his or her license or certification. **Contact University Counseling Services (UCS): 617–552–3310**

A student (undergraduate or graduate) reporting to either of the above privileged resources may request complete confidentiality, meaning that the staff in question will not share any reported information with anyone without the student's consent. These counselors will provide support and assistance but will not investigate the complaint.

A Note about the Role and Responsibility of Faculty and Staff

A student may choose to disclose sexual misconduct to a faculty or staff member. Faculty and staff are required to report to the Student Affairs Title IX Coordinator when a student discloses sexual misconduct so that the University can respond appropriately. The report would include any information that the student decides to disclose, including the names of the victim and alleged perpetrator(s), any witnesses, and any other relevant facts, including the date, time, and location of the alleged incident.

If a victim wants to tell a faculty or staff member what happened but also wishes to maintain confidentiality, a victim should understand that the University will consider the request but cannot guarantee confidentiality in all cases. In reporting the details of the incident to the Student Affairs Title IX Coordinator, the employee will inform the coordinator of the victim's request for confidentiality.

While students should expect that faculty and staff will inform the Student Affairs Title IX Coordinator, students who want the University to conduct an investigation or who wish to pursue institutional remedies and/or adjudication are strongly encouraged to contact the Office of the Dean of Students and/or the Student Affairs Title IX Coordinator directly to ensure a more immediate response.

For specific information about how the University will weigh a request for confidentiality and respond, see the Student Sexual Misconduct Policy at bc.edu/ssmp.

Reporting Options

Office of the Dean of Students. The Office of the Dean of Students, working in conjunction with the Student Affairs Title IX Coordinator, can assist students in understanding their options in the conduct system, implement interim measures such as Stay Away Orders or other interim administrative actions, and provide guidance and support regarding remedies including academic and housing concerns.

- Contact: 617-552-3470, Monday-Friday, during normal business hours or the administrator on-call (outside of normal business hours) through Boston College Police, 617-552-4444 (emergency); 617-552-4440 (nonemergency)

Student Affairs Title IX Coordinator. Student Affairs Title IX Coordinator oversees the University's efforts related to the prevention, education, and response to incidents of sexual misconduct by Boston College students, and can help an individual student in pursuing a complaint and accessing available resources.

- Contact: Tracy Kennedy, 617-552-3482 | StudentTitleIX@bc.edu

Boston College Police Department (BCPD). BCPD provides assistance to victims such as addressing immediate safety concerns, investigating incidents of sexual misconduct, filing a criminal complaint both on campus and off campus, and assisting victims with medical attention and care. BCPD will take a report from a student and, if an investigation occurs, it will be conducted by specially-trained investigators. This may involve questions about the assault, the assailant(s), location, and if there were witnesses.

- Contact: 617-552-4444 (emergency); 617-552-4440 (non-emergency)

University Title IX Coordinator

Patricia Lowe
129 Lake Street, Room 217
617-552-3334
patricia.lowe@bc.edu

The University Title IX Coordinator is responsible for coordinating the University's efforts to comply with Title IX, and oversees the University's response to discrimination complaints. The University Title IX Coordinator is the point of contact for any complaint of sexual harassment under Title IX involving conduct by a faculty or staff member.

Boston College Harassment Counselor

Marie Elena Gioiella
129 Lake Street
617-552-3340
marie.elena.gioiella@bc.edu

The University Harassment Counselor is responsible for responding to complaints of non-Title IX harassment brought against faculty and staff in accordance with the Discriminatory Harassment Policy.

Confidentiality: How Boston College Will Weigh the Request and Respond

The University respects the privacy interests of victims of sexual violence, and will protect the confidentiality of the individuals involved to the fullest extent possible. In responding to a victim's requests for academic, living, or working adjustments, the University will limit disclosures to the minimum number of staff necessary to make reasonable adjustments. (The University has designated the Student Affairs Title IX Coordinator to evaluate student requests for confidentiality in connection with reporting sexual misconduct.) As described more fully in the Student Sexual Misconduct Policy, the coordinator will weigh a student's request for confidentiality against the University's obligation to provide a safe, nondiscriminatory environment for all students, including the victim. The University does not include the names or other identifying information of victims of alleged sexual violence in any publicly available documents, including any publicly available police reports, logs, or safety notices.

If a victim discloses an incident but requests confidentiality or that no investigation of particular incident be pursued or no action through the conduct system be taken, the Student Affairs Title IX Coordinator, in consultation with a small number of key University administrators, who may include representatives of the Office of the Dean of Students, the Boston College Police Department, and the Office of the General Counsel, will weigh the request against

the University's obligation to provide a safe, nondiscriminatory environment for all students, including the victim.

When weighing a victim's request for confidentiality or that no investigation or conduct process be pursued, the Student Affairs Title IX Coordinator will consider a range of factors, including whether:

- The alleged perpetrator is likely to commit additional acts of sexual or other violence, such as:
 - Whether there have been other sexual violence complaints about the same alleged perpetrator;
 - Whether the alleged perpetrator has a history of arrests or records from a prior school indicating a history of violence; and
 - Whether the alleged perpetrator threatened further sexual violence or other violence against the victim or others.
- The sexual misconduct was committed by multiple perpetrators.
- The sexual violence was perpetrated with a weapon or with force.
- The victim is a minor.
- Boston College possesses other means to obtain relevant evidence of the sexual violence (such as security cameras or personal, physical evidence).
- The victim's report reveals a pattern of perpetration (such as via illicit use of drugs or alcohol) at a given location or by a particular group.

The presence of one or more of these factors could lead the University to investigate and, if appropriate, pursue conduct action against the respondent. If none of these factors are present, the University will likely respect the victim's request.

If Boston College honors a victim's request for confidentiality or decision not to participate in an investigation, the University's ability to investigate the incident or pursue conduct action against the alleged perpetrator(s) may be limited.

In some cases, usually rare, the University may not be able to honor a victim's confidentiality request in order to adhere to its obligation to provide a safe, nondiscriminatory environment for all students. If the Student Affairs Title IX Coordinator determines that the University cannot maintain a victim's confidentiality, the Student Affairs Title IX Coordinator will inform the victim prior to starting an investigation and will, to the extent possible, only share information with people responsible for handling the University's response.

How to File a Complaint

There are multiple ways to file a complaint at Boston College. You do not need to make this decision alone. If you are unsure about whether to file a complaint, there are many people you can speak with in order to get more information about what filing a complaint would mean and entail. You will not be pressured to provide more details than you are willing to offer.

Filing a Complaint within Boston College

To file a formal complaint, a survivor should contact the Student Affairs Title IX Coordinator or the University Title IX Coordinator, who can explain the process for filing a complaint. Title IX harassment complaints must be brought in writing.

Filing a Criminal Complaint with Police

If a student (undergraduate or graduate) reports sexual violence to the Boston College Police Department (BCPD), the police may conduct an investigation and assist the victim in filing criminal charges against the alleged offender if he or she chooses. BCPD also helps in obtaining protective restraining orders for domestic and dating violence incidents, as well as harassment. If the incident occurred off campus, BCPD can assist the victim in informing the appropriate municipal police department if he or she so desires. While all Boston College Police Officers are trained to take a range of reports, there are also BCPD officers who are specially trained to respond to sexual assault and intimate partner complaints.

Under Massachusetts law, victims of dating or domestic violence may be entitled to obtain an abuse prevention order under Chapter 209A of the Massachusetts General Laws, and victims of stalking or harassment may be entitled to obtain a harassment prevention order under Chapter 258E of the Massachusetts General Laws. These orders require the abuse or harassment to cease and can include No Contact and Stay Away Orders. They may be issued without prior notice to the abuser or harasser if there is a substantial likelihood of immediate danger of abuse or harassment. The Boston College Police will assist victims in pursuing these orders.

The University Response

The Office of the Dean of Students, in conjunction with the Student Affairs Title IX Coordinator, provides assistance and support to students. For students who report sexual misconduct, the Office of the Dean of Students can connect a student with support and counseling, and will focus on the response and interim remedies needed to help the student. Students who report sexual misconduct violations in situations where they may also be responsible for Student Code of Conduct violations (such as possession of alcohol) will generally not be charged for these ancillary violations. The Office of the Dean of Students can also provide the complainant and respondent with support and counseling as well as a trained guide/adviser (see full Student Sexual Misconduct Policy).

Note: Victims do not need to participate in the conduct process to receive resources and support.

The Student Affairs Title IX Coordinator coordinates the University's efforts to:

- Assist the victim in accessing other available victim advocacy, academic support; financial aid, counseling; disability, health or mental health services, and legal assistance both on and off campus (pages 17–19).
- Assist international students with immigration and/or visa-related issues.
- Provide other security and support, which could include facilitating a No Contact or Stay Away Order, helping arrange for a change in living or working arrangements, and adjusting courses and providing other academic support.
- Inform the victim of the right to report a crime to campus or local law enforcement, and provide the victim with assistance if the victim wishes to do so.

A report of sexual violence (including non-identifying reports) may also prompt the University to consider broader remedial action—such as increased monitoring, supervision, or security at locations where the reported sexual violence occurred; increasing education and prevention efforts, including to targeted population groups; conducting climate assessments/victimization surveys; and/or revisiting policies and practices.

If the Student Affairs Title IX Coordinator determines that the University can respect a victim's request for confidentiality and not pursue conduct violations against the alleged perpetrator, the University will nonetheless take steps to protect and assist the victim.



Retaliation

It is a violation of University policy to engage in any form of retaliation or intimidation in connection with complaints of sexual misconduct. Any student engaging in such retaliation or intimidation may be found responsible for a conduct violation. Any such acts of retaliation or intimidation by a Boston College student should be promptly reported to the Office of the Dean of Students, which may adjudicate such complaints. This policy and related processes may also apply to any allegation that a student has attempted to prevent an individual from reporting sexual misconduct, has acted in complicity with another individual who has engaged or attempted to engage in sexual misconduct, or has engaged in any acts of intimidation or reprisal with respect to any reported sexual misconduct.

Supportive Measures

Upon a victim's request, the University will provide appropriate interim measures designed to prevent further acts of misconduct, harassment, or retaliation and address the victim's safety concerns. These include, but are not limited to, temporary No Contact Orders, University Stay Away Orders, or other administrative action. A detailed description of the range and scope of interim measures can be found in the Student Sexual Misconduct Policy (bc.edu/ssmp).

Resolution of Complaints

The Office of the Dean of Students, in conjunction with the Student Affairs Title IX Coordinator, is responsible for investigating, adjudicating, and resolving sexual misconduct complaints against students. For a more detailed description of the Office's processes for resolving sexual misconduct complaints, please see bc.edu/ssmp.

Getting Support

For most survivors of sexual misconduct, including sexual assault and intimate partner violence, recovering from what happened is a process that takes some time. You deserve to have a strong, supportive network of resources available to you and dedicated to your healing. Please know that Boston College is committed to connecting you with any number of the following on- and off-campus resources, and encourages you to reach out to begin the healing journey when you feel ready.

On-Campus Resources

Boston College Police Department (BCPD): 617-552-4444 | 617-552-4440
(non-emergency)

BCPD can assist students in filing a criminal report for an incident that occurred either on or off campus. Filing a police report may result in a criminal investigation, but every effort is made to keep the wishes of the survivor as a primary focus. For an assault that occurred off campus, BCPD can connect students to the appropriate municipal authorities. The BCPD can also be reached by activating the blue light boxes located throughout campus.

SANet (Sexual Assault Network) CARE Team

617-552-8099

Maloney Hall 441

sanet@bc.edu | Office Hours: Monday–Friday 3 p.m.–4 p.m. and by appointment

Provides confidential support for victims of sexual misconduct, and can help students explore all options including follow-up medical care, reporting options, counseling, and working with University offices to address remedies as needed.

The Women's Center

Maloney Hall 441

Office Hours: Monday–Friday, 10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

The Women's Center provides support, education, and programs that promote empowerment for students of all genders in an inclusive and welcoming space.

Please note: The Women's Center is not a confidential resource; all staff, with the exception of the SANet CARE Team have reporting responsibilities under Title IX.

Confidential Resource Provider

Claire Johnson Allen, LICSW, Women's Center

johnsovj@bc.edu | 617-552-3489

Maloney Hall 441

Available as a resource to provide the following information, reporting options and effects of these options, available counseling services, available medical and health services, supportive measures, the student conduct process, and the legal process.

University Counseling Services (UCS)

617-552-3310

Gasson 001

Office Hours: Monday–Friday, 8:45 a.m.–4:45 p.m.

University Counseling Services is available 24 hours a day to assist students affected by sexual harassment, misconduct, or assault. UCS is available during normal business hours at 617-552-3310. During nights, weekends, and holidays, a University clinician is available on call. Please call UCS directly for after-hours services.

University Health Services (UHS)

617-552-3225

2150 Commonwealth Avenue (St. Thomas More Road entrance)

Medical personnel are available 24 hours a day for immediate and follow-up medical attention during the academic year. For regular appointments, UHS is open Monday–Friday, 10:00 a.m. –4:00 p.m.

Campus Ministry

McElroy Hall 215

617-552-3475

The staff in Campus Ministry is available to help students with private (but not confidential) pastoral counseling and spiritual direction. Some members of the staff reside in the residence halls. A resident minister is also available 24 hours a day by contacting BCPD at 617-552-4444.

Campus Ministry Liaisons:

Rick Rossi (617-552-6592, richard.rossi@bc.edu) (Confidential Resource)

Maura Colleary (617-552-8943, maura.colleary@bc.edu)

Office of the Dean of Students

617-552-3470

Maloney Hall 448

Offers outreach, guidance, support, information, and referrals for any student experiencing distress, including students who are healing from incidents of sexual misconduct.

HEAL Survivor Support Group

Claire Johnson Allen, LICSW, Women's Center

617-552-3310 | johnsovj@bc.edu

HEAL is a closed, confidential weekly support group for survivors of sexual assault. The group is run by a trauma specialist and opens to new participants at the beginning of each semester.

Off-Campus Resources

COUNSELING AND SUPPORT

Boston Area Rape Crisis Center 24-Hour Hotline

800-841-8371 | www.barcc.org

“Dedicated to healing. Advocating for change.”

The Boston Area Rape Crisis Center (BARCC) is the only rape crisis center in the Greater Boston area.

Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault Program at Newton-Wellesley Hospital

617-243-6521

Provides crisis intervention, safety planning, individual counseling and advocacy, referral to community resources (legal, housing, shelter, immigration, etc.), and compassionate, survivor-focused medical care and evidence collection services.

Fenway Community Health Violence Recovery Program

617-927-6250 | www.fenwayhealth.org

Provides counseling, support groups, advocacy, and referral services to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer or questioning (LGBTQ) victims of sexual violence, bias crime, domestic violence, and police misconduct.

Intimate Partner Violence Support and Advocacy

Jane Doe, Inc. | 617-248-0922 | www.janedoe.org

Provides comprehensive list of all sexual assault and partner violence resources in Massachusetts, including those for special populations.

REACH Beyond Domestic Violence 24-Hour Hotline

800-899-4000 | www.reachma.org

Committed to advancing the safety, healing, and empowerment of those who experience domestic or relationship violence.

The Network La Red (partner abuse hotline)

617-742-4911 | www.tnlr.org

Provides support regarding partner abuse in LGBTQ relationships.



Legal Support and Area Law Enforcement Services

Victim Rights Law Center

617-399-6720 | www.victimrights.org/

Offers free legal representation for sexual assault survivors in criminal, civil, and school-based hearings.

Greater Boston Legal Services

617-371-1234 | www.gbbs.org/

Provides free legal services for domestic violence cases.

Boston Police Domestic Violence Unit

617-343-4350 | bpdnews.com/fjc

Boston Police Sexual Assault Unit

617-343-4400 | bpdnews.com/fjc

Newton Police Department

617-796-2100 or

Domestic Violence Officer

617-796-2141 | www.newtonpolice.com

How to Help a Friend Affected by Sexual Violence

Believe What You Hear

Remember that survivors of sexual violence often worry that sharing what has happened to them will lead others to abandon, reject, or even retaliate against them. Being able to show you care could be the reason that your friend feels safe continuing to utilize support.

Don't Judge

For students who have been sexually assaulted on college campuses, feeling judged and having their privacy violated by trusted peers, friends, and roommates can feel as traumatizing as the assault itself. To best help your friend, discuss your discomfort or concerns later with a trusted confidential resource like SANet, not in the moment.

Remember Your Role

While we might feel an instinct to gather details of the incident first, the best way to support a friend after an assault is often to affirm what they tell you. Ask whether your friend feels safe now, what they feel would be most helpful now, and whether they are interested in expanding their support system.

Offer to Connect

If and when your friend feels like the time is right to reach out for more support (such as academic, housing accommodations, conduct process), you can offer to connect your friend to SANet or a trusted professional on campus. Remember that there are many trusted resources on and off campus that they and their support system can utilize.

Seek Support

This is a very important part of helping a friend through the healing process. Throughout your conversations with anyone who talks to you about sexual violence, ask yourself whether this is a point to bring in a professional support system in order to take care of yourself. Remember to respect your friend's privacy by avoiding sharing any details or personal information with others.

What Is Sexual Misconduct?

University policy prohibits a broad range of sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, stalking, and intimate partner violence. Sexual misconduct can occur between individuals who know each other, have an established relationship, have previously engaged in consensual sexual activity, and between individuals who do not know each other. Sexual misconduct can be committed by persons of any gender, and it can occur between people of the same or different gender.

We encourage you to review the complete Student Sexual Misconduct Policy at www.bc.edu/ssmp.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual Harassment is any unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when (1) submission to the conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a person's employment or education, (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by a person is used as the basis for employment or educational decisions affecting the person, or (3) the conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a person's education or work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational, work, or living environment. Examples of conduct that may constitute sexual harassment include, but are not limited to, sexual advances, any form of retaliation or threat of retaliation against an individual who rejects such advances, sexual epithets, jokes, or comments, comment or inquiry about an individual's body or sexual experiences, unwelcome leering, whistling, brushing against the body, sexual gestures, and displaying sexually suggestive images. A single incident of serious sexual misconduct may be sufficiently severe to constitute sexual harassment.

SEXUAL ASSAULT is any sexual contact or sexual penetration with another individual without consent.

SEXUAL CONTACT includes intentional contact with the intimate parts of another person, causing another person to touch one's intimate parts, or disrobing or exposure of another person without permission. Intimate parts may include the breasts, genitals, buttocks, groin, mouth, or any other part of the body that is touched in a sexual manner. Sexual contact includes kissing and attempted sexual penetration.

SEXUAL PENETRATION includes vaginal or anal penetration, however slight, with a body part (e.g., penis, tongue, finger, hand, etc.) or object, or oral penetration involving mouth to genital contact.

SEXUAL EXPLOITATION means taking sexual advantage of another person and includes, without limitation: indecent exposure; causing or attempting to cause the incapacitation of another person in order to gain a sexual advantage over the person; facilitating the prostitution of another person; non-consensual recording (video or audio) of sexual activity and/or the intimate parts of another person; sharing and/or transmitting images of private sexual activity and/or the intimate parts of another person without consent; observing or allowing third parties to observe private sexual acts or otherwise violating a person's sexual privacy without consent; and knowingly or recklessly exposing another person to a risk of sexually transmitted infection or virus.

INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE (also known as Relationship Violence, Dating Violence, or Domestic Violence). Intimate partner violence is any act of violence or a pattern of abusive behavior in an intimate relationship. Intimate partner violence may include actual or threatened physical violence, sexual violence, psychological or emotional abuse, and progressive social isolation. The determination of the existence of an intimate partner relationship is based on the following factors: the length of the relationship, the type of relationship, and the frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship.

Individuals who are victims of domestic abuse in Massachusetts may seek an abuse prevention order, also known as a "restraining order" or "209A order," in addition to pursuing criminal charges and charges through the student conduct system, if the offender is a Boston College student. For more information on Massachusetts law, please go here: <https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartII/TitleIII/Chapter209A>.

STALKING is engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to fear for personal safety or the safety of others or suffer substantial emotional distress. "Course of conduct:" means two or more acts including, but not limited to, acts in which the stalker directly, indirectly, or through third parties, by any action, method, device, or means, follows,

monitors, observes, surveils, threatens, or communicates to or about a person, or interferes with a person's property. "Substantial emotional distress" means significant mental suffering or anguish that may, but does not necessarily, require medical or other professional treatment or counseling.

What Is Consent?

CONSENT is the clear and voluntary agreement to engage in specific acts of sexual contact or activity, communicated through mutually understandable words or actions. Consent is always freely informed and actively given. Silence or lack of resistance cannot be assumed to imply consent. Consent must be ongoing, and it may be withdrawn at any time. Consent for one sexual act does not imply consent for any subsequent sexual activity. If confusion or ambiguity arises during a sexual interaction, it is imperative that the behavior stop and the person initiating the activity has the other person's consent to continue. Consent may never be obtained:

- from an individual who is incapacitated; or
- through the use of coercion or force; from a person who is under the legal age to give consent (16 years of age in Massachusetts);

Definitions of incapacitation, coercion, and force include:

a. INCAPACITATION is the inability to make informed, rational judgments and decisions. Without exception, a person who is asleep or unconscious is incapacitated. A person can also become incapacitated through the use of alcohol or drugs. If alcohol or drugs are involved, incapacitation may be assessed by evaluating how the substance has affected a person's decision-making capacity, awareness, ability to make informed judgments, capacity to appreciate the nature and quality of the act, and the person's level of consciousness. The impact of alcohol and drugs varies from person to person; however, warning signs of possible incapacitation include slurred speech or word confusion, unsteady gait, impaired coordination, inability to perform personal tasks such as undressing, inability to maintain eye contact, disorientation or confusion about time and place, combativeness, vomiting, and emotional volatility. A person who is incapacitated may not be able to understand some or all of the following questions: Do you know where you are? Do you know how you got here? Do you know what is happening? Do you know whom you are with? If incapacitation of the complainant is in question, the University will consider whether the respondent knew, or whether a sober person in the respondent's position reasonably should have known under the circumstances, that the complainant was incapacitated. A respondent's intoxication or incapacitation will not excuse the respondent from the obligation to obtain consent as described in this policy.



b. COERCION is verbal or physical conduct, including manipulation, intimidation, isolation, confinement, undue pressure, and expressed or implied threats of physical, emotional or other harm, that would reasonably place an individual in fear of harm and that is used to compel someone to engage in sexual activity.

c. FORCE is the use or threat of physical violence or intimidation to overcome an individual's freedom to choose whether to engage in sexual activity.

Understanding the Impacts of Sexual Misconduct

What Should I Call What Happened to Me?

We understand that healing from an experience of sexual assault can be different for every individual. One of the things that you might have questions about is what to call what happened to you. While some students might have a difficult time naming what they experienced as violence, this does not minimize the impact of what they might be going through.

Some students refer to themselves as survivors after recovering from an incident of sexual assault, while others prefer to be recognized as victims of a crime. There is no wrong way to talk about how you feel following an episode of sexual violence, and your support network at Boston College will do its best to respect the language you choose to talk about it.

(BARCC, 2012 University of Virginia, Sexual Assault Education and Resources, 2012)

What about the Way I Feel?

Healing emotionally after a sexual assault can be a complex process. One of the most important things you can do to help yourself is to get as much support as possible. People react and cope differently after being sexually assaulted, so it is important to respect your choices and individual style of coping. At the same time, many sexual assault survivors find it helpful to know that some emotions and

reactions tend to be very common. These reactions can be confusing and upsetting, but they are normal in your situation, and can include post-traumatic stress symptoms. Some of the common reactions and emotions people have are

Guilt | Many survivors feel guilty because we live in a culture that tends to blame the victim. No one deserves to be assaulted, regardless of how much they had to drink, what they were wearing, or if they consented to other sexual activity.

Fear | It is normal to feel afraid after being assaulted. Sexual assault is frightening. Some survivors find it hard to be alone at night or in a setting that is like the one in which they were assaulted.

Avoidance | It is common to avoid or want to avoid anything that has to do with the assault, such as getting assistance, because it reminds you of the assault. Although avoidance can initially assist in coping, most survivors find it is not a long-term solution.

Anger | You might feel angry—at the perpetrator, people you love, yourself, or the world. Feeling angry can be an important part of healing emotionally after an assault.

Mood Swings | Your mood may change rapidly or dramatically. Coping with a sexual assault is overwhelming, and these kinds of intense reactions are normal.

Distrust | It may also take a while to feel like you can trust people again. If you were assaulted by someone you knew, you may feel like you've lost confidence in your sense of judgment about other people. If you were assaulted by a stranger, you may feel like you can't trust people you don't know.

Loss of Control | Survivors often feel out of control or powerless. They have been robbed of control over their bodies. One of the most important facets of emotional healing from this experience is regaining control.

Numbness | Sometimes it takes a while for survivors to feel anything at all. One of the ways people sometimes cope with crisis is to go numb.

A Note on Coping: While the reactions listed above name some of the emotions you might experience after an incident of sexual violence, it is also important to consider how you're coping with these reactions. Some students find that they cope by talking with others, watching more television, or turning to homework. Others find that they are participating in activities that might compromise their long-term health and safety. These can include sleeping several more or fewer hours than usual, eating much more or much less than usual, exercising for extended periods of time, spending less time with loved ones, increased substance use, and risk-taking behaviors that might be concerning to others, such as increased random hookups, radical shifts in social circles, and isolation.

It's important for friends and loved ones to avoid expressing judgment to the student, and to instead focus on care, compassion, and empowerment. Survivors can heal from sexual violence of all kinds, and many survivors find that seeking support from individuals who can form a trusted community is helpful in ensuring a healthy and hopeful recovery process.

Myths and Realities about Sexual Assault

MYTH: It could never happen to me.

REALITY: Any person of any age, gender, race, class, physical ability, occupation, sexual orientation, or physical appearance can be sexually assaulted.

MYTH: Sexual assault is only committed in dark alleys by strangers.

REALITY: The vast majority of sexual assaults reported by college students are perpetrated by someone known to the survivor.

MYTH: Women give mixed messages because they do not want to admit that they do not want to have sex.

REALITY: Rape is a crime for which the perpetrator holds responsibility. Rape is rape regardless of the relationship between two people and regardless of the behavior of the survivor prior to or during the assault.

MYTH: Only women are sexually assaulted and only men perpetrate it.

REALITY: Although the majority of individuals who report sexual assault identify as women, people of all genders are affected by sexual violence.

MYTH: Someone who was drinking or drunk when sexually assaulted is at least partially to blame.

REALITY: Sexual assault survivors are never responsible for the attack, no matter what, no matter how much alcohol they consumed. Based on research conducted on perpetrator behavior, it is believed that many perpetrators of sexual assault on college campuses strategically use alcohol to incapacitate their targets. Responsibility lies with the perpetrator and the survivor is never responsible for the assailant's behavior. Substance use may increase the vulnerability to sexual assault, and may make someone incapable of giving consent or protecting themselves, but it is never the cause of an assault (National Institute of Justice, 2008).

MYTH: It is not sexual violence if the couple is dating.

REALITY: Unwanted sexual activity in any relationship qualifies as sexual violence.

MYTH: If the victim did not fight or try to run away, or there was no weapon or injuries sustained, rape did not occur.

REALITY: Threats of violence are a weapon, and a person may not resist vigorously for fear of injury or death.





BOSTON COLLEGE
Division of Student Affairs

2022 Edition