Guide for Victims of

Sexual Assault & Harassment

Domestic, Relationship, & Dating Violence

Stalking

USF
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA

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INTRODUCTION

This guide is for USF-Tampa students and employees who experience rape or other sexual violence,* sexual harassment, relationship or dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking.

In the immediate aftermath of any of the above interpersonal crimes or situations, victims may feel confused, shocked, and may not know what to do, whom to tell, or where to seek help. Victims are often concerned about their privacy and safety. This guide is intended to assist victims in understanding their options and resources in the event of any interpersonal crime.

IMPORTANT! If in imminent danger, call 911.
Due to the potential for increased risk, victims of intimate partner violence (domestic, relationship, or dating violence) and stalking are urged to consult confidentially with a victim advocate at USF's Center for Victim Advocacy (see *Resources*, page 15) for an individualized risk assessment, safety planning, and exploration of options. The advocate will help you pursue any reporting options you choose, as safely as possible.

LGBTQ+ STATEMENT

USF strives to promote the safety and well-being of all students and employees. The information in this guide is applicable to students and employees regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. The Center for Victim Advocacy is aware that anyone who is perceived as not conforming to traditional sex and gender stereotypes may be targeted for sexual harassment, assault, and/or hate crimes. In addition, interpersonal violence does occur in same-sex relationships. All advocates have been trained as LGBTQ+ allies through the USF Safe Zone ally training program.

DISABILITY STATEMENT

USF strives to promote the safety and well-being of all students and employees. The information in this guide is applicable to students and employees regardless of their disability status. The Center for Victim Advocacy is aware that persons with disabilities may be targets of crime, abuse, or harassment and our advocates are committed to providing accessible and available services. For reasonable accommodations, please contact us at 813-974-5756 (FL Relay 711) and/or va@usf.edu.

** There are different terms used by different states to refer to sex crimes, such as sexual assault, rape, sexual violence, or, as in Florida, sexual battery. In this guide, we will refer to these crimes generically as "sexual assault," since that is the term most commonly used.*

VICTIM DISCLOSURE, EMPLOYEE OBLIGATION TO REPORT, AND CONFIDENTIALITY

USF encourages victims of sexual violence or harassment, relationship or dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking to talk about the incident or situation with someone they trust to receive needed support and to allow the university to respond appropriately.

Confidential Campus Resources

Employees of the following campus resources can provide confidential support and services to you and are **not required** to report disclosures of sexual violence or harassment, relationship or dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking:

- Center for Victim Advocacy
- Counseling Center
- Student Health Services
- Ombuds Office
- Students with Disabilities Services

You can seek assistance from employees of these services without prompting a Title IX Incident Report to be filed. The only exceptions to this confidentiality are the following circumstances which require employees listed as confidential resources to report a situation to authorities:

- When child abuse is involved.
- When there is the potential of imminent harm to self or others.
- When a student victim is under the age of 18.

Center for Victim Advocacy Confidentiality Statement

The USF Center for Victim Advocacy assures confidentiality to all who utilize the department's services. All of the advocates are certified by the State of Florida's Office of the Attorney General as advocates and are considered confidential. Client names, identifying information, and any disclosures of a crime will be kept confidential unless an advocate receives explicit permission from the client to release the information to a specific third party, or the University received a legal directive to release the information, such as a subpoena or an Office of Civil Rights request.

Employees Who Must Report Disclosures

With the exception of those USF employees of the departments indicated above, other employees are obligated to report disclosures of sexual violence or harassment, relationship or dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking by students or employees to the Title IX Office.

Employees who are mandated by official university policy to report include:

- Employees who supervise other employees
- All faculty
- Employees or students who oversee student activities and/or who supervise or oversee students
    - Resident assistants (RAs)
    - Academic advisors
    - Student activity coordinators
    - Graduate assistants (GAs)
- University Police Department

As discussed above, for purposes of campus safety, certain employees of USF are required to report instances of sexual violence or harassment, relationship or dating violence, domestic violence and stalking that come to their attention. In addition, certain USF System employees, knows as Campus Security Authorities (CSAs), are mandated under federal law to report such crimes and their location per the Clery Act. The victim's name and identifiers are anonymous. CSAs include, but are not limited to RAs, academic advisors and student activity coordinators. In some instances, well-intentioned friends or family members of a victim may contact law enforcement or other officials to report the incident or situation, even when the victim does not wish for others to know.

For some victims, when a mandated report is filed, the victim may feel disempowered or as though they have lost control of the situation. The Center for Victim Advocacy can provide an advocate who can explain your rights under these circumstances and ensure that your privacy and rights are considered by those responsible for responding to the report. When a mandated report is submitted, it goes directly to the Title IX Coordinator, who will reach out to the victim to provide resources, explain the victim's rights to submit a Title IX complaint, and offer the victim the choice to (1) close the report (2) wait on the report to consider their options (3) file a Title IX complaint. The victim is offered an information session with the Title IX Office. This meeting in no way obligates the victim to move forward with a complaint. Rather, this meeting allows the Title IX Coordinator to answer any questions or concerns the victim may have. Although the Title IX Office is not confidential, steps are taken to protect a victim's privacy.

USF cannot require you, as a victim, to participate in any investigation or misconduct proceeding against your will. Title IX officials at USF uphold your rights in order to help you make the best decision for yourself given the circumstances.

For more information about the reporting obligations of USF employees, please refer to *USF System Policy 0-004: Sexual Misconduct/Sexual Harassment (including Battery)* at http://generalcounsel.usf.edu/policies-and-procedures/pdfs/policy-0-004.pdf

REACTIONS TO VICTIMIZATION

Initially you may react to victimization with shock, disbelief, or denial. You may do your best to try to forget the incident and just go on with your life. Perhaps you believe that being strong means trying to recover on your own and not asking for help. This approach may work for a while, but most of us are not prepared for the disruption to our daily lives that traumatic events often bring. You may experience one or more of the following involuntary reactions, which are ordinary reactions to trauma:

- Sleep disturbances and/or nightmares
- Changes in eating behavior: loss of appetite, overeating, nausea
- Inability to concentrate or focus
- Constantly thinking about or visualizing the traumatic event
- Hypervigilance and increased startle reaction
- Emotional outbursts of crying or anger
- Irritability
- Feeling numb
- Loss of interest in school, work, or usual activities
- Inability to push yourself to attend class or work, resulting in unexcused absences
- Flashbacks in which you re-experience sensory moments from the incident

As stated above, these can be normal, involuntary reactions over which you do not have initial control. As unpleasant as these reactions are to endure, they are biochemically triggered as your brain attempts to process the trauma.

Also know that any reaction to trauma is normal and everyone responds to trauma differently – there is no one *right* way to respond.

Additionally, the offender may be someone you know. If this is true for you, you may:

- Feel betrayed because you trusted this person
- Have difficulty trusting others
- Blame yourself for trusting the offender
- Be grieving the loss of the friendship or relationship in addition to coping with the violence and betrayal

Remember that trust is a good thing – betrayal of trust is not. Learning to trust again is part of your healing process and it may take time.

Advocates at The Center for Victim Advocacy provide trauma-informed care and can help you to understand your reactions and feelings in relation to what has happened to you (see *Resources*, page 15). USF's Counseling Center is also a resource for helping you understand and cope. If you find your academic success or employment negatively affected, an advocate may be able to offer assistance in remedying problems in academics and employment due to victimization.

CENTER FOR VICTIM ADVOCACY

Overview
The Center for Victim Advocacy (CVA) provides free and confidential services to USF students, faculty, and staff who have experienced crime, violence, or abuse, regardless of if it occurred on or off campus. CVA serves people of all gender identities and sexual orientations. The role of an advocate is to provide support, explore options, and assist the client with any advocacy needs they may have.

Crimes Served by CVA:

- Assault
- Battery
- Sexual Battery
- Child Abuse
- Kidnapping
- Harassment
- Stalking
- Hate Crime
- Domestic Violence/Relationship Violence
- Cybercrime/Identity Theft
- Robbery/Burglary
- Secondary Victimization
- Other crimes as deemed appropriate by CVA staff

CVA Services:
CVA's services are tailored to meet the individual needs of the client and are delivered at the request of the client. No student, faculty, or staff is required to engage in any services or to access an advocate unless they so choose. CVA services can include:

- Crisis Intervention
- Emotional Support
- Personal and Systems Advocacy
- Court, Campus proceedings, and Medical Accompaniment
- Information, Options, and Referrals
- Safety Planning
- Assistance filing a report, injunction for protection, or crime victim's compensation claim

To connect with an advocate:

- Call 813-974-5756
- Visit the CVA Office: SVC 2057

IN THE IMMEDIATE AFTERMATH OF A CRIME

It may be difficult to start thinking about what you need to do next and you may feel overwhelmed trying to sort through all of your available options. Let the following tips guide you in understanding your options.

Sexual Assault/Rape/Sexual Battery

- **Sexual battery (rape)** – oral, anal or vaginal penetration by, or union with, the sexual organ of another or the anal or vaginal penetration of another by any other object.
  - Do not go to a hospital emergency room unless you have physical injuries requiring immediate medical attention.
    - Forensic medical exams ("rape kits") are ***not*** performed at Student Health Services or at hospitals in Hillsborough County/Tampa, but rather by the Crisis Center of Tampa Bay (See *Resources,* page 17).
    - Exams can be performed up to 120 hours (5 days) after the assault.
    - The Crisis Center can also provide STI preventative medication and emergency contraception.
    - The Crisis Center's services are all free of charge and you do not have to file a report to access them.
  - Preserve evidence as much as possible until it is collected. If you may want to report in the future, it is important to preserve as much evidence as possible.
    - Avoid bathing or showering, urinating, eating, washing clothes worn during the assault, or washing bedding or towels that were part of the incident. Store items in a brown paper bag.
    - Save all communications to or from the offender or witnesses via voicemail, text, social media, or email about the incident.
    - If you are unsure if you want to report the crime, you may still want to preserve the evidence. However, even if you did not preserve evidence, you may still report the crime.
  - The forensic exam process can be distressing, although every effort will be made to make you as comfortable as possible.
    - You may want a friend or family member and/or your advocate from CVA to accompany you to the off-campus location for the exam.
    - Even if you choose not to have a USF advocate accompany you, the Crisis Center of Tampa Bay will have an advocate present.
  - An advocate (see *Resources,* page 16 for USF Victim Advocate contact information) can provide safety planning, help you determine your immediate needs, and assist you in obtaining assistance in areas such as:
    - Housing and relocation
    - Academics
    - Work
    - Injunction for Protection ("restraining order") – used to restrict offender's contact with you (see pg. 10 for more information)
  - If you would like to report the sexual assault, please see *Reporting Options,* page 10.

Stalking and/or Domestic, Relationship, and Dating Violence

Due to the increased risk of danger, victims of these types of crimes are urged to consult confidentially with a victim advocate at CVA for an individualized risk assessment, safety planning, and exploration of options. The advocate will help you pursue any reporting options you choose as safely as possible.

If you believe you are in danger, dial 911 immediately.

- **Stalking** – Repetitive or menacing pursuit, following, harassment or interference with the peace or safety of a member of the community; or the safety of any of the immediate family members or friends of that person.
- **Relationship violence** – A pattern of coercive control by one partner over the other that involves psychological abuse tactics, and other forms of abuse, such as physical, sexual, and financial.
  - Seek medical care, if needed.
    - Hospital emergency room
    - Student Health Services
    - Other medical provider of your choice
    - A victim advocate can accompany you or meet you at the facility if you are interested
  - Preserve evidence as much as possible.
    - Leave damage to property or dwelling as is for law enforcement to document; avoid changing or washing clothing that may be torn or contain blood evidence; make sure that bruises and other injuries are photographed by police, medical caregivers, or, as a last resort, a friend or relative.
    - Save communications to or from the offender or witnesses via voicemail, text, social media, or email about the incident.
    - If you are unsure if you want to report the crime, you may still want to preserve the evidence. However, even if you did not preserve evidence, you may still report the crime.
  - An advocate (see *Resources,* page 15 for the USF Center for Victim Advocacy contact information) can provide safety planning, help you determine your immediate needs, and assist you in obtaining changes or accommodations in areas such as:
    - Housing and relocation or safe emergency shelter
    - Academics and work
    - Transportation
    - Legal aid
    - Injunction for Protection
  - If you would like to file a report, please see *Reporting Options,* page 10. It is strongly encouraged that you work with a Victim Advocate to engage in individualized risk assessment, safety planning, and exploration of options due to the increased risk of danger associated with these types of crimes.

REPORTING OPTIONS FOR VICTIMS

Depending on the circumstances of your situation, you have a number of options if you wish to report what has happened to you:

- Report to local law enforcement.
- Disclose to the Title IX Coordinator in the Title IX Office, requesting informal or alternative solutions.
- File a formal complaint with the Title IX Office that may lead to a formal action.
- Report student misconduct through the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities (see *Resources*, page 16). NOTE: Any Title IX related concerns will be forwarded to the Title IX Office for action.
- Report misconduct anonymously through Ethics Point, USF's third-party resource, by calling 866-974-8411 or online at https://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/ media/en/gui/14773/index.html.
- Choose not to report.

If you are hesitant to report sexual misconduct to the university because of underage drinking or illegal substance use, please be aware of USF's *Medical Amnesty (Student Reporting) Policy 30-004*, which encourages the reporting of sexual assault in such circumstances and helps protect the victim from misconduct sanctions (http://generalcounsel.usf.edu/policies- and-procedures/pdfs/policy-30-004.pdf).

If you believe you are in danger, dial 911 immediately.

Reporting a Crime to Law Enforcement

For criminal offenses such as sexual assault, stalking, domestic violence, or relationship or dating violence, a report can be made to the law enforcement agency that has jurisdiction over the location of the incident:

- Campus: University Police Department (**UPD**)
- City of Tampa: Tampa Police Department
- Temple Terrace: Temple Terrace Police Department
- Unincorporated Hillsborough County: Hillsborough County Sheriff Department

You may contact the appropriate law enforcement agency directly or you may contact an advocate in CVA to assist you in making the report. The benefits of using a USF advocate include:

- An advocate is on-call 24/7, including weekends and holidays, to respond in person to victims reporting a violent crime.
- An advocate can help you determine the jurisdiction.
- An advocate can accompany you to make the report, if you choose.
- The advocate can continue to assist you throughout the investigation.
- If the case results in court proceedings, the advocate can continue to support you throughout the legal process.

The University Police Department (UPD) has a well-deserved reputation for providing a sensitive response to victims of crime. When you contact UPD, you will be offered the services of an advocate from CVA. When you contact off-campus law enforcement agencies, you typically will not be offered an advocate. If you are reporting a sexual assault to any local law enforcement agency, the police officer will contact the Sexual Assault Services of the Crisis Center of Tampa bay to initiate the forensic exam process. You may find it helpful to contact an advocate in CVA for accompaniment and advocacy through the reporting process. *Be aware that once a report has been made to UPD, they must investigate the crime.*

A detective/investigator may interview you at the time you make the report and/or in the days following your initial report. Your advocate can accompany you to the interview(s), if you choose.

The State Attorney's Office in the jurisdiction where the crime occurred has the authority to prosecute crimes when there is enough evidence to pursue the case. The decision to prosecute is made by the prosecutor on behalf of the State of Florida.

Injunctions for Protection

Injunctions for Protection are often referred to as "restraining orders" or "orders for protection" in some states. You do not have to report the crime in order to request an Injunction for Protection. The intention of an Injunction for Protection is to restrict the offender's access to the victim in an effort to prevent future harm. Some offenders will abide by the terms of the injunction, but others will not. For this reason, Injunctions for Protection, when granted, are not guarantees of safety.

The process for requesting an Injunction for Protection is complex:

- Requires you (the "petitioner") to complete the correct form
- Requires very specific, detailed information
- Can be denied based on wrong form or omission of details

To increase the chances of a successful petition, you can ask an advocate from CVA to assist you with the documentation and filing. Attending the petition hearing and having to testify can be confusing and frightening, but you do not have to handle this alone. Your advocate can guide you through the process and accompany you to court hearings for the injunction.

Reporting Sexual Discrimination, Harassment or Assault Under Title IX

Due to the increased risk of danger, victims of intimate partner violence (domestic violence, relationship or dating violence) and stalking are urged to consult confidentially with a victim advocate at CVA for an individualized risk assessment, safety planning, and exploration of options. The advocate will help you pursue any reporting options you choose as safely as possible.

If you believe you are in danger, dial 911 immediately.

Title IX protects people from sex discrimination in educational programs and activities at institutions that receive federal financial assistance (20 U.S.C. § 1681). Title IX applies to USF programs and activities, as related both to education and employment. USF is committed to providing an environment free from sex discrimination, including sexual harassment and sexual assault. See the USF System Policy 0-004 Sexual Misconduct/ Sex Harassment available at http://generalcounsel.usf.edu/policies-and-procedures/pdfs/policy-0-004.pdf.

USF has a central reporting protocol for violations of Title IX. To file a Title IX report you may:

1. Walk in to the Title IX Office for an Information Session, learn your options, and then work with Title IX to take the level of action you choose
2. Turn in a Title IX report via email (found at http://www.usf.edu/diversity/title-ix/reporting.aspx) to TitleIXReports@usf.edu
3. Turn in a Title IX complaint to the Title IX Office (via email, USPS mail, or by dropping it off at the Title IX Office)

It is important to remember that you are the person in control and in charge of what actions will be taken. The Title IX Office works to ensure that your rights are protected by providing education about the process (Information Session) and consultation to you. Your advocate is always welcome to join you in any meeting held with Title IX.

Title IX also prohibits retaliation against anyone who, in good faith, has made allegations of sexual assault or who has testified, assisted, or participated in any investigation, proceeding, or hearing related to Title IX. If you believe that you have experienced retaliation, contact your advocate or the Title IX Coordinator directly, or contact University Police if you are concerned for your safety.

The USF Title IX Coordinator is:
Araiña Muñiz
4202 E. Fowler Ave, ALN 172
Tampa, FL 33620
813-974-9901
arainamuniz@usf.edu

Misconduct by a Student

If the conduct includes a USF student, the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities will most likely be involved in the adjudication of a Student Code of Conduct violation. Title IX related issues in the Student Code of Conduct are issues that involve sexual misconduct. Please see the code at:
http://regulationspolicies.usf.edu/regulations/pdfs/regulation-usf6.0021.pdf

The University works to address policy violations and does not have the authority to legally arrest, charge, or prosecute someone for a policy violation.
NOTE: In cases of crimes, when UPD is involved, actions by UPD fall within their role as law enforcement, thus giving UPD the ability to address the crime.

Misconduct by an Employee

If the conduct involves an employee, the Title IX Office will work with Human Resources to adjudicate the matter. This may involve policies that specifically outline expectations for employee conduct.

If you do not want to report or are uncertain about reporting the incident

Remember, if you do not wish to report the sexual assault, stalking, or other interpersonal crime, USF offers the confidential services of the Center for Victim Advocacy, the Counseling Center, and Student Health Services to you (see Resources, page 15).

You can still access many services including a forensic exam, medical assistance, accommodations, risk assessment, support, injunction for protection, housing, and academic support without filing a report about the crime or incident.

CONFIDENTIAL CAMPUS RESOURCES

Center for Victim Advocacy (CVA)

CVA is staffed by professional victim advocates who are designated Victim Services Practitioners. They are able to provide crisis intervention, ongoing support services, advocacy for academic, financial, housing, conduct, criminal justice or civil justice matters occurring due to crime or abuse, risk assessment and safety planning, accompaniment on and off campus to hearings, court, medical appointments, and other appointments related to victimization and recovery, and offer assistance with completion of documents and forms for filing complaints, applying for State Crime Victims Compensation, and requesting Injunctions for Protection.

sa.usf.edu/advocacy/
Student Services Building (SVC) 2057
Office: 813-974-5756
24-Hour Victim Helpline: 813-974-5757

Counseling Center

The Counseling Center provides brief, confidential counseling services to currently enrolled USF students and has licensed mental health clinicians, social workers, and psychologists on staff.

usf.edu/student-affairs/counseling-center
Student Services Building (SVC) 2124
Office: 813-974-2831

Student Health Services

Student Health Services provides general health, sexual health, and gynecology services in a supportive, student-centered environment. The office has medical doctors, physician assistants, board-certified psychiatrists, and advanced registered nurse practitioners on staff.

usf.edu/student-affairs/student-health-services
SHS 100 (located east of the USF Bookstore)
Office: 813-974-2331

All offices listed above adhere to professional, legal, and ethical guidelines established by the State of Florida, professional organizations, and federal laws. Confidentiality does not apply in circumstances of immediate risk of harming yourself or others, child abuse or neglect, abuse of vulnerable adults, or a court order. Additional limits to confidentiality may apply to students under the age of 18.

NON-CONFIDENTIAL CAMPUS RESOURCES

University Police Department (UPD)
usf.edu/administrative-services/university-police
Emergency: 911
Non-Emergency: 813-974-2628

Title IX Office
http://usfweb2.usf.edu/EOA/
ALN 172
Office: 813-974-4373

Office of Student Rights & Responsibilities (OSRR)
sa.usf.edu/srr/
ALN 109
Office: 813-974-9443

OFF CAMPUS RESOURCES

Crisis Center of Tampa Bay (Sexual Assault Services)
The Sexual Assault Services unit at the Crisis Center of Tampa Bay provides victim advocacy for the larger Hillsborough County community and is Hillsborough County's authorized location for forensic evaluations and treatment, often referred to as "rape kit exams." The exams are performed by Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANEs) who are Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioners specifically trained to collect evidence from victims of sexual assault. Forensic exams for sexual assault victims from USF-Tampa receive that service free of charge through this program.

crisiscenter.com/content/19/Sexual-Assault-Services.aspx
24-Hour Crisis Hotline: 2-1-1
Contact: 813-234-1234

The Spring
The Spring is the certified domestic violence shelter in Hillsborough County. They provide safe emergency shelter, a 24-hour crisis hotline, safety planning, advocacy, and transitional housing, among other services.

thespring.org/
24-Hour Crisis Hotline: 813-247-SAFE (7233)

Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office
hcso.tampa.fl.us/
Emergency: 911
Non-Emergency: 813-247-8200

Tampa Police Department
tampagov.net/dept_police/
Emergency: 911
Non-Emergency: 813-231-6130

Temple Terrace Police Department
templeterrace.com/index.aspx?nid=171
Emergency: 911
Non-Emergency: 813-989-7110

NOTES

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Center for Victim Advocacy

Office: 813-974-5756

24/7 Victim Helpline: 813-974-5757

4202 E. Fowler Avenue, SVC 2057

Tampa, FL 33620

usf.edu/advocacy

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