

# **GUIDE FOR VICTIMS OF SEXUAL ASSAULT**

**INFORMATION TO ASSIST MEMBERS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW ORLEANS COMMUNITY WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED SEXUAL VIOLENCE**

## **Sexual Violence:**

- ❖ **Sexual assault**
- ❖ **Sexual harassment**
- ❖ **Stalking**
- ❖ **Intimate partner abuse/domestic violence**

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# SEXUAL VIOLENCE RESOURCE LIST

## RESOURCE LIST FOR UNO STUDENTS WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED SEXUAL VIOLENCE

### MEDICAL CENTERS:

Seek medical attention and/or evidence collection at the following hospitals if the violence/sexual assault occurred with the last 72 hours.

#### **LSU interim hospital (University Hospital)**

903-3000

2021 Perdido Street (Emergency Room off Gravier St.)

Nurses with special training in sexual assault provide exams and care for victims. This is the only location in Orleans parish where forensic evidence (a rape kit) can be collected for sexual assault victims.

The Student Health Services                      280-6387  
UC 238

SHS provides medical care, addresses concerns about sexually transmitted infections and pregnancy, discuss resources, and provide follow-up care. SHS does not collect evidence.

### REPORTING AGENCIES:

To report an assault that happened on-campus, to a legal authority contact the UNO police department. If the assault occurred off-campus, please contact the New Orleans Police Department (NOPD).

- UNO Campus Police                                      280-6666
- NOPD Special Victim's Section                      658-5800
- NOPD Victim/Witness Assistance Unit              658-6795

Student Accountability, Advocacy & Disability Services  
UC 248    280-6222

This department manages the disciplinary process for incidents of sexual misconduct involving UNO students. This process can be discussed with staff in this office without filing a complaint.

Human Resource Management                      280-6259  
AD 213

### SUPPORT & ADVOCACY:

It's important to get help when dealing with issues related to sexual assault, intimate partner violence, or stalking in order to heal from the affects of these issues.

Counseling Services                                      280-6683  
UC 226

This department provides confidential services for students at any time during the recovery process.

Student Accountability and Advocacy              280-6222  
UC 248

This department assists with academic, housing, and financial concerns

#### Student Housing Staff

Student Housing Area Coordinators can provide support and help identifying and connecting to resources on and off-campus

P'hall North Front Desk 504-280-7777 24 hrs.

P'hall South Front Desk 504-280-7739 24 hrs.

Main line 504-280-6402 8am-4:30pm

24-Hour Rape Helpline                                      267-7020

Provides anonymous support and information

CHOICES (24 Hour Domestic Violence Hotline)  
224-4663

#### Metropolitan Center for Women and Children

24/7 504-837-5400 or 1-888-411-1333

Provides help victims who have been sexually assaulted or raped.

#### New Orleans Family Justice Center

504-592-4005

24/7 crisis line 504-866-9554

Assists individuals affected by family violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking.

## Introduction

This document was created by The University of New Orleans University (UNO) to assist students who have experienced sexual violence. It is our goal to provide information and to encourage those who would like to access services. Staff, faculty, family and friends are all encouraged to seek out information as they support people who disclose to them. This document can be used to help any individual connected with UNO come up with a plan on how to address sexual violence situations.

UNO is committed to creating a community free from sexual violence. Please note that we are using “sexual violence” to denote incidents which can be defined as sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, and/or intimate partner abuse/domestic violence. The university strives to achieve this goal through prevention, survivor support, the student conduct process, and referrals to the criminal justice system. It is understood that any person may be affected by sexual violence. The university therefore implements relevant policies in such a manner that all students and groups have full and equal access to the information and services related to sexual violence, regardless of factors such as gender, race, and sexual orientation, nation of origin, religion, age, disability, or living arrangement. Applicable services are available to any student, whether the assault occurred on or near campus, or elsewhere.

It is up to a survivor to decide how to cope with their experience. Each person decides which “first step” to take. An initial response may include immediately calling the police. However, it is very common for a person to seek out medical care or other information first. If a person has recently experienced an assault, please skip ahead to the “medical care/treatment” or “reporting” sections for more information about these options. Regardless of the decision to report, in any instance where physical contact and/or injury has been experienced, all survivors should be encouraged to seek medical care.

At the university, when a “university official” is told about an instance of sexual violence, it is important that both the university employee and the student understands what will happen. University officials can be found in a wide range of roles in different offices/departments. Staff or faculty will need to report their knowledge of what has happened (when they are given specific information) to police or to the Office of Human Resource Management. Exceptions do exist. For example, counselors with the Counseling Service are required to keep information confidential.

A university official is required to balance their requirements as a staff or faculty member with the obligation to insure public safety and the needs of a survivor. It is important for a staff member to check with their department’s policy regarding disclosures of sexual violence. Staff and faculty are also encouraged to contact some of the university offices listed in this document to consult about situations when they arise.

## Definitions

### **Survivor:**

In this document, we will refer to those who have experienced sexual violence as “survivors” of these experiences. In other contexts this person may be referred to as a “victim”, a “client” or a “patient”. We use “survivor” as a term of respect and to acknowledge that people who experience sexual violence have survived an event or events that can be life-changing.

Please note that these definitions of sexual violence are behavioral definitions and not legal ones. Police and prosecutors will determine whether a crime occurred based on legal definitions from the Louisiana Revised Code.

A **sexual assault** occurs when a person experiences a sexual act or acts against their will. Sexual assault includes a number of acts (e.g. rape, incest, molestation, etc.) and may be defined based on the specific factors of a situation. It’s important to acknowledge that experiencing a sexual assault is not the victim’s/survivor’s fault. Sexual abuse is used to denote a pattern of sexual assaults that occur over time.

**Sexual harassment** includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other physical or verbal conduct of a sexual nature when it meets any of the following:

- a. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual’s employment or academic status.
- b. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or academic decisions affecting such individual.
- c. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work or academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment for working, learning, or living on campus.

**Stalking** occurs when a person repeatedly behaves or acts in a way that invades your life and causes you mental distress and/or fear of bodily harm. Stalking may even look “romantic” or non-threatening (like sending flowers, cards, “friendly” e-mails or instant messages, etc.). It is important to understand the context and impact of the stalking behavior. Stalking occurs when the contact is known to be unwanted and causes distress to the recipient. Common stalking behaviors may include:

- a. Following you,
- b. Calling or texting,
- c. Damaging your property,
- d. Threatening to hurt you or your friends/family/pets/etc.

**Intimate Partner Abuse** is a pattern of controlling behavior with a current or former dating partner or spouse. Abuse knows no boundaries and occurs regardless of age, income, culture, religion, education and race. It often begins with isolation, jealousy, threats or name-calling and may include emotional, sexual or verbal abuse. Physical violence may or may not be part of this pattern.

**Domestic violence** is a broader term which acknowledges that abuse and control can happen within a family structure or between members of the same household. A domestic violence

survivor can be someone who grew up in a family or household where this occurred or someone who is currently in this situation.

### **Medical Options**

#### **Medical Care/Treatment & Evidence Collection**

For the person who has just experienced an assault, it's important to get to a safe place and make a decision about what to do next. Some options include: calling the police, going to the hospital, making a doctor's appointment and/or telling a friend or support person.

A medical examination is also recommended for cases of possible sexual assault and where injuries have resulted from an incident of intimate partner abuse/domestic violence. A medical examination can occur at the Student Health Center, a doctor's office, hospital or health clinic. However, a hospital is the location where both an advocate can be called and evidence can be collected.

If an individual is uncertain about whether or not they want to report what has occurred, they can still get evidence collected. In cases of sexual assault or severe injuries, the police will be called by the hospital. The survivor can decide if they want to speak with the police at that time to officially report what has happened.

While evidence may be collected anonymously (i.e. without the survivor's name attached to it) and/or when there is no report made to police, these cases are handled differently. A discussion about the merit of collecting evidence "anonymously" and in instances where the survivor does not want to report, should be discussed with medical personnel and/or an advocate.

At some local emergency departments, the evidence collection exam may be performed by a doctor, a nurse or a specially trained nurse: a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE). In cases of sexual assault, within the first 96 hours of an assault is the best time for evidence to be collected. Under certain circumstances, it may be collected after this time frame. It is not necessary for evidence to be collected in order for a case to be reported. It is easier to investigate and prosecute cases that have physical evidence but it is not impossible to go forward without it.

If an individual wants to get evidence collected, it is best not to bathe and to take the clothes that they were wearing at the time of the assault to the hospital with them. It is also recommended to avoid eating, drinking, and going to the bathroom. However, a lot of people do all of these things before going to the hospital and evidence can still be collected.

Follow up medical care can happen at an individual's doctor, Student Health Services or other medical facility. Information about STI testing sites on campus and in the community can be found in the appendix of this document.

**The Student Health Services** can provide confidential information and services concerning sexually transmitted diseases, pregnancy and general medical issues. Services for victims of sexual assault are provided by the Student Health Services regardless of the duration of time since the assault occurred. If the sexual assault occurred within the last 96 hours, you will be

encouraged to seek care at a hospital where evidence can be collected. This does not require you to speak to police. If you choose to be seen at the Student Health Services, evidence will not be collected. Concerns about sexually transmitted infections and pregnancy will be addressed, as well as a discussion of resources and a plan for follow-up care.

### **Reporting Sexual Violence**

#### **Reporting to the Police**

An individual who has experienced an incident of sexual violence may report this to the police. Individuals who file a report can have a support person and/or advocate with them.

***Reporting to police can be done by immediately calling 9-1-1 by or calling the non-emergency number of the appropriate police department (e.g. New Orleans police 504-821-2222 or UNO police 504-280-6666.***

Reporting a crime is the process of officially documenting what has occurred with the police and does not necessarily mean that an investigation will occur and that criminal charges will be filed. It is ultimately up to the police and the prosecutor to determine if charges will be pursued. A survivor can provide input about what they would like to see happen and has rights within the criminal justice system. More information about victim's rights can be provided by police, advocates, and/or prosecutors. Reporting a crime may occur at the hospital, the police station or at the site of the crime.

Following the report, an investigation may occur. During an investigation, police/prosecutors may use their discretion in informing survivors of the progress. Survivors may contact the department, and may be given updates. Following an investigation, a charge may be filed and/or the matter forwarded to the prosecutor's office or Grand Jury. If the case does not move forward, information will be made available about the investigation via public records request. Additionally, an arrest of a suspect may or may not occur at any point in the process.

UNO police investigate crimes which occur on UNO property and may be consulted about possible sexual violence incidents that transpire off and on campus. Police will look at the specific behaviors involved and could take a report, begin an investigation, discuss safety planning or offer other thoughts/remedies.

#### **University of New Orleans Police Department's Sexual Assault Victim's Bill of Rights**

Campus Police are committed to Helping Victims of Sexual Assault, including date/acquaintance rape. These very serious crimes are a high priority of this Campus Police Department. If you feel you are the victim of a sexual assault on campus, the department will guarantee the following:

1. We will meet with you privately, at a time and place of your choice to take your report.
2. We cannot and will not notify your parents without your consent.
3. Our officers will not prejudge you and you will not be blamed for what occurred.
4. We will treat you and your case with professionalism, courtesy, sensitivity, and dignity.

5. We will assist you in arranging for any necessary hospital treatment, or other medical needs. We will also assist in emergency housing if needed.

6. If you would feel more comfortable talking with a friend or advocate of your choice present, we will do our best to accommodate your request.

7. We recommend you allow us to contact the New Orleans Police Department; however, we will respect your decision whatever you elect to do.

8. We will assist you in privately contacting the Rape Crisis Counselling Line, other counseling, and other available services.

9. We will continue to be available to answer your questions, to explain the system and process involved, and to be a listening ear if you wish.

10. We will consider your case seriously, regardless of your gender or the gender or status of the suspect. Please do not hesitate to call Campus Police at 504-280-6666, if you have been a victim of sexual assault.

### **Reporting to the Office of Student Accountability, Advocacy and Disability Services**

If the alleged perpetrator of sexual violence is a student, survivors can report the incident to the Office of Student Accountability, Advocacy and Disability Services which administers the Student Code of Conduct. UNO has a student accountability hearing process for incidents of misconduct involving UNO students. This process can be discussed with the Director without filing a complaint.

Like the police, this office can be consulted about a situation, take a complaint/report and initiate an investigation. This office serves as a neutral fact-finder, once a complaint has been reported. If there is enough evidence to go forward, a hearing may result.

If a student is found in violation of the Code of Student Conduct, there are a range of possible sanctions from an official reprimand to expulsion. However, when students are found in violation of sexual misconduct, more common sanctions involve possible suspension, probation and “no contact” directives. Depending on the facts of the case, sanctions are designed to address the behaviors and are both educational and punitive in nature.

All information is kept private and notification of the finding is provided to both the accused student and the survivor. However, this finding is part of the private record of the accused student and can only be attained through a subpoena.

Individuals who file a complaint and go through this process may have a support person and/or advocate with them. More information about the Student Code of Conduct can be found at <http://www.uno.edu/student-affairs-enrollment-management/student-accountability-advocacy.aspx>.

### **Reporting to the Office of Human Resource Management (HRM)**

If the incident of sexual violence was committed by a staff or faculty member of The University of New Orleans University, then a complaint shall be made to the Office of Human Resource Management.

In some ways, the office of Human Resource Management functions like the student conduct process and the police. This office may be consulted about situations, takes reports/complaints, initiates investigations, and makes a determination. This office investigates complaints of discrimination, harassment (including sexual harassment) as well as other employment issues/disputes.

During the investigation, an individual who has filed a complaint may have a support person and/or advocate with them when meeting with HRM. The office makes an effort to complete the investigation within 45 calendar days. Depending on the outcome of the investigation, if corrective action needs to be imposed, the Office of Human Resource Management will advise the leadership on appropriate action.

This office takes steps to protect the confidential nature of reports, while remaining attentive to any concerns around retaliation. There are a number of ways to initiate a case with the Office of Human Resources. It can be in writing, in person, or by telephone.

The university cannot promise complete confidentiality. Each situation is resolved as discreetly as possible. UNO is obligated to follow up on all allegations. There are times that a one-on-one conversation with the alleged harasser can resolve the situation without revealing the complainant's identity (e.g. investigating an anonymous report). If this doesn't work, then it is often necessary to reveal the complainant's identity to conduct an investigation.

### **Support Services**

#### **Confidentiality:**

Medical services provide confidentiality to patients. Confidential services are offered by: Counseling Services and the Student Health Services. In general, a medical/health professional is required to keep a patient's information confidential. That is, no information can be shared without explicit permission by the survivor unless it is subpoenaed due to a court case. Please note, however, that if someone presents a danger to themselves or others, medical/health professionals may break confidentiality to insure safety.

Various areas within the university including the Student Housing staff, the Office of Student Accountability, Advocacy and Disability Services, and other university departments can provide services which aren't confidential but where privacy is protected. Information can only be shared within the university if there is a "legitimate educational need". In order for information to be shared outside of the university, a survivor would need to give explicit permission or that information would need to be subpoenaed. If a survivor or co-survivor has any questions about what will happen if they share information with any university employee, it is important to ask.

#### **UNO Counseling Services**

The primary function of Counseling Services is to assist students in addressing mental health concerns in a confidential, professional, unbiased, objective way. To that end, Counseling Services offers problem assessment, short-term personal counseling and career testing and counseling and, when warranted, referrals for longer-term or specialized treatment for currently-enrolled UNO students. All counseling services are confidential to the limits provided by law, and no information can be released to anyone within or outside of the University without a client's written consent except as indicated by law including if ordered released by a court of law. The staff adheres to the ethical guidelines of the professional associations to which they belong.

### **University Housing**

The University housing team provides services to the students who live in the residence hall (Ponchartrain North and South) and the married and family housing facility (Lafitte Village.) The housing staff, including RA's, Area Coordinators, and other full time staff are available to assist. While some issues can be dealt with by housing staff and in accord with housing policy, many incidents are forwarded to Student Accountability, Advocacy and Disability Services. University Housing also provides educational programming to enhance academic studies and foster student development.

### **Hotlines/Helplines**

Hotlines/Helplines can answer questions, explain options and provide emotional support. There are national hotlines that can be called regardless of where an individual lives, and online sources of support can be found through any number of web searches. A few anonymous resources are listed further on in this document.

### **NOTE:**

If a person is dealing with a stalker or intimate partner abuse/domestic violence situation, it is important to take precautions when accessing any kind of support. In some circumstances, stalkers and/or abusers may access phone or computer records. When possible, people in these situations may want to use public computers or phones to seek out information. It is also good to safeguard your information by frequently changing passwords to random, unpredictable ones. It may also be helpful to think about steps that can be taken to keep information away from a stalker or intimate partner (e.g. keeping things with a friend or getting mail at a different address).

## Other Resources

### **HIV Antibody & Other STI Testing Sites in New Orleans:**

#### **Anonymous & Confidential Testing:**

There are two forms of testing that are available: anonymous and confidential. You have a right to choose which form of testing is right for you. Anonymous testing means your name is not linked to your blood sample. People who choose the anonymous test are given a number code to bring back or are asked to call at a specific time to get the test result. With anonymous testing, your HIV status will not be documented.

Confidential testing means your name is linked to your blood sample. The test results are protected to a certain extent by state laws, agency policies and staff commitment to confidentiality. The test results may become part of your permanent medical record. The health department is also required by law to notify any previous or current partner(s) of a positive HIV status.

#### **UNO Student Health Services:**

Confidential HIV Testing and STD testing

#### **Planned Parenthood:**

<http://www.plannedparenthood.org/health-center/centerDetails.asp?f=2805>

New Orleans Health Center - New Orleans, LA

4018 Magazine Street

New Orleans, LA 70115

504.897.9200

#### **Delgado Personal Health Clinic**

517 N Rampart St.

New Orleans, LA 70112

(504) 658-2540

Delgado Personal Health Center is an STD clinic in New Orleans, LA. This clinic offers chlamydia treatment and gonorrhea treatment.

**24-Hour Rape Helpline** – Trained volunteer advocates provide emotional support, crisis intervention and community referral information over the telephone to survivors of sexual violence, co-survivors and the community.

1-800-656-HOPE

#### **New Orleans Police Department**

NOPD Special Victim's Section                      658-5800

NOPD Victim/Witness Assistance Unit            658-6795

**Stalking Resource Center**

1-800-FYI-CALL (M-F 8:30 AM - 8:30 PM EST)

e-mail [gethelp@ncvc.org](mailto:gethelp@ncvc.org)

**Suicide Prevention Services 24-Hour Hotline**

267-7020

Provides anonymous support and information

**National Domestic Violence Hotline**

1-800-799-SAFE (7233) (24 hours, 7 days a week)

1-800-787-3224

**Sexual Assault Hotline**

1-800-656-4673

**Stop It Now! (Sexual Abuse)**

1-888-PREVENT

<http://www.stopitnow.com/>

**United Way Crisis Helpline**

1-800-233-HELP (1-800-233-4357)

**If Someone You Know Has Experienced Sexual Violence**

A survivor has experienced a crime (or crimes) where they have lost control over the situation. It is natural to feel a tremendous loss of power and control over life during these times. Surviving sexual violence is a testament of the individual's strength; however, they may not feel strong. Below are some suggestions about how you can help.

- **Do not judge the survivor.** An individual is likely examining him or herself very critically during this time. Asking questions regarding details of the assault, why the individual was at a specific place, doing a specific behavior, etc. only works to place blame on the survivor for the violence of the perpetrator. No matter what their behavior prior to the assault, they are NOT responsible- the perpetrator is. Following sexual violence, an individual may try to understand their role in what happened but it's important to be clear that they are not responsible for the actions of others.
- **Do not attempt to impose your explanation of why this has happened or try to "fix" the situation.** It may come across to the survivor as victim-blaming. The only real

explanation is that the perpetrator chose to act as they did. Additionally, you don't have to fix the situation; you just have to be supportive.

- **Remind survivors that their feelings are understandable.** There are many symptoms that the individual may experience; these are typical reactions to traumatic events. If they are experiencing feelings, emotions, or physical symptoms that are out of the ordinary, it is due to the fact that they have just experienced a horrific and traumatic event.
- **Do not attempt to reassure the person that everything is “Okay” or tell them you know how they feel.** Because at this time, everything is not “okay”. Making statements such as “Don't worry about it” or “You're going to be fine” may serve to minimize the victimized person's feelings and downplay the seriousness of the event(s) which occurred. Also, chances are you don't know exactly how they feel. You may know what it feels like to be hurt, to be violated, or to be angry. However, you probably don't know quite how they feel at this moment.
- **Do offer to gather information about their options and who may be able to help.** Once you educate yourself and have information to share, encourage them to take a step. It's okay to offer your support in taking a step but be mindful of not taking over or pressuring the survivor to do what **you** think they should do. Whatever step they take will reinforce that they can take another.
- **Be willing to say nothing.** Just being there is often the biggest help.
- **Do not feel intimidated by the intense emotions of survivors.** Remember: you don't have to fix the situation, just be supportive. There are many people at our university who can help provide support.
- **Encourage the survivor to seek counseling and post-trauma services.** There are specially trained mental health professionals that can assist the survivor on many levels. Counseling is not a sign of weakness; it is a sign of strength and of taking control of the situation.
- **Find your own support. You are also affected by this situation.** You can't support someone else if you aren't supported as well. You cannot expect the survivor to provide support for you, find other friends, support people, or counseling to share your own feelings related to what happened to your friend.