



Guide for Victims of
Sexual Assault & Harassment

Domestic, Relationship,
& Dating Violence

Stalking



SOUTH FLORIDA

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	3
Victim Disclosure, Employee Obligation to Report, and Confidentiality.....	4
Confidential Campus Resources	4
Employees Who Must Report Disclosures.....	5
Reactions to Victimization	6
Center for Victim Advocacy	7

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.

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 bee5122 0.125 r97:0.9302370 0 1 39 224.69 Tm(h)-5(a)-12(v)-13(e)-6(-)-6(b)-5(e)-19()-5(e)

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
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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

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

REPORTING OPTIONS FOR VICTIMS

Depending on the circumstances of your situation, you have a number of options if you q.0.000059
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- Report to local law enforcement. (
- Disclose to the Title IX official at DIEO, requesting informal or alternative solutions.
- File a formal Title IX complaint with DIEO that

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

NON-CONFIDENTIAL CAMPUS RESOURCES

University

OFF CAMPUS RESOURCES

Crisis Center of Tampa Bay (Sexual Assault Services)

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