

TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY SEXUAL ASSAULT RESPONSE TEAM **SEXUAL ASSAULT REPORTING BY ORIGIN OF REPORT**

Any reports of sexual assault must be reported to the Office of Equity and Inclusion (“OEI”) as required by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and TBR Policy Guideline P-080. Following a report of sexual assault, OEI will coordinate with the appropriate departments to ensure the reporting student receives the resources they need. Such coordination with departments will help ensure consistent implementation of this protocol and generate feedback necessary for future revisions. OEI office will also conduct an investigation into the report to determine if there have been any violations of TSU policy.

UNIVERSITY POLICE

University Police officers are required to report sexual assault, domestic/dating violence, and/or stalking to the Chief of Police and OEI immediately. Beyond these specific contacts, University Police officers are required to keep this information in strict confidence within the confines of the law. The Chief of Police is required to report a sexual assault to the OEI immediately. Beyond these specific contacts, the Chief and all University Police Officers are required to keep this information in strict confidence within the confines of the law.

DEAN OF STUDENTS/STUDENT CONDUCT

Student Conduct staff are required to report sexual assault, domestic/dating violence and/or stalking to OEI immediately. If there is an immediate threat of danger, staff should also report this information to the University Police Department. Beyond these specific contacts, staff is required to keep this information in strict confidence. After OEI has conducted a preliminary review of the report, the Dean of Students will be notified if a Title IX/P-080 investigation should be commenced.

RESIDENCE LIFE

Due to the profound impact that sexual assault, domestic/dating violence and/or stalking has on the reporting student and on a residence life community, paraprofessional staff (Resident Assistants) are required to report these occurrences to their professional supervisory staff (Residence Director, Director, Associate or Assistant Director of Residence Life) immediately. All Residence Life staff are required to keep this information in strict confidence. Residence Life professional supervisory staff are then required to report the sexual assault to OEI immediately.

COUNSELING/HEALTH SERVICES

Reports to a privileged **professional** within Counseling (therapist/psychologist) and Health Services (doctor/nurse) are by nature confidential and only continue through the University’s investigative process at the request of the reporting student. If the student requests that the assault be reported, the staff member should then make the report to OEI immediately.

FACULTY AND OTHER CAMPUS DEPARTMENTS

Due to the profound impact that sexual assault has on the reporting student and the TSU community, faculty and other University staff must *immediately* report all sexual assaults, domestic/dating violence, and/or stalking to OEI. Beyond this specific contact, faculty and staff are required to keep this information in strict confidence and are expected to refrain from further involvement in the investigation process at this point.

DO'S AND DON'TS OF COMMUNICATING WITH SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL ASSAULT

DO's

- **Ensure the immediate safety of the reporting student.** If the reporting student is in immediate danger, in need of immediate medical attention, or if the assault presents an immediate danger to the University community, contact TSU Police Department at 963-5171 or 911.
- **Encourage the reporting student to seek medical attention and/or police services.** The student should not be pressured to report, not report, or under report a sexual assault, however, without pressuring them, inform the student that timely reporting is an important factor in a sexual assault investigation and prosecution. Make them aware that reporting the assault keeps their legal options open and may also prevent others from being assaulted.
- **Talk to the reporting student in a place that ensures privacy and convey support:**
 - **Sample Language:** *“Thank you for telling me this; I realize how hard this is. We have a Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) that is specially trained to work with students who have been assaulted. They can offer you help with whatever you choose to do or not to do. A member from this team will be contacting you to be sure you get any resources/assistance you need.”*
- **Remain nonjudgmental.** Harmful or inappropriate responses to reports of sexual assault can be detrimental to the reporting student's willingness to participate in the Title IX or police investigative process.

DON'Ts

- **Don't ask the student questions about the assault.** This is best for the reporting student personally, and potentially legally as well. While being supportive, we want to limit the number of times the reporting student discusses the details of the incident.
- **Don't dismiss the student's feelings or minimize their experience.** Employees who are the first to receive a report do not have the responsibility of determining whether the report was illegal assault/harassment or if the reporting student is being truthful. *Your only responsibility to report the allegations to OEI immediately.*
- **Don't notify persons who are not “need to know” of the report.** Do not call the police unless the survivor requests or there is imminent danger. It is acceptable to notify your direct supervisor that you are forwarding a report of sexual assault to the OEI Office; however, you should not involve additional persons in the report. Remember, OEI is the *only* office that *must* be notified of sexual assault and has the responsibility of making any additional notifications.
- **Don't sit on a report because it is after hours on the weekend.** If you receive a report after 5:00 p.m. on weekdays or any time over the weekend, you should still immediately send OEI an email with the information from the report, but without pressuring the student, you should also encourage them to contact the TSU Police Department at 963-5171 or the Counseling Center at 963-5611.