

Guidelines for Responding to Victims of Sexual Assault/Sexual Misconduct

Below is a guide to help you assist individuals who are victims of sexual assault/sexual misconduct. The information pertains to both female and male victims. There are important decisions to be made so providing immediate emotional support and resource/referral information are priorities.

If you are unable to complete the process for any reason contact the Health and Counseling Center staff or the Dean of the Chapel.

Instructions: Initial each item of the protocol when completed and submit the form to the Health and Counseling Center.

1. ___ Determine if the victim is in immediate danger and assure her/his safety.

- a. If physical safety is at risk, call Campus Security (304 473 8011) or Buckhannon Police (911) and immediately provide a safe space until help arrives. If in a residence hall seek assistance from Residence Life staff member.
- b. If emergency medical attention is needed contact 911. If non-emergency medical attention is needed arrange or assure transportation to St. Joseph's Hospital.
- c. If minor injuries are reported offer first aid and refer the individual to the Health and Counseling Center for follow-up.

2. ___ Take steps to determine when the assault took place. Discuss the medical option of being examined by a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner if the assault occurred within 96 hours. SANE nurses are trained to provide compassionate care, conduct a forensic medical exam, and provide referrals for follow-up care.

- a. The victim is not required to seek medical attention; however, documenting injuries and collecting evidence are important if the individual currently, or in the future, wants to consider prosecution.
- b. Explain that showering, changing clothes, urinating, brushing hair or teeth, or drinking/eating can destroy valuable evidence.
- c. The nurse will offer tests for sexually transmitted infections, pregnancy, and other services.
- d. Arrange or assure transportation to St. Joseph's Hospital if the medical exam is chosen.

3. ___ Offer crisis intervention and other resource support for the victim.

On-campus services:

- a. **Daytime hours (8am-4pm M-F)** Contact the Health and Counseling Center at 304 473 8100.
- b. **Off Hours (4 pm-am daily)** Contact Campus Security at 304 473 8011 or a Residence Life Staff member. A professional counselor or support person will be notified.

Off-campus services:

- a. **Contact Women's Aid in Crisis** at 304 473 0070 or the Hotline at 1 800 339 1185
- b. **National Sexual Assault Hotline** 1.800.656.HOPE(4673) | Free. Confidential. 24/7.
- c. **National Sexual Assault Online Hotline** <https://ohl.rainn.org/online/>

4. ___ Explain reporting options. Individuals are encouraged to report incidents of sexual assault/sexual misconduct. The campus system can be activated and administrators will fulfill federal reporting requirements while making every effort to maintain levels of confidentiality and privacy. The local criminal justice system can be activated and college officials will assist the victim and cooperate with local law enforcement. It is important to note that either or both systems can be used to activate a reporting process.

On campus:

- a. **Campus Process:** Members of the Campus Community can contact the Dir. of Campus Life, the Dir. of Security, the V.P. Student Development, or the Dir. of Human Resources to report violations of the Sexual Misconduct Policy and activate an investigation.

