

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I HAVE BEEN SEXUALLY ASSAULTED?

The **primary** concern for survivors of sexual violence is safety and to address medical issues related to physical injury, sexually transmitted infections, and/or pregnancy. The **secondary** concern is evidence collection to aid in a possible police investigation.

- Get to a safe place immediately. Go to your apartment, home, residence hall, or the residence of a trusted friend.
- DO NOT change your clothing or shower. Preservation of physical evidence is of the utmost importance. If you change your clothes, it is important that they are kept in a paper bag to preserve evidence.
- DO NOT apply medication to any injuries that have been sustained unless absolutely necessary. DO NOT drink or chew gum, or disturb anything in the area where the assault occurred.
- Get medical attention as soon as possible.
Visit the MSSU Willcoxon Health Center or go to a local hospital's emergency department or the Freeman SANE division listed on this brochure. Medical attention at the local hospital is required in order to preserve valuable evidence should you decide to seek prosecution through the criminal justice system. It is important to know if you go to the hospital the local police may be contacted. If you suspect that you have been given a predatory drug, like Rohypnol or GHB, please let the staff at the MSSU Willcoxon Health Center, MSSU Campus Police or hospital know. A urine sample can be collected within 72 hours of a sexual assault for predatory drug testing.
- Seek free, confidential counseling at the Advising Counseling and Testing Center.
Call 417-625-9324. Help is available for the person assaulted and for MSSU students helping the survivor of sexual assault. Other free local counseling resources are available too.
- Utilize campus resources.
The Dean of Students Office may be able to assist with changes in academic or university living arrangements if reasonable accommodations are available

MEDICAL RESOURCES

MSSU WILLCOXON HEALTH CENTER
Billingsly Student Center
Room 242
417-625-9323

SEXUAL ASSAULT NURSE EXAMINER
Freeman Emergency Room
1102 West 32nd Street, Joplin, Missouri
417-347-6656

FREEMAN SANE PROGRAM
417-347-SANE (7263)
Joplin, Missouri

MERCY HOSPITAL
Mercy Emergency Room
2817 St. Johns Boulevard
Joplin, Missouri
417-781-2727

The Missouri Southern State University Sexual Assault Policy can be found at

- mssu.edu/emergency-information/sexual-assault
- mssu.edu/offices/human-resources/index
- mssu.edu/dean-of-students

as well as in both the Student Handbook and the Human Resource Office.

COUNSELING RESOURCES

MSSU ADVISING COUNSELING AND TESTING
Hearnes Hall Room 314
Email acts@mssu.edu
417-624-9324

LAFAYETTE HOUSE (BATTERED WOMEN)
417-782-1772

OZARK CENTER CRISIS SERVICES
417-347-7720 or 800-247-0661

NATIONAL SEXUAL ASSAULT HOTLINE
800-656-4673

What to do about Sexual Violence



A survivor of sexual violence will have a wide range of emotions following an incident. It is important to utilize available resources or refer someone you know who has been assaulted to receive necessary care and begin to process the events. Going to a hospital immediately following the incident provides survivors with urgent care as well as an opportunity for valuable evidence collection.

WHAT IS SEXUAL VIOLENCE?

Sexual violence refers to physical sexual acts perpetrated against a person's will or where an individual is incapable of giving consent due to an intellectual disability or use of drugs and/or alcohol. Sexual violence can occur between friends, classmates, spouses, romantic interests, acquaintances, or strangers. Examples of sexual violence include rape, sexual assault, sexual battery, and sexual coercion. Dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking are also serious offenses.

WHAT IS THE PROCESS FOR INVESTIGATION OF A COMPLAINT OF SEXUAL ASSAULT?

If you file a report with the Title IX Coordinator/Director of Human Resources or the Dean of Students, you will be contacted by an office representative to schedule a meeting to collect the facts related to the incident. The purpose of the initial meeting will also be to assure that you have access to all necessary resources and that there will be no impact on your opportunity to participate in your educational program. You should be prepared to address any changes to your university living arrangements or academic program that may be appropriate based on the circumstances. Once you have filed a complaint you will be updated regularly regarding the status and outcomes of the investigation. You should expect to receive an equal opportunity for participation in the investigation and any subsequent proceedings as the individual who is the subject of the complaint.

For more information visit:

- mssu.edu/dean-of-students
- mssu.edu/emergency-information/sexual-assault

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I WITNESSED A CRIME OF SEXUAL ASSAULT?

If you are a witness to a crime of sexual violence you should report the incident to campus or local police. You may also speak with the Dean of Students or the Title IX Coordinator/Director of Human Resources who can assist you with further reporting as appropriate.

WHAT RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE IF I DO NOT WANT TO FILE A COMPLAINT?

A survivor of sexual assault is always encouraged to consult with trained mental health professionals regardless of whether the person elects to file a report with the police or other campus officials. Mental health professionals typically can maintain confidentiality and should discuss their confidential privileges with you.

Seeking support after a sexual assault is crucial

*Special Thanks to University of North Texas for allowing us to use their brochure format.

HOW FRIENDS, FAMILY, AND FACULTY/STAFF CAN HELP

• *Say something. Lend a listening ear.* Show that you care and are willing to listen. Do not force the issue but allow the individual to confide in you at his/her own pace. Never blame the person for what is happening or underestimate his/her fear of potential danger. Focus on supporting the individual's right to make his/her own decisions.

• *Guide survivors to campus and community resources.* Let him/her know they are not alone and people are available to help. Encourage him/her to seek sexual violence advocates and assure them that information will be kept confidential in most cases.

• *Do not ever judge survivors.* Tell the person you are sorry they have been hurt. No matter his/her behavior prior to the assault, they are not responsible--the perpetrator is. No one deserves to be assaulted.

• *Remind survivors that their feelings are normal.* They may feel "crazy". Assure survivors they are not "crazy" and any feeling or reaction is normal.

• *Validate survivors in their feelings.* Continue to do so even if they feel everything is terrible and even if you feel frustrated with their recovery.

• *Focus on his/her strengths.* The individual has probably continually been told by the abusive person that he/she is a bad person, a bad student, or a bad friend. They may believe he/she cannot do anything right and that there really is something wrong with him/her. Give him/her emotional support and help in recognizing personal strengths and skills. Emphasize that he/she deserves a life that is free from violence.

• *Find your own support.* You cannot support someone else if you are not supported. However, do not try to receive that support from the survivor.

WHAT IF I WAS UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF DRUGS OR ALCOHOL AT THE TIME OF THE SEXUAL ASSAULT?

Use of alcohol or drugs impacts an individual's ability to consent to a sexual act and does not put the person at blame. A student who is assaulted while under the influence of alcohol or drugs is encouraged to seek help and entitled to university and community assistance.

WHERE DO I REPORT SEXUAL VIOLENCE?

UNIVERSITY RELATED REPORTING

DEAN OF STUDENTS

Billingsly Student Center | 417-625-9531

You may contact the Dean of Students who will begin an investigation upon your request. If the aggressor was a student, the Dean of Students will investigate possible violations of the Code of Student Conduct which could result in disciplinary sanctions up to expelling the student from the university. The Dean of Students may also be able to immediately remove another student from the university if the student puts the university community at immediate risk and issue no contact orders.

TITLE IX COORDINATOR

Hearnes Hall | 417-625-9527

You may contact the Title IX Coordinator in the Director of Human Resources who will also begin an investigation upon request.

MSSU CAMPUS POLICE DEPARTMENT

417-626-2222

You may file a police report with campus police for sexual assaults occurring on-campus or with local police for sexual assaults occurring off-campus. When making a report to police, you may choose to report using a pseudonym so that your name will not appear in public files.

NON-UNIVERSITY RELATED REPORTING

Jasper County Sheriff's Office | 417-624-1601

Joplin Police Department | 417-623-3131

Neosho Police Department | 417-451-8000

Newton County Sheriff's Office | 417-623-2282
or 417-541-8300

*If you need a copy of this Brochure in an alternate format please see Lori Musser in the Office of Student Disabilities.