

Remote Response to Student Disclosures of Interpersonal Violence

The transition to online learning during the COVID-19 crisis will continue to present challenges, including supporting students remotely during a time of heightened risk of domestic violence and familial abuse¹, substance abuse and mental health emergencies². Students who are already more vulnerable to economic instability, health insecurity and systemic racism face additional risk. Below are some best practice tips for supporting students who may disclose interpersonal violence during the crisis:

Assess for Immediate Danger

If a student discloses interpersonal violence (intimate partner violence, sexual assault, stalking, sexual harassment and/or stalking online or in-person) via e-mail, social media, or online learning platform (Canvas, Blackboard, MyRUN, Sakai) begin your response by asking them if they are in immediate danger or require medical assistance. If so, encourage them to call 911 immediately. Students in New Jersey can text 9-1-1 if it is not safe to call. If a student discloses by phone or live chat and it is an emergency, encourage them to end the conversation to call 911 and reach back out when they are safe. If it is not an emergency and the student does not wish to alert police respect their wishes.

Explain limits of confidentiality

Let the student know that you can protect their privacy, but you cannot promise confidentiality. Tell the student that as a responsible employee of the University, you are required to report the incident to the college's [Title IX Office](#) or [Office of Employment Equity](#), but you will not tell anyone else. Let the victim know that the Title IX Coordinator will likely be in touch with them via email but they are under no obligation to make a report—it is entirely their decision. If the student would like to speak with a confidential resource, refer them to the Rutgers Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance located on their campus. Consider including this [sample syllabus statement](#) on Canvas or your online course platform to alert students prior to disclosures, or send an e-mail with the statement and the attached resource page.

Listen and Validate

Whether you are responding to an e-mail, direct message or listening in real time, let the student know that the violence is not their fault. Validate the emotions that they may be experiencing (shame, fear, anger) and that it is not easy to make such disclosures. Remember there is no 'right' way to respond to trauma.

Provide Resources and Choice

Remind students that although you are required to report the incident to the Title IX Office, they have the right to file a complaint or not to file a complaint with the college online or via phone. Information on the process is available at endsexualviolence.rutgers.edu and your campus' Title IX office (contacts below). Remember that resources may be state-specific, so students who reside out of state can access resources by calling any of the national hotlines or crisis text/chat services.

Reach Out for Support

Remember that you do not have to address these issues alone. Do not hesitate to reach out to Rutgers Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance (VPVA) or [Title IX Offices](#) for consultation.

For more information or to schedule an interpersonal violence training for faculty and staff please contact Kaylin Padovano, Faculty and Staff Training Coordinator at kaylin@hr.rutgers.edu or 848-932-1784.

¹ <https://news.un.org/en/story/2020/04/1061052>

² "Mental Health and Coping During COVID-19." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1 Apr. 2020, www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/managing-stress-anxiety.html.

Interpersonal Violence Resources for Students

Rutgers Resources

Though many offices may be closed during the COVID-19 crisis, the following resources are available remotely. Please check the individual office's website or call for updated hours.

Victim Services

Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance

[New Brunswick](#): 848-932-1181

[Newark](#): 973-353-1918

[Camden](#): 856-225-2326

[RBHS](#): 973-972-4636

Rutgers University Police Department (Non-Emergency, In case of Emergency call 911)

New Brunswick: 848-932-7111

Newark: 973-972-7551

Camden: 856-225-6009

RBHS: 973-972-4491

Title IX Offices

New Brunswick: 848-932-8200

Newark: 973-353-1906

Camden: 856-225-6422

RBHS: 973-972-9794

Mental Health and Counseling Services

[New Brunswick](#): 848-932-7884

[Newark](#): 973-353-5805

[Camden](#): 856-225-6005

[RBHS](#): 1-800-327-3678

University-wide

[Rutgers Graduate School of Applied and Professional Psychology \(GSAPP\)](#): Free phone and telepsychology services to help students and faculty/staff obtain short term supportive therapy or facilitate referral to therapists in network.

Other Resources

New Brunswick

- coronavirus.rutgers.edu (Includes **university-wide** information on Rutgers Student Food Pantry and Emergency Housing Assistance)
- [Rutgers Dean of Students Office](#)-Currently offering assistance with emergency housing, emergency financial assistance, food assistance and more.
- [Student Legal Services](#)-Free Professional Attorney for all Undergraduate and Graduate Students
- [Student Health Services](#)-Includes Updated Hours and Access Information
- **Rutgers Student Health Advice Nurse Line: [800-890-5882](tel:800-890-5882)**- Free service for non-urgent medical issues

Newark

- [MyRUN Covid 19 Updates](#): Includes information on emergency housing and other supports
- [Rutgers Newark Student Health Services](#): 973-353-5231 (Telemedicine Available)
- **MyRUN Food Pantry**: Monday and Wednesday 1pm-4pm and Friday 10am-noon in PRCC Room 226. Email questions to pantry_run@newark.rutgers.edu .

Camden

- [Camden Coronavirus Updates](#): Includes information on emergency housing and other supports
- [Rutgers Camden Wellness Center](#): 856-225-6005
- [Rutgers Camden Food Pantry](#)

RBHS

- [RBHS Coronavirus Updates](#)
- [RBHS Student Health Services](#): 973-972-8219 RBHS Newark; 732-235-5160 RBHS Piscataway/NB

State and National Resources

New Jersey

[New Jersey Sexual Assault Programs by County](#)

[New Jersey Domestic Violence Programs by County](#)

[NJ Hope Line](#) (Suicide Prevention): [855-654-6735](tel:855-654-6735)

National

The National Domestic Violence Hotline is 24/7, confidential and free:1-800-799-7233 and through [chat](#).

The National Sexual Assault Hotline is 24/7, confidential and free:800.656.HOPE (4673) and through [chat](#).

[National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#): [800-273-TALK \(8255\)](tel:800-273-TALK)

[National Crisis Text Line](#): Text KNIGHTS to 741741. To speak directly with a counselor of color you can text STEVE to 741741.

The [Trans LifeLine](#) for peer support for trans folks 9am-3am CT:1-877-565-8860 This hotline is staffed exclusively by trans operators is the only crisis line with a policy against non-consensual active rescue.

The [Deaf Hotline](#) is available 24/7 through video phone (1-855-812-1001), [email](#) and chat for Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled survivors.

[National Parent Helpline](#) Monday -Friday 12pm-9am CT emotional support and advocacy for parents:1-855-2736

[The Jed Foundation](#)- Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Resources for Young People

[Therapy for Black Girls](#)-Resources, Information and Therapist-finder tool

[TalkSpace](#)- Online and Text Therapy

[Technological Safety Resources](#) and [Guide to Emergency SOS for iPhone](#)