

## **Victims' (Complainants') Rights, Options, and Resources**

(For those who report sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating/domestic violence, or stalking)

**If you or someone you know has experienced sex discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking, NOVA is here to help. Sexual misconduct, the umbrella term for the above, is unacceptable at Northern Virginia Community College.** Reports of sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating/domestic violence, or stalking are taken seriously. It is important to NOVA that victims (complainants) are informed, protected, and respected. Northern Virginia Community College's Policy on Sexual Harassment and Sexual Misconduct (Title IX Policy) is available at <http://www.nvcc.edu/titleix/index.html>.

The following rights are afforded to any NOVA community members as well as any visitors who experiences such an incident. It is NOVA's hope that these rights will provide you with adequate information from which to choose your options.

**REPORTING OPTIONS.** Each person's experience is unique and numerous options are available for support and reporting. Victims have the right to choose whether they would like law enforcement involvement unless the report triggers a mandated report. At NOVA, there are several offices to report an incident if you choose to do so. In an emergency, call 911.

College Police – 703-764-5000

To report an incident that occurred **on** campus and begin a criminal investigation. This may also trigger the college's administrative processes. Any timely warning that is broadcast through NOVA websites or emails for the safety of our community will not identify a victim. Timely warnings are triggered when NOVA Police determines that someone presents a serious or continuing threat to the NOVA community.

Local Police Department – 911

To report an incident that occurred **off** campus and begin a criminal investigation that may not involve college administrative processes.

NOVA's Title IX Office –703.323.2262 or [titleix@nvcc.edu](mailto:titleix@nvcc.edu).

To report an incident, seek academic or other accommodations, seek assistance when your Financial Aid is impacted, and discuss your administrative investigation or informal resolution options to address the incident. Complainants have the right to file a formal complaint, the complaint form can be found here: <https://www.nvcc.edu/forms/pdf/125-018.pdf>. Filing a formal complaint will automatically trigger an investigation assuming proper jurisdiction.

Human Resources – 703-323-3110 or [employeeerelations@nvcc.edu](mailto:employeeerelations@nvcc.edu)

To report an incident involving an employee (faculty, staff) or contractor that is not sexual misconduct; NOVA Police may also be called to begin such an investigation.

**CONFIDENTIALITY.** Identifying information of a victim will be protected as much as possible. This means that a victim's name will not be published or otherwise publicized without their permission unless required by law. When a person makes an official complaint to authorities, all possible protections will be afforded this individual, whether or not they participate in any investigation. When the College needs to act to protect the safety of others, absolute confidentiality may not be possible. Your personal and identifying information may only be disclosed when: (1) you give written consent for its disclosure; (2) it is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals; (3) the information concerns conduct involving suspected abuse or neglect of a minor; or (4) as required by law.

**FAIR AND IMPARTIAL INVESTIGATION AND RESOLUTION.** You can expect a fair and just process as your complaint is handled. For more information, go to <http://www.nvcc.edu/titleix/get-help.html>. Parties have the right to choose whether they would like to participate, however, the Title IX formal process can take place without a party's participation.

**NO CONTACT or PROTECTIVE ORDERS.** The College will honor any protective order that you may have acquired through the local courts. Please bring a copy of such a court order to the College Police for their information and enforcement. In addition, a NOVA administrative no contact order may be created by the Office of Rights and Responsibilities or Title IX Coordinator once an incident is reported.

**PRESERVING PHYSICAL EVIDENCE.** It is extremely important to preserve all evidence of an assault. If you go to a hospital as a result of a penetrating sexual assault or physical dating/domestic violence, you are entitled to a free evidence collection examination called a FACT exam. FACT stands for Forensic Assessment and Consultation Team. In Northern Virginia, the preferred hospitals for such an exam are INOVA Fairfax in Fairfax CO and Sentara Hospital in Prince William CO, where they have specially trained nurses on call 24 hours a day for such purposes. The FACT nurse will collect the evidence and ask the police in the jurisdiction where the crime occurred to pick it up and store it for at least six months. The evidence will be in a box marked only with a number, not your name. You are not required to make an official police report for this evidence to be collected. If you later decide to make such a report, the hospital will give your name to the police and the evidence kit will be tested for possible use in a court case. For more information about how to preserve evidence, contact NOVA Police at 703.764.5000.

**REQUESTS FOR CHANGES OR SUPPORT/INTERIM MEASURES.** Regardless whether you file a formal complaint, you may request a change in academic setting (class or campus) or work assignment to be more clearly separated from the respondent (the accused). These requests should be made to the Title IX Coordinator (if you are a student) or the Director of Human Resources (if you are an employee).

**RETALIATION CONCERNS.** Threats, intimidation, and any form of retaliation for bringing a complaint of sexual misconduct are prohibited by the Sexual Misconduct Policy as well as Federal law and may be grounds for disciplinary action. If any retaliation occurs, it is important to contact either the College Police, the Title IX Coordinator, and/or Human Resources.

**COMMUNITY RESOURCES.** NOVA does not offer mental health counseling to students or employees, however there are many community resources that are both free and confidential. Most offer 24-hour services. It is best to choose the service listed below that is closest either to your home or your campus. Every student can use NOVA's Confidential Victim Advocate, no matter where you live, work, or study.

Alexandria Sexual Assault Center: 703.683.7273

Alexandria Domestic Violence Shelter: 703.746.4911

Alexandria Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Wallet Resource Guide

Fairfax County – Office for Women and Domestic and Sexual Violence Services: 703.360.7273

Loudoun Abused Women's Shelter/LAWS: 703.777.6522

Prince William ACTS: 703.221.4460

