

After Sexual Violence: Your Rights and Options

How you may be responding.

What your concerns and needs may be.

What supports and services UChicago students are entitled to.

Local, low-cost resources for students of all genders, orientations, ethnicities, & stages in recovery.

A booklet for UChicago student survivors
from the Phoenix Survivors Alliance

including contributions from:

Resources for Sexual Violence Prevention

UChicago Clothesline Project

Chicago Alliance Against Sexual Exploitation – UChicago Chapter

Student Government

Health Promotion and Wellness

Student Health & Counseling Services

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A Greeting from the Phoenix Survivors Alliance

We are an organization of students, former students, and alum survivors and allies who work, research, and collaborate to provide information, advocacy, and peer support to UChicago student sexual violence survivors. Our mission is to:

- **Offer a safe, informal space for survivors of all identities and in all stages of recovery to voice their stories and receive peer support from fellow student survivors and knowledgeable, conscientious allies.**
- **Act as a means of communication between UChicago administration/service providers and the student population.**
We attempt to bring the concerns and needs of students to appropriate providers and increase the accessibility of UChicago services for survivors.
- **Raise awareness about sexual violence in the UChicago community.**
We head workshops that address misconceptions and stigmas surrounding sexual assault, rape culture, maintaining relationships while recovering, and how to be an effective ally.

If you have any concerns, suggestions, questions, or additional information you would like to bring to our attention...

If you would like to speak with one of our members or get involved in our efforts...

Please do not hesitate to contact us! Email us at contactphoenixsa@gmail.com. Or reach out to us on our [Facebook Page](#). We are here for **you**. Honestly.

Please note that PSA members are not medical, legal, psychotherapeutic, or psychiatric professionals. The information in this handbook serves as an informal resource complementing professional medical and legal services; **it is not meant to substitute professional resources.** We are not mandatory reporters, so **the conversations that take place with us will not be shared outside PSA.**

- The Members of PSA

Introduction

Returning to your daily tasks, ambitions, and relationships after surviving sexual violence can feel like a daunting, disorganized, and isolating process. You may feel as though no one believes you. You may question whether you remember the event accurately, or doubt your ability to recover from the anxiety and mistrust that you may be experiencing. And unfortunately, finding the resources to get the support you deserve to get back on your feet can seem like a confusing and overwhelming task. We, the members of the Phoenix Survivors Alliance, intend for this guide to:

1. Lay out information that would be helpful to you in deciding what you need right now to take care of yourself, and
2. Direct you to resources that can provide the services and advocacy that you have decided you need.

We've divided its contents into three sections:

Understanding Your Response

Decide what you need to take care of yourself by learning what you may be feeling, what concerns you may have, and what strategies may be useful to work through these experiences.

Knowing Your Rights

What services you are entitled to receive should you decide to:

- Seek medical care and advocacy
- File a police report and proceed with prosecution
- Pursue disciplinary proceedings at UChicago
- Seek legal advocacy

Finding and Receiving Care

Free or low-cost resources in Chicago appropriate for survivors of all genders, orientations, ethnicities and various stages of recovery, including:

- Psychological care, advocacy, and administrative help with housing, coursework, and enrollment at the University of Chicago
- Emotional support from peers and spiritual communities
- Psychological care from culturally competent professionals trained in trauma counseling
- Emergency housing

Before we begin ... a few things we want to stress:

1. **What happened to you was not your fault. You did nothing to provoke what happened. Your story deserves to be believed and your experience deserves to be validated.**
2. **However you are feeling, however you are emotionally or physically reacting to what happened is normal.** People react to sexual violence differently – they express and process emotions in unique ways. People recover from sexual violence at their own pace and need different forms of support in doing so. Your experience and your needs are legitimate.
3. **You have rights. You have options.** What you feel you need right now – medical, legal, and/or psychological support; someone to talk to; or just some self-care tips – depends completely on your unique situation. But, no matter your gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, or income; no matter what happened; no matter how far along you are in recovering ... you have rights and you have options in deciding what support you will seek and what actions you will take.
4. **IF YOU ARE IN CRISIS – if you are thinking of hurting yourself or need immediate emotional support, call the Sexual Assault Dean-on-Call (773-834-HELP (4357)) , call one of the following hotlines, or go straight to the emergency room.**
 - Chicago Rape Crisis Hotline: 888-293-2080
 - LifeLine (suicide hotline): 800-273-8255
 - Suicide Hotline: 800-784-8433
 - Depression Hotline: 630-482-9696
 - Trevor Project (for gay and questioning youth): 866-488-7386

See also [Changing Our Campus](#), a site hosted by the US Government with various [resources](#).

Understanding Your Response

What you may be feeling. What concerns or needs you may have.

After surviving sexual violence, you may feel anywhere from numb to overwhelmed by anxiety and anger. Please know that however you are responding to sexual violence, your experience is completely legitimate. You deserve to have your concerns and needs respected and met by those around you.

The following are common emotional reactions, physiological responses, and concerns that survivors experience following sexual violence. We've included some self-care techniques that have helped some survivors cope with these effects of trauma, and we encourage you to seek professional help as well. Upon request, we can send you a directory we've compiled of mental health professionals in Hyde Park.

Trigger Warning:

Explicit descriptions of various responses to sexual assault and common triggers.

Anxiety	You may feel heavily distracted and may be dwelling on existing worries or responsibilities in your life, or you may feel overwhelmed by vague feelings of foreboding and panic. Feeling concerned or embarrassed that anxiety is impeding your performance might make these feelings even worse. You may feel especially nervous or uncomfortable outside or in social situations.
<i>Self-care:</i>	Most importantly, be patient with yourself. Take time to rest and participate in activities you enjoy. Don't feel embarrassed if you feel the need to step back from social engagements or commitments. While it is important not to isolate yourself from others, acknowledge and respect your need to feel safe and take the space you want. Take deep breaths, eat well, and exercise. Talk about how you are feeling to those you trust. Many survivors find meditation quite helpful: attend a UChicago workshop.
<i>More information:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HelpGuide – Understanding Anxiety

Panic attacks	Panic, or anxiety, attacks are periods of intense fear, dread, or apprehension that may span from a few minutes to a few hours. During this time, you may also feel hot flashes or chills, nausea, tingling in your hands or feet, heart palpitations, shortness of breath, sweating, dizziness, chest pain, disorientation, or a vague feeling of unreality.
<i>Self-care:</i>	One of the best ways to counter a panic attack is to realize that you're having one – understand that the fear and anxiety you are experiencing is caused by the panic attack and that it will pass in time. Panic attacks are very common among survivors and a completely understandable response to what you have experienced, but understand that these feelings are not caused by a present danger. Ground yourself by doing something that feels tangible – hold ice cubes or run your hand over a fuzzy blanket. Hug yourself, wrap yourself in a blanket, hug a stuffed animal or a pillow; if you feel comfortable, ask a friend to hold your hand or hug you. Take deep breaths. Try to visualize and focus on an image that relaxes you, and try to think calm, positive thoughts. If you feel the need, move to a location that is spacious and quiet. Above all, trust that the feelings will pass and you will make it through!
<i>More information:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Panic disorder – Self-help • How to Halt and Minimize Panic Attacks • Panic Attack – Summary • Self-help Strategies for Panic Disorder

Depression or mood swings	You may feel hopeless, despairing, irritable, and helpless. You may have crying spells, difficulty sleeping or concentrating, or thoughts of harming yourself. You may lack interest in activities that were previously enjoyable and energizing. You may swing from feeling highly upset and distressed to feeling numb and detached, which may make you fear that you are psychologically unstable or “crazy.”
<i>Self-care:</i>	Most importantly, be patient with yourself. Take time to rest and participate in activities you enjoy. Don’t feel embarrassed if you feel the need to step back from social engagements or commitments. While it is important not to isolate yourself from others, acknowledge and respect your need to feel safe and take the space you want. Talk about how you are feeling to those you trust – don’t be afraid to ask for their support and patience. Take deep breaths, eat well, and exercise. If you are having thoughts of harming yourself, call a support hotline or seek counseling. Remind yourself that these moods will subside as you process your response to the assault.
<i>More information:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● PTSD Self-Help

Dissociation	Dissociation describes a range of experiences that involve detaching from reality. You may feel emotionally numb, as though you are detached from your body, or as though the world isn’t real. You may not be able to remember portions of the assault. These experiences can be very frightening and disorienting.
<i>Self-care:</i>	Most importantly, be patient with yourself. You are not “going crazy.” On the contrary, dissociation is a normal mechanism that your mind uses to manage stress. Unfortunately, it can activate involuntarily as you cope with trauma. But understand that the dissociative episodes following trauma are not caused by a present threat, and will pass with time. Take deep breaths. Try to visualize an image that relaxes you and think calm, positive thoughts. Ground yourself by doing something that feels tangible – hold ice cubes or run your hand over a fuzzy blanket. Hug yourself, wrap yourself in a blanket, take a hot bath, hug a stuffed animal or a pillow; if you feel comfortable, ask a friend to hold your hand or hug you. Above all, trust that the feelings will pass and you will make it through!
<i>More information:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tips for Managing Dissociation

Flashbacks	<p>You may have unanticipated periods of intense memory or sensation in which you feel you are reliving parts of the assault. These flashbacks can be very frightening and disorienting. Flashbacks can be “triggered” by certain sounds, smells, situations, words, stories, or images – meaning that experiencing these things can cause you to vividly recollect parts of the assault.</p>
<i>Self-care:</i>	<p>If you are experiencing a flashback, try to remain calm by grounding yourself in the present. Hold ice cubes, run your hand over a fuzzy blanket, hug yourself, wrap yourself in a blanket, ask a friend to hold your hand or hug you if you feel comfortable. Take deep breaths and try to focus on an image that relaxes you. If you feel the need, try to go to a location that is spacious, quiet, and without potential triggers. Above all, trust that the flashback will soon end and that you will make it through!</p> <p>Flashbacks can be incredibly vivid, disorienting, and terrifying. It is perfectly understandable if their occurrence, or your worry that they might occur without warning, might leave you feeling fragile, exhausted, or unable to concentrate. Be patient with yourself. If possible, recognize and steer clear of situations and environments that may trigger flashbacks for you. Above all, do what you must to feel safe.</p>
<i>More information:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Information on Flashbacks

<p>Guilt and shame</p>	<p>You may believe that you are at least partially to blame for what happened, which would suggest that you cannot trust or protect yourself. You may feel shame, believing that sexual violence happened because you are dirty, or you are in some way defiled because of the violence This is not true! No matter what happened, no matter your relationship with the assailant, no matter how much or little you resisted, no matter how much you drank or what you were wearing or whether you took your clothes off or whether you invited your assailant into your house or room or bed, you are not to blame for them disregarding your right to choose whether or not to have sex.</p>
<p><i>Self-care:</i></p>	<p>Keep reminding yourself that, while feelings of guilt or shame are completely normal, you are not to blame for what happened in any way. Your actions, apparel, or sexuality had nothing to do with your assailant’s decision to disregard your right to give consent. You did not give them the “wrong impression” and did not owe them anything.</p>
<p><i>More information:</i></p>	<p><i>When the assailant is an acquaintance:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Acquaintance Rape <p><i>An intimate partner:</i> (more information on pg 17)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Marital/Partner Rape ● Abuse in Intimate Relationships: Defining the Multiple Dimensions and Terms <p><i>A stranger:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Although stranger violence is statistically less likely to occur than non-stranger violence, the trauma of such an event is no less real and your needs are no less relevant than if you survived sexual violence by a non-stranger. Some links on research about sexual violence perpetrated by strangers: ● Research on Stranger Rape ● Types of Sexual Assault

<p>Responsibility for maintaining the status quo of existing relationships</p> <p><i>(with individuals who are not the assailant – see pg 17 for info on surviving intimate partner violence)</i></p>	<p>You may feel worried about how knowledge of sexual violence might affect those close to you. You may feel worried that your relationships might be negatively affected by how you are responding to violence (e.g. experiencing depression, anger, decreased libido, etc).</p> <p>Members of minority groups, such as persons of color (POC) and LGBTQIA individuals, are often reluctant to speak out regarding sexual violence because they fear that members of their own community will condemn them for accusing a fellow, or that individuals outside the community will interpret the accusation as proof that their community is violent or promiscuous.</p> <p>Please understand: It is not your responsibility to mediate how others respond to knowledge of your experience or to your needs and reactions while recovering. You do not need to recover silently and alone out of the fear of destabilizing or upsetting others – you deserve to be given the attention and support you need to take care of your unique needs and responses.</p>
<p><i>Self-care:</i></p>	<p>Communicate what you need from your partners, friends, and family. Ask for their support, set boundaries in your relationships, and request that loved ones seek their own resources to cope with their reaction to sexual violence.</p>
<p><i>More information:</i></p>	<p>Counseling services exist for you and your loved ones to help all parties communicate their needs, confusions, and frustrations so that everyone can share and receive the support they need to maintain healthy relationships.</p> <p><i>More information for survivors in relationships:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Sex After Sexual Assault: How to Find Joy After Trauma ● Sexual Intimacy After Sexual Assault or Sexual Abuse

<p>Confusion or concern over your gender identity or sexuality</p>	<p>You may find yourself doubting whether you are “actually” the sexual orientation, gender identity, or virgin you considered yourself based upon the fact that sexual violence happened, the orientation or gender of your assailant, or your physiological reaction to non-consensual sex.</p>
<p><i>Self-care:</i></p>	<p>Please understand: sexual violence is about one person dominating and controlling another, not sexual attraction. Non-consensual sex does not determine your own sexuality or identity. This remains true even if you experienced physical arousal and/or orgasm during non-consensual sex. Physical arousal and/or orgasm are often simply physiological responses to stimulus, and many survivors report having experienced them during non-consensual sex.</p> <p>The gender or orientation of your assailant determines nothing about who you are sexually attracted to, the extent you feel sexual attraction to anyone at all, who you decide to have sex with, or your capacity to form intimate relationships with individuals of your choosing; you are still heterosexual or homosexual or bisexual or asexual.</p> <p>If you considered yourself a virgin before non-consensual sex, you may still consider yourself a virgin because you have not decided to and negotiated the terms of your first sexual experience.</p> <p>What happened to you determines nothing about your gender identity. If you identify as a man, you are no less a man than you were before non-consensual sex. If you identify as a woman, you are just as wholly a woman. If you identify as agender, gender-nonconforming, or anything in-between, non-consensual does nothing to invalidate that.</p> <p>Of course, sexuality and gender identity is complex and fluid for many survivors. Do not feel ashamed or worried if, after non-consensual sex you feel a change in either the extent to which you feel attracted to other individuals or the orientation/identity of individuals that you feel attracted to.</p>
<p><i>More information:</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Myths About Male Rape

<p>Self-injury</p>	<p>Some survivors feel the impulse to inflict injury upon themselves as a means of coping with psychological pain, anger, depression, and guilt. This is a common and understandable attempt to control and express the overwhelming and alienating emotions that trauma often engenders. Survivors who self-injure are not necessarily trying to get attention, and self-injury does not always indicate a desire to commit suicide.</p> <p>However, we must stress that self-injury is only a temporary relief from emotional pain and not a healthy way to process or heal from trauma. Do not feel ashamed if you have these impulses, but know that self-injury can cause permanent physical damage and ultimately hinder healing by perpetuating guilt, depression, discomfort with one’s body, dissociation, and isolation. Please seek therapeutic help if you feel the desire to inflict injury upon yourself.</p>
<p><i>Self-care:</i></p>	<p>Alternatives to self-injury:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Try to ground yourself by holding ice cubes, drinking a hot beverage, running your hand over a fuzzy blanket, hugging yourself, wrapping yourself in a blanket, asking a friend to hold your hand or hug you if you feel comfortable. ● Write your feelings down in a journal. ● Express your feelings through art. ● Exercise to ground yourself in your body. <p>You do not have to cope with emotional pain alone, and deserve patience, understanding, and respect when healing from trauma and coping with impulses to self-injure.</p> <p>Please seek counseling for a non-judgmental space to express, process, and develop strategies for healing from emotional pain.</p> <p>If you feel you are ready, reach out to people you trust and disclose your impulses to self-harm – seek their support as you seek alternative ways of coping with emotional pain.</p>
<p><i>More information:</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Information on Self-Harm ● Understanding Self-Harm ● How Do You Tell Someone You Self-Injure?

<p>Suicidal thoughts</p>	<p>Sometimes, survivors believe that suicide is the only way to end emotional pain, guilt, fear, isolation, or despair after struggling to receive justice or support. Many survivors suffer from depression, which can lead them to believe that their situation is hopeless and their strengths are inadequate. Please seek immediate help if you are considering harming yourself! Such despair is an understandable response to trauma, but these feelings will pass. If you express your feelings and reach out for support, no problem is insurmountable. You have so much to offer – the world is far better off with your innumerable insights and capacity for love. Trust that you possess the strength, will, and creativity to endure these feelings.</p>
<p><i>Self-care:</i></p>	<p>Please seek immediate help if you are considering harming yourself. Speak to someone you trust, go to the emergency room, or call a support hotline:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Chicago Rape Crisis Hotline: 888-293-2080 ● LifeLine (suicide hotline): 800-273-8255 ● Suicide Hotline: 800-784-8433 ● Depression Hotline: 630-482-9696 ● Trevor Project (for gay & questioning youth): 866-488-7386 <p>Please seek professional medical and/or psychological help.</p> <p>Form a safety plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Form a support network of people you trust. They can keep you safe and offer alternative perspectives on your situation. ● Get rid of any means to commit suicide you may have access to (pills, razors, a gun, etc). ● Avoid alcohol or drugs when you are feeling depressed. ● Avoid being alone when you feel depressed (especially at night) – phone a friend, stay with family, or ask someone to keep you company. ● Write down your feelings or express them through art. ● Eat well and exercise – even just a walk around the block can stimulate endorphins in your brain and improve your mood.
<p><i>More information:</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Dealing With Suicidal Thoughts ● Effects of Sexual Assault: Suicide ● Suicidal Thoughts

<p>Anger & revenge fantasies</p>	<p>Some survivors harbour strong desires to personally punish or enact revenge upon their assailants, especially if they were ignored by family or police and unable to receive justice through legal avenues. They may feel outraged about society’s refusal or failure to punish their assailant and personal responsibility to protect other potential survivors. They may feel blocked from testifying to their experience. Male-identified survivors may feel especially pressured to take matters into their own hands and inflict justice upon their assailant as a way to reclaim or affirm their masculinity.</p>
<p><i>Self-care:</i></p>	<p>Your desire to pursue justice is completely understandable, and you may rightly feel outraged at the assailant, individuals who dismiss your experiences, and a legal system that can be difficult and frustrating to navigate. Seeking legal recourse and/or making your assailant’s crime known to your community may be important steps in your healing process (see pg 28 for legal rights & resources).</p> <p>If you are frustrated by your attempts to seek legal recourse, you may feel as though exacting revenge on your assailant by other means (such as physical violence) will empower you, validate your experience, and grant you closure. But by making empowerment and recovery contingent upon exacting revenge, you are relinquishing power to the assailant. Hurting or punishing them will not alleviate your emotional pain. In fact, you will be held accountable for your actions, which will only complicate your life.</p> <p>Do not make your healing contingent on the assailant. They are not worth further energy, emotion, and thought. Focus on yourself – what you need to recover and care for yourself. Write down your feelings. Create some distance to reflect upon what course of action would truly benefit you. Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What am I thinking and feeling? ● What action is going to help me live the kind of life I want to live? ● Am I making my recovery contingent upon my internal state or the state of others? <p>Talk with someone you trust. Seek therapeutic help. Seek alternative means of testifying to your experience and holding your perpetrator accountable. Share your story with other survivors on online forums, such as the UChicago Clothesline Project.</p>
<p><i>More information:</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Thoughts of Revenge ● UChicago Clothesline Project

<p>Physical symptoms</p>	<p>The emotional effects of surviving a trauma like sexual violence places great stress on all systems of the body. You may experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● soreness, muscle tension ● shortness of breath, heart palpitations ● headaches ● nausea, stomach aches ● fatigue or insomnia ● change in appetite ● change in libido ● nightmares
<p><i>Self-care:</i></p>	<p>Visit a doctor to determine that these symptoms are not caused by any underlying medical condition. Ask a doctor or counselor on what treatments exist to alleviate these symptoms. Eat well, get enough sleep, and exercise. Many survivors find meditation quite helpful in alleviating these symptoms: attend a UChicago workshop.</p>
<p><i>More information:</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● After Sexual Assault: A Recovery Guide for Survivors ● Self-Care Following Trauma ● PTSD Symptoms, Self-Help, and Treatment

<p>Exacerbation of an existing physical or mental illness</p>	<p>Because the emotional effects of trauma place great stress on the body's systems, existing physical or mental illnesses can be exacerbated in the aftereffects of sexual violence.</p>
<p><i>Self-care:</i></p>	<p>Be patient with yourself. Take the time and space you need to avoid overtaxing and exhausting yourself. Eat well, exercise, and try to get enough sleep. If you see a doctor or counselor for a physical or mental illness, talk to them about how the effects of and/or treatments for trauma might affect its severity or any medication you are taking.</p>

For survivors of sexual abuse in intimate/domestic relationships:

For many individuals, surviving sexual violence when it occurs in intimate or domestic relationships carries unique struggles and concerns (these relationships include dating relationships, marriages, cohabiting partners, and individuals who have children without being romantically or sexually involved).

- **Survivors may feel conflicted** over acknowledging their partner's behavior as abuse. Labelling their experience as abuse may cause them great shock and distress.
- **Survivors may feel invested** in or affectionate towards their abusive partner, or worry about how leaving their partner might affect their family.
- Survivors may believe that their **fiscal situation**, living arrangements, or preexisting disability prevents them from leaving their partner, **especially in cases of LBGTQIA survivors** who may have no legal process to assist in making sure assets are evenly divided after a separation, unlike their married counterparts.
- Survivors may fear that their partner may **retaliate**.
- There are often **fewer places of safety or refuge for survivors of intimate/domestic sexual violence** because the abusive partner has access to many realms of the survivor's life, and long-term abuse can cause survivors to **doubt their abilities to trust and care for themselves** without their partner's presence.
- Since abusers often keep their partners socially isolated, **survivors may lack support networks** that will validate and protect them.
- People of color (POC) and/or Lesbian, Bisexual, Gay, Trans, Queer, Intersex, Asexual (LBGTQIA) survivors **may not be able to remain anonymous** in their communities and may be given limited support in their community.
- **Trans* survivors may be denied entrance** to emergency housing facilities or shelters due to their gender/genital/legal status.

Sexual abuse can manifest in intimate/domestic relationships in subtle ways, and refers not only to initiating sexual behavior without an individual's consent, but also:

- Interfering with birth control, controlling decisions about birth control / pregnancy
- Engaging in risky sexual behaviors without a partner's consent
- Controlling a partner by threatening to have affairs
- Shaming a partner for their sexuality, sexual behaviors, choices, or lifestyle (e.g. for choosing to participate in or not consent to certain sexual acts)
- Using sexually derogatory language, names, or jokes
- Using guilt to coerce a partner into having sex
- Withholding forms of sexual intimacy or affection (e.g. cuddling) unless a partner engages in particular sex acts
- Distributing intimate correspondence, photos, or videos without a partner's consent

Self-care: If possible, get to a place where you feel safe. Reach out to trusted friends and family, domestic violence advocates and shelters, and other options for

emergency housing (see pg 43). Strategize a safety plan for yourself (and your children if applicable). If necessary, obtain a Civil-No-Contact order so the abuser cannot approach or contact you (more information on pg 32). If you have been able to leave your abuser and are living alone, please be careful about any unidentified mail or packages. Seek any medical care you may need, and (if possible) long-term counseling to help you through your recovery.

If you cannot get to a safe place, brainstorm a list of reasons to give the abuser for you to leave the house when you feel endangered. Come up with a code word or phrase that means “call the police” and teach it to trusted friends and family. Try to use a computer outside your home for financial and social affairs, and change your username and passwords. Keep a phone on you when possible.

Resources:

- **Domestic Violence Hotline** – 800-799-SAFE (7233)
- **Between Friends Hotline** – 800-603-HELP (4357)
- **Domestic Abuse Helpline for Men & Women** – 888-7HELPLINE (43-5754)
- **The Gay & Lesbian National Hotline** – 800-THE-GLNH (843-4564)
- **City of Chicago Domestic Violence Help Line** – 877-863-6338
- **Family Rescue Crisis Line** – 800-360-6619
- **Chicago Metropolitan Battered Women's Network** – 312-527-0730
- **[Rape Abuse & Incest National Network](#)** (RAINN) -- 800-656-HOPE (4673)

More information:

- [For Survivors of Marital/Partner Rape](#)
- [Abuse in Intimate Relationships: Defining the Multiple Dimensions and Terms](#)
- [Technology safety](#)
- [Legal information](#)
- [Chicago Domestic Violence Legal Clinic](#)
- [Campus Violence Prevention Policy and Behavioral Intervention Team](#)
- [UCPD Umbrella Coverage](#)
- *For LBGTQIA survivors:*
 - [Lambda Anti-Violence Project](#)
 - [Gay Men's Domestic Violence Project](#)
 - [Lesbian Partner Violence](#)
 - [Transgender Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault](#)
- *For male-identified survivors:*
 - [Help for Men Who Are Being Abused](#)
- *For POC survivors:*
 - [Women of Color Network: Domestic Violence](#)
- *For Jewish survivors:*
 - [SHALVA](#)

More information about the effects of sexual violence:

- **RAINN:** [Recovering from Sexual Violence](#)
- The website for [UChicago's Student Counseling Services](#) offers collections of links that direct to websites offering information on topics from depression, anxiety, and trauma in relationships. This includes a collection of information for concerned loved ones.
- UChicago's group [Resources for Sexual Violence Prevention \(RSVP\)](#)
- **Phoenix Survivors Alliance:** anonymously submit questions and receive information and input from fellow survivors on our website:
<https://phoenixsurvivorsalliance.wordpress.com/>

Resources for male-identified survivors:

Please keep in mind that all resources for survivors are appropriate for and available to male-identified individuals. The following websites contain information about responses, concerns, and needs that male-identified survivors often experience:

- [Male Survivor](#)
- [1in6](#)
- [Stop Abuse for Everyone](#)
- [Sexual Abuse of Boys](#)
- [For Male Survivors of Rape & Sexual Abuse](#)
- [Many Voices](#)
- [PAVE](#)
- [Sexual Assault of Men and Boys](#)

Resources for female-identified survivors:

- [Chicago Women's Health Center](#) provides gynecological care and individual counseling. Payment for services is on a sliding scale.
Phone: 773-935-6126
- [YWCA of Metropolitan Chicago](#) provides free counseling for female survivors of sexual assault and their impacted non-offending significant others (i.e., partners, parents/guardians, siblings).
Phone: 888-293-2080

Resources for LBGTQIA survivors:

- *LBGT Crisis Hotline:* 773-871-2273
- *Center on Halsted:* 773-472-6469
- Some websites with additional information:
 - [Domestic Violence and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Relationships](#)
 - [For Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, & Questioning Survivors of Sexual](#)

Violence

- [Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender & Queer Community](#)
- [Strategies for Supporting LBGTIQ Survivors](#)
- [Community United Against Violence](#)
- [Fenway Health Violence Recovery Program](#)

Resources for survivors who are kinky or practice BDSM:

- Great guide for survivors of sexual assault or intimate partner violence that happens within the BDSM community: [In The Aftermath](#)
- This website is also a good source of information regarding legal rights and resources for sexual violence survivors and victims of discrimination within the BDSM community and other marginalized sexualities: [Kink Aware Professionals Directory](#)
- Advice in response to common concerns kinky survivors have about reporting and seeking services: [Dealing with Assault](#)

Resources for survivors of color:

- [Mujeres Latinas en Accion](#)
Crisis line: 312-738-5358
- [Korean American Women in Need \(KAN-WIN\)](#)
Crisis line: 773-583-0880
- [Apna Ghar](#): for victims of domestic violence in South Asian community
Crisis line: 773-334-4663 (if calling from IL); 800-717-0757 (if calling from out-of-state)
- [Women of Color Network: Sexual Violence](#)

Resources for survivors with disabilities or mental illness(es):

- [WCSAP: Disability Community](#)
- [Sexual Assault and Persons with Disabilities](#)

Know Your Rights

What services you are entitled to.

In this section, we provide information on your medical and legal rights at UChicago as well as in the Greater Chicago Area. Specifically, we outline

- What services you can expect at the hospital should you seek immediate medical care
- How you can navigate the billing process
- What criminal procedures are like and what you can expect from initiating recourse in the civil courts
- What your civil rights are at UChicago and the disciplinary/adjudication process guaranteed to you at UChicago

Trigger Warning:

Explicit descriptions of hospital procedures (including physical examination and evidence collection kit), medical bills, STIs and pregnancy, criminal procedures (actions of police and prosecutors), civil procedures, and the UChicago adjudication process

Medical Rights

You have the right to visit the emergency room to seek medical care at any time after an instance of sexual violence. An act exists called the Sexual Assault Survivors Emergency Treatment Act (SASETA) that grants you the right to certain medical services while in the ER:

1. As a survivor, **medical staff should consider you a priority second ONLY to life and death cases.** As such, they should see you as soon as possible in as private a room as they have available, and, if you wish, without either UChicago or Chicago police presence.
2. You have the right to a **full-body medical examination and treatment of any injuries.**
3. Within seven days after the incident took place, you have the right to a **Sexual Assault Evidence Collection Kit** (also known as a rape kit) taken, and, if you wish, without either UChicago or Chicago police presence. The purpose of this kit is to collect forensic evidence from your body that can be used in prosecution. If you intend to prosecute, it is important that you visit the ER and have the evidence collection kit done as soon as possible to preserve the evidence. Do not change clothes, wash, brush your teeth or hair, or urinate if possible. See pg 31 for more information.

- The kit includes: gathering material from your hair, clothes, and under your fingernails, swabbing your mouth, photographing visible injuries, and a gynecological and/or anal exam. You have the right to refuse the entire kit or any one of the many steps the kit involves.

For more information about the kit's steps, see

[Sexual Assault Evidence Collection Kit](#)

- *If you think that your assailant drugged you,* the kit may include a urine sample to test whether any substances are present in your system. Most drugs that assailants use to facilitate sexual assault leave your system quickly, so it is important to have a kit completed as soon as you feel comfortable. Commonly used drugs generally cause impaired memory or amnesia, hallucinations, dizziness, confusion, disorientation, impaired motor function or sedation, nausea, unconsciousness, verbal incoherence, and reduced heart rate.

For more information about these drugs:

[Drug-Facilitated Sexual Assault](#)

[Date Rape Drugs & Sexual Assault](#)

- If you're not sure whether you want to press charges, rest assured that you have two weeks after having the kit completed to decide to release the evidence into police custody. **If you do not inform the hospital within two weeks that you**

wish to hand over the kit to the police, they will discard it.

4. You have the right to be **treated for syphilis, gonorrhea, chlamydia, and herpes**. You should be provided with the actual medications, not just prescriptions. If the physician considers you to be at a high-risk, you have the right to receive **post-exposure treatment for HIV** (the reason why they only offer this treatment to individuals they deem high-risk is because the post-exposure is expensive, must be taken for many months, and causes extremely unpleasant side-effects).
5. You have the right to receive **emergency contraception**. Emergency contraception works best if taken within 72 hours of intercourse, but is effective up to 120 hours following. Note that some Catholic hospitals are exceptions to this; they are not required to give you emergency contraception, but they **DO** have to mention it as an option and tell you where you can obtain it.
6. **If you seek medical care in Illinois, you should not have to pay for any medical services you receive in the emergency room to gather evidence or treat injuries incurred as a result of sexual violence. Your insurance, the Illinois Sexual Assault Program, or Public Aid should pay for any services you receive in the emergency room AND any follow-up care related to the incident within ninety days of the original ER visit if you return to the same ER.** It is possible that you may receive a bill in error, so we suggest that you preserve all or as much written and financial documentation as possible.

If you receive a bill, these UChicago and local organizations can help you correct the error:

- The **Office of Social Work** at 773-702-1807 can find information for you and advise you on how to proceed.
- You can file for financial assistance with the bill using [this form](#). More instructions are [here](#). The Office of Social Work can walk you through any questions you may have.
- **Resilience**, the **YWCA**, and **Life Span** may have options to help you with medical bills.

Keep in mind: confidentiality is not guaranteed in many of these options. If you are on your parents' insurance, information about what services you received may show up on the statement. And depending on your insurance policy, your parents may be able to access documentation and information about what services you received even if they are not explicitly listed on the statement.

7. If you are insured or if you uninsured and without Public Aid, you are eligible to receive

a voucher that covers medical care related to the incident for ninety days after your original ER visit (regardless of which ER you choose to visit for this follow-up care). Ask your physician about this, since not all hospitals offer these vouchers.

Centers we suggest:

If possible, visit the ER of one of these hospitals. They are contracted with Resilience to call an advocate whenever a survivor visits the ER. This advocate can be a very helpful ally to you: they'll explain your rights and what to expect while in the hospital, they'll advocate for you to physicians and police, and they are a great source of information and resources. Basically, they are there for you – they follow your agenda and your agenda only.

- Methodist Hospital
- Northwestern Memorial Hospital
- St Joseph's Hospital
- Swedish Covenant Hospital
- Thorek Hospital
- Weiss Memorial Hospital
- John H. Stroger of Cook County
- Provident Hospital of Cook County
- Rush University Medical Center
- University of Illinois Hospital
- Mount Sinai Hospital
- Our Lady of the Resurrection Medical Center
- Saints Mary and Elizabeth Medical Center
- West Suburban Medical Center

Resources at UChicago:

- UChicago Medicine's Mitchell ER is also a good choice – you have the option to have the Sexual Assault Dean-on-Call or an advocate support you through your visit.
- Student Health can provide follow-up care including pregnancy testing, counseling, referral services, and sexually transmitted infections (STI) testing and treatment.

Legal Rights

An overview of your options

There are three avenues you may pursue (individually or along with another survivor):

- **Criminal Court**

This process begins with filing a police report, which does not obligate you to press charges and which possibly includes a rape kit. It then concludes with the accused being found guilty or not guilty by a jury. Your advocate through this process is the Office of the State's Attorney.

Illinois state definition of sexual assault can be found [here](#) and [here](#). [TW Explicit description of sexual assault]

- **Civil Court**

This process does not require a police report and does not involve the case being brought before a jury. Instead, the plaintiff describes to the court what injury the accused has (allegedly) committed and asks the court to order the accused to provide monetary compensation or stop the conduct that is causing the harm. Civil court proceedings include suing the accused under the Gender Violence Act or requesting a Civil No-Contact Order/Order of Protection. Your advocate through this process is a private lawyer; there are pro-bono resources available which we describe later in this booklet.

For more information on what constitutes sexual assault as per the Gender Violence Act, see [here](#). [TW Explicit description of sexual assault]

- **Disciplinary Proceedings at UChicago**

These procedures include the time when the survivor first discloses their experience of sexual trauma(s) to the Sexual Assault Dean-on-Call, a Resident Assistant / Head, or other mandatory reporter, up through the process of taking disciplinary action against the accused (if found guilty) according to the spirit of or stipulations enforced by Title IX and other legislation.

Please keep in mind that no University representative described in this process can promise complete privacy, except for Student Counseling. At the very least, all players are required to document the event anonymously, according to a federal law called the Clery Act, in which university community members are secured the right to be kept apprised of crime taking place in their area. The disciplinary proceedings section also describe steps that UChicago is required to take to protect and inform you (with caveats, which we describe) from the moment you file a complaint through the rest of your time at

UChicago. In some cases, the University is required to enact internal disciplinary procedures without the consent of the survivor in the interest of public safety.

For more information on what constitutes sexual assault at UChicago, as well as an overview of the administration's guiding principles in resolving cases of sexual assault, see [here](#). [TW – **Explicit description of sexual assault**] A few highlights include the acknowledgement that individuals impaired by drugs, alcohol, or other intoxicant, may not be able to give consent. In addition, the policy covers “sexual conduct,” which is defined as “any intentional or knowing touching or fondling by the victim or the accused, either directly or through clothing, of the sex organs, anus, or breast of the victim or the accused.”

What distinguishes these legal avenues?

1. Each of these has ***differing burdens of proof***, which is the obligation of the person bringing charges to prove that the accused is guilty of committing a crime. Criminal court carries the highest burden of proof, meaning that the person bringing charges – in this case the survivor – must prove *beyond a reasonable doubt* that the accused committed the crime. In contrast, in civil court and disciplinary proceedings the person bringing charges only has to prove that it is *more likely than not* that the accused committed an offense (or multiple offenses).
2. These three legal processes have ***different consequences for the guilty*** party. If found guilty in criminal court, the accused serves jail time. If found guilty in civil court, they must provide monetary compensation to the wronged party or cease whatever conduct is causing harm. Being found guilty after disciplinary proceedings carries academic consequences.

Take the time to consider carefully which of these legal options serve your interests best. Some survivors find going through the legal process empowering, while others are equally empowered by deciding not to participate in pressing charges. The degree to which you need to participate in legal proceedings of any kind depends entirely on your needs. **No matter what legal avenue you decide is best for you to pursue, and no matter the outcome of the proceedings, your experience is real and valid.**

Phoenix Survivors Alliance has knowledgeable members who will gladly walk you through their knowledge of the legal options; in particular, they can go over the student manual and other federal laws that may be applicable to your needs (Title IX, the Clery Act, the Dear Colleague letters, etc.). Following are suggestions for resources to obtain legal representation and advice.

I. Criminal Court

Filing a police report

There are many reasons why survivors of sexual violence may decide to file a police report documenting their experiences: to pursue criminal charges against their assailant, to provide information regarding their assailant's actions so that in the future you could be called as a witness or enable a prosecutor to show a pattern of sexual violence, and/or to take an important step in healing from the event. We encourage you to take this step if you feel it will be helpful to you, and would be happy to connect you with organizations that can provide legal advocacy if the prospect seems intimidating to you.

In the case of sexual crimes, filing a report involves providing information about the incident to a police officer and answering questions regarding what occurred. Basically, if you speak to an officer about an incidence of sexual violence, they will file a report. Again, keep in mind that reporting doesn't obligate you to pursue redress through criminal courts. However, the final decision to prosecute rests on the decision of the police officers/detectives dealing with your case, based on their (subjective) expectations from the State Attorney's office.

If you think you might want to press charges, it is best that you file a report as soon as possible if you feel capable and comfortable. You can file a police report at any time – even years after the incident, but be aware that there is a time limit on how long after the incident a prosecutor or state's attorney can file criminal charges against the perpetrator (see [here](#)).

Be as honest as you can, but please do not blame yourself if you cannot remember everything; there is sizable research demonstrating the difficulty of remembering the exact details surrounding trauma. We encourage you to have Sexual Assault Dean-on-Call (SADoC) accompany you to the police station to advocate for you.

- University of Chicago Police Department (UCPD) can be reached by calling 773-702-8181 or 1-2-3 from a campus phone. Their responsibilities include:
 1. Attending to your immediate needs, including personal safety and prompt medical care
 2. Broadcasting a description of your assailant, when appropriate
 3. Notifying the SADoC, if you are a student
- If you go to the ER, a Chicago police officer will be called to take a statement. If you wish to press charges, if you are able it is best if you file a report as soon as you feel comfortable doing so. However, you do not have to file a report with them at the ER –

you have the right to file a report later.

We don't wish to dissuade you from filing a report or pursuing justice via criminal courts; this is about restoring agency to you as a survivor. However, we do want to provide you with a realistic expectation of what you may face at the police station.

Unlike the UCPD, which has undergone some sensitivity training provided by UChicago, the Chicago Police Department (CPD) does not prioritize survivor advocacy. Their primary concern is a successful prosecution, so they have been known to question survivors with a prosecutorial tone, to challenge the validity of the survivor's experience, or to refuse to pass cases to the State's Attorney's office because they expect the case to result in a loss. And there has been some discussion that the CPD has recently taken jurisdiction of sexual assault reports and that they no longer fall under the UCPD's purview (certainly we have anecdotal evidence to support this). Please be in close communication with the SADOcs and the legal advocates at the YWCA, Resilience, or Chicago Alliance Against Sexual Exploitation (CAASE) while you navigate the criminal process.

Sexual Assault Evidence Collection Kit

A sexual assault evidence collection kit (also referred to as a rape kit) consists of various steps to gather forensic evidence of the assault for prosecution. This evidence includes photographs of any visible injuries, material from your hair or under your fingernails, urine collection to test for drugs, a gynecological and/or anal exam, and swabs from your vaginal/penis, anus, and mouth. You can consent to all, none, or specific steps of the kit. Keep in mind that the urine test that the police perform is extremely sensitive, and will detect any illicit substances present in your system. ERs will perform a kit within seven days after the assault.

If you are not sure whether you want to press charges, rest assured that just because you have an evidence collection kit done does not mean that it is immediately released and used in the prosecution. You have two weeks to decide whether you want the kit released to the police. The hospital will hold the kit for two weeks after its collection and will discard the kit after this time frame if you do not inform them that you want the kit released to the police. If there is any chance that you might want to pursue legal and/or disciplinary action, we suggest that you have the kit done – you can then take these two weeks to decide whether or not you want to release the kit.

II. Civil Court

Civil Suit Under the Gender Violence Act

You may decide to pursue redress in civil courts; the Gender Violence Act (GVA) is a civil rights law providing penalties for gender-related violence, i.e., acts of harassment, abuse, or violence taken at least in part on the basis of a person's sex. At most, they can give monetary compensation, but in theory, the burden of proof is lower than criminal courts. The statute of limitations is 5 years.

Broadly speaking, under the GVA,

- Survivors of rape and intimate battery/partner violence can sue the abuser in state civil court, regardless of whether the abuser was ever prosecuted or even charged in criminal court – the ability to sue (and win) is independent of outside outcomes.
- Along with sexual violence, sexual harassment or unwanted physical contact is considered an act of gender-related violence.
- Any *threat* of these actions constitutes an act of gender-related violence.
- Survivors of sexual harassment or violence have protections in professional environments, even if they are the bosses of the abuser.
- Civil lawyers have financial incentives to represent survivors, as winning will provide them with monetary compensation – something to keep in mind when considering the potential financial burden of pursuing litigation.

For more information [**TW: Explicit descriptions of sexual harassment, assault, and violence; description of survivor experiences; statements by a defense lawyer**]:

- Statement of the [Gender Violence Act](#) itself
- [“The Gender Violence Act: Towards the Eradication of Rape”](#)

Orders of Protection or Civil No Contact Orders (CNCOs)

You may obtain orders of protection and civil no contact orders (also known as restraining orders or CNCOs) against your offender(s), which are essentially court-issued orders prohibiting the offender(s) to be near you. There can be much more included under these orders.

- Survivors who are not documented citizens are eligible for seeking orders of protection.
- Under the Victim Economic Safety and Security Act (VESSA), survivors who work for companies with more than 15 employees may take unpaid leave to pursue medical, legal,

and other services.

Compensation

Depending on your circumstances, you may consider filing a Crime Victim's Compensation (CVC) application. Note as far as we know, this is only applicable to IL.

- Under the Crime Victim Compensation Act of Illinois, you may be eligible for reimbursement of certain expenses. However, you must provide payment yourself first, the Act only compensates up to \$27,000, and you must report sexual violence within seven days.
- More information is available [here](#). Note this process takes time and requires some documentation.

Resources for pursuing protection or compensation in the civil court:

- We've had positive experiences with the **Chicago Alliance Against Sexual Exploitation (CAASE)**; they can assist with University disciplinary procedures, filing Office of Civil Rights complaints, and filing no contact orders or orders of protection. We can provide referrals if you wish; or, you can reach them directly [here](#).
Cost: Free
- **Resilience**, the YWCA, and **Life Span** have stellar legal advocates to further inform you of your rights and options, and to provide dedicated legal representation.
- **The Chicago Rape Crisis Hotline** can be contacted at 1-888-293-2080.
- The **American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Illinois** is also worth reaching out to for legal assistance.

For more information on IL statute, visit the [Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault](#) page.

III. Disciplinary Options at UChicago

Your rights under Title IX

Broadly speaking, Title IX is a piece of federal legislation that protects students of *all genders* from sex-based discrimination so that they are free to safely pursue their education. It states that:

- **Schools must be proactive in preventing and responding to sexual discrimination, harassment, or violence on their campuses.** If they possess reasonable knowledge that

it is occurring and causing an unsafe/hostile environment for any student, they must act to stop it and respond effectively to the harm caused.

- **Schools must have an established procedure for handling complaints:** The school must
 - Have a Title IX Coordinator who understands and abides by the statute to ensure general Title IX adherence.
 - Investigate complaint regardless of its contents and whether you choose to file a police report.
 - Conclude their own investigation expeditiously and in a timely fashion (should take place within the semester) rather than waiting for the outcome of criminal proceedings.
 - Determine outcome of complaint based upon “preponderance of evidence,” meaning that discipline should result when it is more likely than not that discrimination, harassment, or violence occurred, NOT when it is beyond a reasonable doubt that the offense occurred (as in the Illinois state burden of proof).
 - Provide you and accused with final outcome in writing and allow either party to appeal the decision (more information below).

- **Schools must take immediate action to make you feel safe enough to continue their education,** including reasonable changes to housing, schedule, campus job, or extracurricular activities. These arrangements can occur BEFORE a formal disciplinary complaint, investigation, hearing, or decision and can CONTINUE after the entire disciplinary process.

- **Schools may not retaliate against someone filing a complaint and must protect them from retaliation from other sources.**

- **Schools can issue a no-contact directive** to prevent accused from contacting or approaching you. For more information, see the [UMatter page on No-Contact Directives](#). As of this writing, UChicago is implementing updates to the University policy on the terms of NCDs that are intended to support the needs of survivors. Briefly, the stipulations of NCDs are as follows:
 - The University may issue an NCD **prior to or in the absence of a disciplinary action** against the respondent – an NCD can serve as an interim measure during disciplinary proceedings, as a protection for the complainant after disciplinary proceedings, or as an accommodation requested by a student that does not require the filing of a formal complaint.
 - Depending on the particular case, the NCD may be **mutually binding** on both the complainant and respondent, or **exclusively binding** on the respondent.

- An NCD prohibits the specified parties from **verbal and virtual contact**, as well as contact through a third party. Although an NCD does not necessarily prohibit the specified parties from being in the same place, the University may require that a respondent leave the presence of the complainant or implement **residence and class arrangements** to prevent physical contact between the parties.
 - You can call the SAdoC (1-773-834-HELP) or the Deputy Title IX Coordinator for Students (773-702-0438) with any additional questions about NCDs.
- **Schools are prohibited from encouraging or allowing alternative ways of “working things out” and “mediating” between you and the accused.** For instance, bringing the complainant and respondent to an informal conversation is a violation of Title IX.
 - **Schools cannot discourage survivors from remaining on campus and accessing every available educational opportunity and program.** In other words, they can’t force a survivor to take a leave of absence or quit a class, club, or team.

If you suspect that your Title IX rights have been violated, we can put you in contact with lawyers who can help you file a formal complaint with the Office of Civil Rights at the US Department of Education.

You have 180 days from the occurrence of the civil rights violation to file this complaint. The Office of Civil Rights only has an obligation to investigate your complaint if it is filed within this time period. If you report more 180 days from the violation (because, for instance, you did not know that your rights were violated), you may complete a waiver. The Office of Civil Rights, however, is not obligated to investigate a complaint submitted after 180 days from the civil rights infraction.

In a complaint, it is not possible to seek monetary recompense; instead, the aim is to subject the school to higher scrutiny by the Department of Education. A successful complaint entails the Office of Civil Rights creating a plan for the school to follow, along with a closer examination of the institution’s practices.

UChicago’s Title IX Contacts: to raise concerns or file a complaint under Title IX or UChi’s Policy on Unlawful Discrimination & Sexual Misconduct

Title IX Coordinator

Bridget Collier

Associate Provost, Affirmative

Action Officer and ADA Coordinator

Edward H. Levi Hall, 510

5801 South Ellis Avenue

bcollier@uchicago.edu

773-702-5671

Deputy Title IX Coordinator for Students

Megan Heckel-Greco

Associate Director, Office for Sexual

Misconduct Prevention and Support

Student Disability Services, 112

5501 South Ellis Avenue

mheckel@uchicago.edu

773-702-8251

For more information about your rights under Title IX:

- [Know Your IX](#) is an outgrowth of the nationwide movement to provide resources for survivors – and make universities accountable for their treatment of survivors of sexual violence perpetrated on their campuses. They're great for a quick self-education on your rights (and we drew from it generously in our description of your rights).
- [Not Alone](#) is a US government website with various resources, including information on your civil rights.
- [Document repository](#) from the Department of Education and the Office of Civil Rights
- [Podcast](#) on using Title IX to address sexual violence

We urge you to contact the Sexual Assault Dean-on-Call (SADoC) as soon as possible after experiencing sexual violence (1-773-834-HELP). The SADoC is a great source of information and is your ally throughout disciplinary proceedings. They can:

- Connect you with on- and off-campus resources, including:
 - Medical care
 - Counseling and emotional support, for both you and loved ones
 - Referring complainants of sexual harassment to an Unlawful Harassment Complaint Advisor
 - Legal advocacy
- Adjust living arrangements on campus
- Help you manage academic obligations
- Provide medical and legal advocacy by
 - Reporting the incident to the Dean of Students
 - Accompanying you to the emergency room and helping you file a police report and/or negotiate medical bills

Disciplinary proceedings at UChicago (updated to reflect policy change in effect July 2014):

If the incident involves UChicago students, employees, faculty members, or other academic

appointees (RA, lecturer, librarian, etc) and you would like to pursue disciplinary options, here is what to expect from the key players. Formally, you are described as a “complainant” and the accused/offender/abuser the “respondent” or “accused.”

You may choose to initiate and/or participate in a University investigation and disciplinary process in addition to, rather than instead of, a law enforcement investigation. If it is in your best interest for self-care, you can postpone proceedings until whenever you feel ready to enact them – even until after you have graduated or are no longer at the University. The Student Manual explicitly states that there is no statute of limitations to these proceedings; as long as both the complainant and respondent were both students at the University at the time of the incident(s), the complainant has a right to initiate disciplinary action. However, it is important to keep in mind that after your assailant has graduated, the scope of consequences the University can take on your behalf is limited to revoking the respondent’s degree. Also, if your assailant is no longer a student when you initiate disciplinary action, the University cannot compel them to respond to charges.

Who could access and/or share information about my case? *Privacy is not the same as confidentiality*

- ***Private*** information cannot be disclosed to another party without your consent under any circumstances. **Student Counseling is the only party that will keep any information you disclose to them private**, in that they will not share any information with other University personnel without your consent. The only exception to this is if there exists a threat of harm to yourself or others.
- ***Confidential*** information is anonymous (no name or identifying information is included) but may be disclosed without your consent to University personnel under need-to-know circumstances. **Information you share with any UChicago administration member other than SCC counselors is confidential, but not private.** Under the Clery Act, representatives of the University, which includes the administration, are obligated to protect and inform the student body by providing information about incidents of sexual violence on campus.

Steps to the UChicago disciplinary process:

It is important to note that each player in the disciplinary process has their own specific agenda, which will be reflected in their behavior and language through the process. It is important to keep this in mind as you interact with each individual involved; do not be discouraged or threatened by their tone, language, or behavior.

1. **Reach out to the Sexual Assault Dean-on-Call**, who will begin contacting your Dean of Students. *Please keep in mind: Once you talk to the SADOc, they are required to report the incident* for Clery Act compliance (i.e., requirements on accurate reporting of sexual violence statistics) regardless of whether you want them to or whether you want to continue with disciplinary proceedings. Whether or not you choose to proceed with disciplinary proceedings, **any information you disclose to the SADOc is confidential but not private. This means that the SADOc will keep any information that you disclose anonymous, but they do not need your consent to share this anonymous information with university personnel to continue with disciplinary proceedings.**

**Keep in mind* the Sexual Assault Dean-on-Call's agenda: the SADOc aims to advocate and support you throughout the disciplinary process without passing judgment and according to your needs and agenda; above all parties, they are your ALLY.

2. **Your Dean of Students will then have a meeting with you to appraise you of the procedures involved and run through your (Title IX) rights.**

**Keep in mind* the Dean of Students' agenda: the Dean of Students' priority is to initiate, proceed, and complete a disciplinary investigation with the obligation to protect the student body as a whole. Consequently, they do not act as an advocate for you or the respondent. They merely provide all parties involved equal access to information, resources, and validation. They will act as a supervisor to the entire process, but will not use the language of "victim," "survivor," or "perpetrator" (or variants thereof) as no adjudication process has taken place nor substantiated the occurrence.

3. Once you request a formal investigation, the **Unlawful Harassment Panel** will be assembled to determine whether enough evidence exists to found your complaint. You and the respondent will provide written statements outlining their knowledge of the events in question, and may be interviewed by panel members. These materials and the proceedings will be kept confidential. The panel is made up of 3 faculty members drawn from a pool of candidates who have been appointed by the Provost and Student Ombudsperson to serve on the Panel. These individuals are required to undergo ongoing training on issues related to sexual assault, dating & domestic violence, and stalking, as well as on how to conduct an investigation and hearing. A list of current panel members can be found [here](#).

A Committee Chair will be present to ensure that proceedings adhere to policy guidelines. They may ask questions and be involved in the Panel's deliberation but have

no voting power.

You will be allowed to bring a “support person”: a friend, family member, loved one, or the SADoC. This person is there to provide support, not to act as an advocate or participant in the proceedings. You may bring a lawyer as your support person, but the General Counsel at UChicago will need to be notified in advance. Your support person may not speak at the meeting itself, even if this person is a lawyer. The respondent is also entitled to a support person, who must adhere to the same rules. If you or the respondent does not have their own support person to be present at the hearing, one can be provided.

During the disciplinary hearings, you (the complainant) and the respondent are typically present in the same room, sitting apart from each other. You and the respondent are not allowed to address each other directly, and a Committee Chair will mediate each of your contributions to the hearing. *You have the option of explicitly requesting not to be in the same room as the respondent while contributing to the hearing (the respondent can make the same request), in which case a phone will be used.*

You may cry. You may be emotional. Or you may be calm and composed. Remember that you are there to tell your story and have the truth be heard. Nobody, and no outcome, can invalidate the courage this takes and the empowerment that you may feel by voicing your experience.

4. **The Panel will determine whether the complaint has merit, does not have merit, or whether merit cannot be established from the available facts.** If it finds the complaint to have merit, it will relay its finding to the Provost, who will place disciplinary sanctions on the guilty respondent. Sanctions are diverse in kind and severity; they may include a warning, disciplinary probation, loss of privileges, suspension, expulsion, or revocation of degree. If the Panel finds that the complaint does not have merit or if it cannot determine whether the complaint has merit from the available facts, they will dismiss the complaint.
5. **You will be informed of the *determination* of the proceedings – whether the respondent is found guilty, not guilty, or no finding (not enough evidence, based on preponderance of evidence, exists to determine guilt). You are entitled to know only as much information about the *outcome* of the proceedings – the respondent’s “punishment” (warning, suspension, etc) – as to make you feel safe on campus.**
 - You are not permitted to know any specifics about the proceedings’ outcome that would be documented on the respondent’s academic record. For example, if the respondent were suspended for two academic quarters, you (and only you) would

be assured that there would be no reason to see the respondent on campus for the next two quarters. But you would be given no specifics about the hearing's decision beyond that. You are allowed to divulge this information, but are NOT allowed to divulge the details or existence of the disciplinary proceedings themselves (as this would violate the respondent's FERPA rights).

- More precisely, the DOE makes it clear that when FERPA and IX intersect, "FERPA permits a school to disclose to the harassed student information about the sanction imposed upon a student who was found to have engaged in harassment when the sanction directly relates to the harassed student. This includes an order that the harasser stay away from the harassed student, or that the harasser is prohibited from attending school for a period of time, or transferred to other classes or another residence hall" (p. 13 of the 2011 [Dear Colleague Letter](#)). Be sure to consult with your lawyers about what you can find out about the measures the school has taken to ensure your safety under this legislation.

6. **Both you and the respondent may appeal the hearing within 15 days of outcome notification** on the grounds that 1) prescribed procedures were not followed or 2) new information becomes available that was previously unavailable to the committee but that bears significantly in the appealing party's favor or (3) the sanction is disproportionate to the violation. Retaliation of any sort would constitute a violation of Title IX.

Investigations should take no more than 60 calendar days, though delays are possible if the committee believes the case is complex or is waiting on additional evidence (e.g., police reports, though this should only take 3-10 days). However, **the goal of the administrators should be to act expeditiously.**

For more information about the UChicago disciplinary procedure:

- UChicago [Sexual Assault Policy](#)
- Overview from the [Student Manual](#)
- UChicago [Disciplinary & Legal Options](#)

Find and Receive Care

What resources and sources of support are available to you.

The research and outreach that needs to be done to obtain support services can seem like an overwhelming project, but you do not have to do it all alone. These resources are appropriate for survivors of all genders, sexual orientations, religious or spiritual orientations, and ethnicities (the one potential exception being Student Counseling Services' support group, which has so far been a female group and which we cannot promise will be otherwise in the near future). If their services do not meet your needs they can refer you to an organization that can.

Emotional Support

On campus: Sexual Assault Dean-on-Call, short-term counseling, peer support, self-care resources

- No matter your situation, we urge you to contact the **Sexual Assault Dean-on-Call** (1-773-834-HELP). They can help you find emotional support and get counseling, getting medical care, preserve evidence, file a police report, manage academic obligations, adjust living arrangements, and refer sexual harassment complaints to the Unlawful Harassment Complaint Advisor. More information is provided on their [site](#).
- The **Phoenix Survivors Alliance** holds weekly meetings to provide a safe, informal space for survivors to seek support and information from fellow survivors and informed allies. We welcome all survivors who can make use of our services, and strive to provide a safe space for individuals of all backgrounds, experiences, genders, and identities through conducting our own research and encouraging feedback from our members. For more information on meetings, contact us via email at contactphoenixsa@gmail.com.
- **The Clothesline Project** is a campus-wide collaboration in which survivors can anonymously display their stories on shirts to foster visibility and awareness in the UChicago community. Survivors may submit a story for an artist to depict or they may create the shirt themselves.
- **Student Counseling Services** offers a 10-week support group that provides acute, short-term care to (historically, female-bodied) student survivors. SCS intends for this support group to be mindful and inclusive of survivors of all sexual orientations,

lifestyles, and ethnicities. If you are interested in the support group, many Phoenix members would be happy to offer their input on applying to and participating in the group. If you feel as though your needs or identity falls outside the purview of SCS's group, SCS encourages you to reach out to them to ascertain what services exist which may better fit your needs. More information is also available [here](#).

- a. SCS also leads workshops and events that impart practical skills and strategies for managing stress (see calendar on the bottom of their [site](#)). The techniques that these workshops discuss are specifically directed toward the daily stresses that commonly plague UChicago students, but they may nonetheless be helpful in managing anxiety and depression that surviving assault can cause.
 - b. SCS has a therapist on-call, as well: 773-702-3625. They also offer emergency walk-in hours from 8:30 A.M to 5:00 P.M.
- A multitude of resources exist on campus to provide **spiritual and religious support** to survivors of diverse faiths. For more information, see [here](#).

Off-campus: long-term counseling, support groups, medical/legal advocacy

- For long-term care, a number of local therapists accept UChicago student insurance (USHIP). You will need to obtain a referral from the **Student Counseling Services** (SCS); the process is explained here: <http://counseling.uchicago.edu/page/referrals>. SCS is quite helpful in suggesting what therapists may suit your unique needs.
Cost: On USHIP student health insurance, a \$200 deductible, after which each session is discounted by 90% (often resulting in a charge of \$10 per session).
- **Chicago Rape Crisis Hotline** (1-888-293-2080) is a 24-hour hotline that provides *free* and confidential emotional support to all survivors.
- **Resilience**, the **YWCA**, and **Life Span** employ counselors who are specially trained to provide psychological support to survivors. These organizations offer counseling and support groups. More information and additional resources are available here:
 - [Porchlight Counseling Services](#) for college survivors.
 - [Resilience](#): 312-443-9603
 - [YWCA of Chicago](#): 312-733-2102
 - [Life Span](#) (suicide hotline): 312-408-1210
 - [Project Unbreakable](#) is an online blog that raises awareness of the issues surrounding sexual violence and encourages the healing and empowerment of survivors through art and community.

Emergency Housing Options

You deserve to live without fear of further violence. If you do not feel safe where you are currently living, services exist to make your dwelling more secure or provide temporary housing.

For those in on-campus housing: It is not clear that there are set procedures in place for moving you or your assailant from on-campus housing. Talk to a SADOc about how to proceed.

For those in off-campus housing: The **Safe Homes Act** applies to survivors of domestic or sexual violence living in non-public housing. Under this Act, you can request an emergency lock change or terminate a lease early with certain conditions:

- **If you are a survivor of domestic violence:**
 - You will be required to provide notification to your landlord or agent that there is a “credible imminent threat” of future domestic or sexual violence 3 days before or after leaving the apartment
 - No other documentation is necessary – no need for police reports or court orders. All that is necessary is a statement of your fear of future harm.
 - After providing notice, you cannot be held responsible for rent due after you vacate the premises; your landlord cannot keep the security deposit or any interest. However, you must remove all belongings and return your keys.

- **If you are a survivor of sexual violence, there are some additional protections:**
 - You do not need credible imminent threat
 - You do need to provide notification within 60 days of the sexual assault (or ASAP) in writing 3 days before or after leaving the apartment and evidence consisting of one of the following:
 - A police report
 - Medical records
 - Court records
 - A statement from a survivor service organization
 - After providing notification, you’re entitled to the same rights as a survivor of domestic violence.

Additional information, including how to change locks, can be found [here](#).

Some Parting Words.

“The world breaks everyone, then some become strong at the broken places.”

Sexual violence can shake apart our conceptions of a just and safe world, cast shadows on those we’ve allowed close to us, and cause us to doubt our own integrity or even sanity. Caring for oneself after such an experience can seem an insurmountable project, demanding a great deal of patience, trust, and self-love that may feel beyond reach. Some days may feel exhaustingly long and difficult to endure; some days may pass by quickly in a haze of grief or rage. Some days test our conviction in ourselves and our experiences, making us feel unbearably alone. Some days we feel great anger at the violation we’ve survived, and at the further disrespect that we and our fellow survivors may face in other sectors of society.

Yet one can find kindness, empathy, and love in the most unexpected places. One can cultivate hope and strength inside oneself in ways one never expected. You are not broken. You are not sullied or damaged. And most importantly, you are not alone. There are resources and sources of support that you can draw from as you need, in your own time, and according to your own agenda.

Please be kind, patient, and loving to yourself while you rediscover your own integrity and resiliency. You may not be able to turn back time – you may not even want to. But you are still *you* – nobody can take that away.

“In the depths of winter, I finally learned that within me there lay an invincible summer.”

With love and the spirit of fellowship,

Your friends at PSA.