

The Survivors Guide:

**Rights and Options for Survivors of Dating
Violence, Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, and
Stalking**



The University of Pittsburgh values the safety and health of all members of the Pitt community and seeks to foster an environment in which its students and employees treat others with respect, civility, and dignity. University policy prohibits any behavior that involves dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking of another person. These crimes can be traumatizing, and it is important to know there are University and community resources available to support all Pitt community members. There is no one correct response to these crimes – simply different options to access support and different reporting options. Your immediate and long-term safety is what is most important, and the resources and options described below may be helpful as you decide what next steps are a good fit for you.

This document contains a large amount of information on sensitive topics and may be overwhelming to digest all at once. Please use the quick links below to find the specific information you are looking for.

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WHERE DO I START?

After experiencing a traumatic incident, you may be feeling overwhelmed and not sure what to do. Before making any decisions, you may want more information about what resources and services are available to you or to talk with someone confidentially as you decide what next steps are best for you. All the confidential resources listed below are available for counseling, information, and support.

1. [University Counseling Services](#): 814-269-7119 (On-Campus resource for students)
2. [Life Solutions](#): 1-866-647-3432 (On-Campus resource for employees)
3. [Cambria County Crisis](#): 1-877-268-9463 (Off-Campus resource for students and employees)
4. [Victim's Services of Johnstown](#): 814-288-4961 (Off-Campus resource for students and employees)
5. [Women's Help Center](#), 1-866-644-2882 (Off-Campus resource for students and employees)
6. [Suicide & Crisis Lifeline](#): Dial 988 (Off-Campus resource for students and employees)

WHAT TO DO IF YOU EXPERIENCE ONE OF THESE CRIMES

(Dating Violence, Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, or Stalking)

Your immediate safety is a top priority. If you are in immediate danger, call Pitt-Johnstown Police at 814-269-7005 or call 911. If possible, as quickly as you can, find a safe place away from the perpetrator or any other potential danger. Once you are out of danger, here are a few next steps to consider:

1. You are encouraged to seek immediate medical attention for your own physical health and to preserve all physical evidence. You can receive treatment at any medical facility; hospital emergency departments are in the best position to treat you and collect physical evidence. The following locations have specially trained staff, sexual assault nurse examiners (SANE), to help survivors of sexual assault and/or can offer a sexual assault forensic exam (SAFE):

Conemaugh Memorial Medical Center
Emergency Room
1086 Franklin Street
Johnstown, PA 15905
814-534-9000

Medical facilities have an obligation to notify law enforcement of any injuries they treat that are the result of a crime. Survivors can remain anonymous to police and this notification does not obligate a survivor to speak to law enforcement, file a police report, or press charges against a perpetrator.

2. You may contact the [Office of Civil Rights and Title IX](#) at 412-648-7860 OR the Pitt Johnstown Title IX Liaison at 814-269-7113 (during University business hours: 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m., Monday through Friday). This office can assist with accommodations, if requested and reasonably available. This office also can connect you with other resources and services available to you on and off campus. You also may file a report online through the [Pitt Concern Connection](#).
3. Students may contact Student Health and Counseling Services at 814-269-7119 (8:30 a.m.-5 p.m., Monday through Friday). Counselors will advise survivors of reporting options, can guide students through the process of receiving a medical exam, and will assist survivors in notifying campus or local police authorities if desired.
4. Employees may contact Life Solutions at 1-866-647-3432. [Life Solutions](#) is the University of Pittsburgh's Faculty and Staff Assistance Program that provides a broad range of services to assist University employees and their household members to balance work and the stresses of daily life. Life Solutions offers personalized care services, 24-hour support, online resources and tools, and more, all at no cost to you.
5. You have the right to notify the proper law enforcement agency of the crime, to be assisted in notifying law enforcement authorities by university officials if you so choose, and to decline to notify such authorities. You are strongly encouraged to contact the Pitt-Johnstown Police at 814-269-7113 or call 911 to report the situation. The police can assist with transportation to a facility for a SAFE exam if you so choose.

You have the right not to press charges if you call the police. However, after reviewing the report, Pitt Police may determine that a serious or ongoing threat to the campus community exists and may be required to issue a campus crime alert. Crime alerts do not contain personally identifying information about the survivor.

Pitt-Johnstown Police are required to include crimes reported to the Pitt-Johnstown Police occurring within Pitt-Johnstown Police patrol jurisdiction in the daily crime and fire log. The daily log does not contain personally identifying information about the survivor.

There are community resources available 24/7 to assist survivors. Community resources include [Victim's Services of Johnstown](#): 814-288-4961 (answers 24 hours a day) and the [Women's Help Center](#), 1-866-644-2882 (answers 24 hours a day). Both groups provide assistance and guidance through the medical and/or legal process. Survivors who seek assistance from these organizations are not obligated to press charges against the perpetrator.

PRESERVING PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

In the aftermath of a traumatic incident, although it may not be at the forefront of your mind, the preservation of evidence is strongly encouraged. Even if you don't think you want to pursue a criminal or civil proceeding, preserving evidence keeps your options open in case you change your mind and also may assist you with obtaining a [Protection from Abuse or Protection from Sexual Violence and Intimidation order](#).

To preserve evidence, do not shower, douche, or change clothes or bedding before you seek medical attention. Also, if oral contact took place, do not brush your teeth, smoke, or eat. Optimally, evidence collection should occur within 72 hours of the assault and there are medical facilities in Pittsburgh that can assist you:

Conemaugh Memorial Medical Center
Emergency Room
1086 Franklin Street
Johnstown, PA 15905
814-534-9000

Conemaugh Memorial Medical Center is staffed with sexual assault nurse examiners, registered nurses who have completed specialized education and clinical preparation in the medical forensic care of the patient who has experienced sexual assault or abuse. Hospital emergency rooms are best equipped to collect physical evidence of a sexual assault. Your best source of immediate medical help is the nearest hospital emergency room. All hospitals are required by law to report to the police any injury that is the result of a crime. This does not obligate you to file formal charges. Completing a forensic exam does not require a survivor to talk to police or prosecute the perpetrator. Anyone who has experienced sexual assault can get a forensic medical exam at no cost to them. You may choose to have your insurance billed or to have [Pennsylvania's Victims Compensation Assistance Program](#) cover the costs.

Survivors of dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking should take steps to preserve other forms of evidence, including, but not limited to:

- Save unwashed clothing and/or sheets in a paper bag.
- Take screenshots of social media posts.
- Save text messages, emails, call logs, security camera footage, and other forms of electronic contact.
- Keep in mind if you decide to change phone numbers, information such as text messages may no longer be accessible. Save that information on another device.
- Ask friends/family to save text messages, emails, call logs, and other forms of electronic contact they received.
- Take photos of bruises and/or other injuries.
- Save and/or take photos of damaged property.

- Save any other evidence that may show a pattern of behavior or course of conduct.

ADDITIONAL COUNSELING, MEDICAL, AND OTHER SERVICES AND SUPPORT

Seeking emotional support in the aftermath of dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault, and/or stalking can be very important for recovery. Pitt Johnstown's **Counseling Services** offers specialized counseling services designed to assist students who have experienced sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, harassment, and stalking. The office also can assist with referrals to specialized counseling services off campus. Additional counseling resources may include [Victim's Services of Johnstown](#): 814-288-4961 or the [Women's Help Center](#): 1-866-644-2882.

Pitt Johnstown's **Health Services** provides ongoing medical treatment to students for any physical problems related to an assault. Health Services can assess for pregnancy risk; provide counseling about emergency contraception; test and treat for sexually transmitted infections; and assess, treat, and/or offer/give referrals for physical injuries. Health Services is located in G-4 Student Union, 814-269-7119.

Pitt students can contact their resident assistant, resident director, or other Residence Life staff member for support (available 24 hours a day). **Residence Life** staff are not confidential resources and have a duty to report disclosures of sexual misconduct to the Office of Civil Rights and Title IX. Residence Life staff can be reached at 814-269-7115.

International students may contact the **Office of International Services (OIS)** for questions or concerns regarding immigration and visa status. OIS can be reached at 412-624-7120 or OIS@pitt.edu.

Life Solutions is the University of Pittsburgh's Faculty and Staff Assistance Program that provides a broad range of services to assist University employees, including a 24/7 crisis contact and counseling services (1-866-647-3432).

Any member of the University community also may contact the **Office for Civil Rights and Title IX** at 412-648-7860 or titleixcoordinator@pitt.edu or the Pitt Johnstown Title IX Liaison at 814-269-7113 to report sexual misconduct or seek resources. Reports or concerns also may be submitted through the [Pitt Concern Connection](#).

PENNSYLVANIA CRIME VICTIMS INFORMATION

Under Pennsylvania Law, you have [rights as a survivor of a crime](#). The Pitt Police can assist you with understanding and accessing these rights and services, as well as assist you with obtaining a [protection from abuse \(PFA\) or protection from sexual violence and intimidation \(PSVI\) order](#). Pitt-Johnstown Police are available 24/7 by calling 814-269-7005 or in-person at the Campus Police Suite, Physical Plant Building, 300 Highfield Avenue.

The Pitt Police can assist with obtaining a Protection from Abuse orders (PFA) or Protection from Sexual Violence and Intimidation (PSVI) orders through the court system. If you have obtained a PFA or PSVI from another jurisdiction, provide a copy to the Pitt Police so they are aware the order is in place and can work with you to develop a safety plan while on campus.

WARNING SIGNS OF ABUSE

Dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking are not always easy to recognize. No survivor is ever to blame for being assaulted or abused. Below are some warning signs of potential abusive behavior:

- Being isolated from friends and family
- Watching what you say to avoid a “blow-up”
- Hiding bruises or injuries from family and friends
- Being afraid of your partner
- Being forced to do things that you don’t want to do
- Having your partner monitor where you go, what you do, and who you meet
- Having your partner demand to check your phone or email

Unhealthy relationships can escalate quickly. If you are not sure if you or someone you know is in an unhealthy situation, the [Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence](#) website has a brief [online questionnaire](#) to help identify unhealthy relationships, provides information on different types of abuse, and can direct you to local domestic violence programs throughout Pennsylvania.

These crimes can be traumatizing to survivors. Each person’s experience is unique and there are a wide range of emotions that a survivor may encounter. These emotions can change over time, and it may be helpful to address them with assistance of a counselor, a victim advocate, or a trusted friend or family member. Below are some ways these emotions may manifest themselves.

Possible physical effects may include:

- Pain and soreness
- Injuries, Nausea
- Vomiting
- Headaches
- Panic attacks
- Sleep pattern disturbances (insomnia/hypersomnia)
- Loss of appetite or change in eating habits (overeating or under-eating, etc.)

Possible psychological and/or emotional effects may include:

- Impaired memory
- Shock, Denial
- Irritability and anger
- Sadness and grief
- Social withdrawal
- Apathy (detachment, loss of caring)
- Hypervigilance (always on guard)
- Sleep disturbance (including nightmares)
- Flashbacks
- Difficulty concentrating
- Loss of trust in self or others
- Guilt, shame, or embarrassment
- Thoughts of suicide or death

- Diminished interest in activities
- Increased or decreased interest in sexual activity

ACCOMMODATIONS AND SUPPORTIVE MEASURES

The University is here to assist and support you after experiencing an incident. There are accommodations and supportive measures that are available to you, if those accommodations are requested and reasonably available. For more information and assistance with requesting any of these services, you can contact:

- Office of Civil Rights and Title IX (412-648-7860, 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m., Monday through Friday)
- Pitt Johnstown Title IX Liaison (814-269-7113, 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m., Monday through Friday)
- Office of Student Conduct (814-269-7133, 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m., Monday through Friday)
- Pitt-Johnstown Police (814-269-7005, available 24/7)
- Counseling Services (814-269-7119, 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m., Monday through Friday).
- Residence Life (814-269-7115, 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m., Monday through Friday)

Such measures or accommodations, if appropriate, may include, but are not limited to:

- Issuing a No Contact Order through the University
- Assistance with obtaining [legal protective orders \(Protection From Abuse \(PFA\) or Protection from Sexual Violence and Intimidation \(PSVI\)\)](#) through the court
- Changes in University-related class or work schedules or job assignments
- Changes in University-owned housing
- Restricting a person's access to certain University facilities or activities pending resolution of a matter
- Assistance with connecting to transportation services (temporary parking permits, etc.)
- Academic accommodations (retroactive withdraw, requests for deadline extensions, etc.)
- Assistance with contacting the appropriate police department
- Access to counseling and mental health services
- Access to and assistance with obtaining necessary medical services
- Assistance in contacting community resources
- Guidance and support with filing a report through the Office of Civil Rights and Title IX and/or through the criminal justice process

Upon receipt of a report of sexual harassment, dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking, whether the complainant (reporting party) decides to move forward with filing a formal complaint, the Office of Civil Rights and Title IX shall offer to the complainant supportive measures and facilitate the implementation of such supportive measures to protect the safety and well-being of the complainant. If a formal complaint is filed under the University's Title IX Policy, supportive measures will also be made available as appropriate to any involved party. The University will maintain as confidential any supportive measures provided to the parties, to the extent that maintaining such confidentiality would not impair the University's ability to provide the supportive measures.

REPORTING OPTIONS

Several options are available for you to report sexual misconduct, including dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking.

- You may file a complaint with the Office of Civil Rights and Title IX. This office generally oversees reporting and resolution of sexual misconduct against members of the University community, including faculty, staff, and students. You may contact the Office of Civil Rights and Title IX at titleixcoordinator@pitt.edu or 412-648-7860 OR the Pitt-Johnstown Title IX Liaison at 814-269-7113 during regular business hours: 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. The Office of Civil Rights and Title IX can assist with reporting to law enforcement, if requested. Individuals also may decline to notify law enforcement.
- You may file a report through the Pitt Concern Connection compliance.pitt.edu/make-a-report.
- You may file a criminal complaint by contacting the proper law enforcement agency. Both Pitt-Johnstown Police and Richland Township Police can assist with obtaining Protection from Abuse orders.
 - PITT-JOHNSTOWN POLICE: (Pitt Police can assist with notifying Township Police)
814-269-7005
Campus Police Suite
Physical Plant Building
300 Highfield Avenue
[PittSAFE app](#) (online reporting option, can be anonymous)
 - Richland Township Police
9-1-1
322 Schoolhouse Road
Johnstown, PA 15904
<https://cambria.crimewatchpa.com/richlandpd/17374/submit-tip> (online reporting option, can be anonymous)
- Although the University encourages complainants to make formal reports as outlined above, you may file an anonymous complaint using the Pitt Concern Connection compliance.pitt.edu/make-a-report or through the Rave Guardian app. Anonymous reports greatly limit the University's ability to respond to and investigate the report.

The University provides amnesty to students who report other Student Code of Conduct (Code) violations connected to sexual misconduct incidents. Amnesty ensures that survivors of sexual misconduct will not be charged with Code violations regarding liquor and/or drug law violations that are disclosed as part of a sexual misconduct report. Survivors do not need to proceed with any University process to receive amnesty.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The University has two policies covering sexual misconduct, the University Sexual Misconduct Policy (CS 20) and the University Title IX Policy (CS 27). Both policies include procedures for informal resolution (available with some exceptions) and formal complaint procedures. The informal resolution process does not involve any findings of responsibility, nor the imposition of sanctions. The formal process involves charging a respondent with a violation of university policy, an investigation, in certain cases a live hearing, a determination of responsibility, and, if found responsible, the imposition of sanctions. The formal process under both policies also has appeal procedures available to all parties, when certain criteria are met. The University uses the preponderance of evidence standard for determining responsibility, which means it is more likely than not that University policy has been violated.

In general, all parties have the right to:

- A prompt, fair, and impartial process from the initial investigation to the final result (completed within the timeframes laid out by University policy in a manner that is transparent, provides timely notice of meetings and equal access to information to both the complainant and the respondent, and conducted by officials without a conflict of interest or bias for either party that receive annual training on how to conduct an investigation and hearing process that protects the safety of survivors and promotes accountability).
- Have others present during any institutional disciplinary proceeding, including the opportunity to be accompanied to any related meeting or proceeding by an advisor of their choice.
- Notification, in writing, of the result of any institutional disciplinary proceeding from their report of dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking.
- The institution's procedures to appeal the results, if certain criteria are met.
- Be notified of any change to the results.
- Be notified when the result becomes final.

The University's full policies and procedures regarding reports of sexual harassment, dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking can be found at the following links:

Sexual Misconduct Policy (CS 20)

www.policy.pitt.edu/cs-20-sexual-misconduct-formerly-06-05-01

Title IX Policy (CS 27)

www.policy.pitt.edu/cs-27-title-ix-policy

RESOURCE CONTACT INFORMATION

If you are not sure where to start, [PA 211](#) is a great place to search for and get connected to many different resources in southwest Pennsylvania. You can search for services online or dial 2-1-1.

Below are different on-campus and community resources that are available to you, along with their website and contact information, where available. While this is not an exhaustive list, it is a good place to start.

Type of Resource	On-Campus	Off-Campus
Counseling and Mental Health Services	University Counseling Center 814-269-7119 G-4 Student Union Life Solutions , 1-866-647-3432, available 24/7 (Employees)	Cambria County Crisis : 1-877-268-9463 (students and employees) Suicide & Crisis Lifeline , Dial 988
Health Services	Health Services , 814-269-7110 (Students) G-10 Student Union	UPMC Hospitals , 412-647-8762/800-533-8762 Allegheny Health Network Hospitals , 412-362-8677
Victim Advocacy		Victim's Services of Johnstown : 814-288-4961 (students and employees) Women's Help Center , 1-866-644-2882 (students and employees)
Legal Assistance	Life Solutions , 1-866-647-3432, available 24/7 (Employees)	Online resources and information for survivors: ACBA Lawyer Referral Service ACLU https://www.palawhelp.org/issues/victims-of-crime https://palegalaid.net/find-legal-help
Visa and Immigration Assistance	Office of International Services , 412-624-7120 (Students) 708 William Pitt Union Mon-Fri, 8:30 AM – 5 PM ois@pitt.edu Human Resources , 412-624-7000 (Employees) 100 Craig Hall Mon-Fri, 8:30 AM – 5 PM	
Student Financial Aid	Financial Aid Office 814-269-7045/800-881-5544 114 Blackington Hall	Department of Education (Federal) Pennsylvania Department of Education