



Mayo Clinic College of Medicine and Science

**Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)  
Brochure**

Contact information for guide and for reporting:

Amy Boyer, Title IX Coordinator

Compliance Hotline: 888-721-5391

Compliance Intranet Site:

<https://intranet.mayo.edu/charlie/integrity-compliance-program/>

# Table of Contents:

## **Introduction**

## **Rights and Protections**

- 1. If You Have Experienced Sexual Misconduct**
- 2. Contact Information**

## **Policies, Procedures, and Confidentiality**

## **Resources and Support**

## **Prevention and Education**

- 1. Sexual Misconduct: Risk Reduction for Intimate Partner Violence, Stalking, Sexual Harassment, and Sexual Assault**
- 2. Reduce the Risk of Being Accused**
- 3. A Brief Summary of Title IX's Recent History**
- 4. When Does Title IX Apply?**

## **Conclusion**

## **Definitions**

# INTRODUCTION

The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) is a significant piece of U.S. federal legislation aimed at addressing and reducing violence against women. Initially signed into law in 1994, VAWA has been reauthorized several times to expand its protections and services. VAWA, as it pertains to higher education, mandates that colleges and universities take specific actions to address and prevent sexual violence on campus.

It can be a challenge to understand the complexity of Mayo Clinic College of Medicine and Science's Title-IX and VAWA-related policies and procedures. This handbook is designed to provide comprehensive information about the College's responsibility under Title IX and VAWA.

Additionally, this guide will:

- Provide you with specific resources available both on and off campus
- Provide you with details on available supportive measures
- Educate you on your right to an advisor and how they can assist you throughout the process
- Inform you of policy definitions that describe prohibited conduct
- Inform you of possible sanctions for policy violations
- Provide you with common questions and answers asked by parties (Complainants and Respondents)

# RIGHTS AND PROTECTIONS

If you are off campus and experiencing an emergency, call local police by dialing 911. You may also call the local non-emergency line in your location.

## IF YOU HAVE EXPERIENCED SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

- 1. Go to a safe location as soon as you are able.**
- 2. Seek immediate medical attention if you are injured, believe you may have been exposed to the risk of an STI/STD, or pregnancy.**
  - Medical Attention: Evidence collection should be completed within approximately 120 hours of an assault, but fluids, hair samples and DNA can be collected for a long time thereafter. Even if you have washed or bathed, evidence can often still be obtained. After 120 hours, it may still be helpful to have medical attention, even if you are not trying to obtain evidence of an assault. Sexual assault nurse examiners are trained in the collection of forensic evidence and can check for injuries and exposure to sexually transmitted infections and diseases. If you are still wearing any clothes worn during the incident, wear them to the hospital, but bring a change of clothes, as the hospital will keep the clothes you are wearing as evidence. If you have changed clothes, bring the ones you were wearing during the incident to the hospital in a clean paper (not plastic) bag or wrapped in a clean bedsheet. Leave sheets/towels at the scene of the incident. Police will collect them. Typically, police

will be called to the hospital to take custody of the forensic kit, but it is up to you whether you wish to speak with them or file a criminal complaint.

3. **Choose how to proceed.** You have options. You can: (1) do nothing until you are ready, (2) pursue resolution by MCCMS, and/or (3) initiate criminal proceedings, and/or 4) initiate a civil process against the perpetrator. You may pursue whichever combination of options is best for you.
  - If you pursue resolution by MCCMS, your options can include a formal response, informal resolution, and/or supportive measures.
  - If you wish to have an incident investigated and resolved by MCCMS, students should contact the Title IX Coordinator.
  - Employees should contact either Human Resources or the Title IX Coordinator.
  - MCCMS procedures will be explained and are summarized below.
  - Those who wish incidents to be handled criminally should contact the local Police Department who has jurisdiction over where the incident occurred and have the right to be assisted by MCCMS in doing so.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

For assistance, guidance, and reporting, please use the following contact details:

- **Compliance Hotline: 888-721-5391**
- **Compliance Intranet Site:** <https://intranet.mayo.edu/charlie/integrity-compliance-program/>
- **Title IX Coordinator:**
  - Amy Boyer
  - Title IX Coordinator
  - Office Phone: 507.284.4714
  - Cellular: 507.269.9873
  - Email: [Boyer.Amy@mayo.edu](mailto:Boyer.Amy@mayo.edu)

## POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Individuals affected by violence, including domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking, are encouraged to report incidents to the Title IX Coordinator or through the Compliance Hotline. Reports may be made in person, by regular mail, telephone, electronic mail, anonymously, or by any other means that results in the Title IX Coordinator receiving the person's report.

In-person reports must be made during normal business hours, but reports can be made by regular mail, telephone, or electronic mail at any time, including outside normal business hours.

Individuals may make reports through the Compliance Hotline at 888-721-5391 or by e-mailing Compliance Hotline.

All reports will be handled with the utmost confidentiality and sensitivity, ensuring the safety and well-being of the affected individuals.

- **Confidentiality:** To make informed choices, all parties should be aware of confidentiality and privacy considerations, as well as institutional mandatory reporting requirements. Confidential Reporting: If a Complainant wishes to keep the details of an incident confidential, they should speak with campus mental health counselors and/or health service providers. Campus counselors are available to help on an emergency basis. Their service is free of charge.

***Policies and procedures:***

Mayo Clinic and MCCMS has established policies and procedures to address incidents of violence and ensure compliance with VAWA. These policies include:

*Arizona and Minnesota campuses:*

- [Title IX sex discrimination and sex-based harassment policy](#) (effective for all events on or after August 1, 2024, excluding Florida)
- [Title IX sex discrimination and sex-based harassment procedure](#) (effective for all events on or after August 1, 2024, excluding Florida)

*Florida campus:*

- [Title IX sexual harassment policy](#) (effective for events prior to August 1, 2024, or ongoing in Florida)
- [Title IX sexual harassment complaint resolution procedure](#) (effective for events prior to August 1, 2024, or ongoing in **Florida**)

*All campuses:*

- [Grievance procedure](#)
- [Non-discrimination procedure](#)
- [Sexual and other harassment prevention policy](#)
- [Warning, Probation, Dismissal, and Appeals Policy](#)
- [Warning, Probation, Dismissal, and Appeals Procedure](#)

For detailed information on these policies, please utilize the links to access the official policy documents or contact the **Title IX Coordinator:**

Amy Boyer  
Title IX Coordinator  
Office Phone: 507.284.4714  
Cellular: 507.269.9873  
Email: [Boyer.Amy@mayo.edu](mailto:Boyer.Amy@mayo.edu)

## RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

MCCMS offers a variety of resources and support services for individuals affected by, or “bystanders” who witness, violence. These include:

- Student Services Title IX Intranet Site: <https://intranet.mayo.edu/charlie/student-services/about/policy-management/title-ix/>
- Counseling Services: [Mental Health Counselors – Student Services \(mayo.edu\)](#)
- Employee, Student, and Staff Resources:
  - [Arizona](#)
  - [Florida](#)
  - [Rochester](#)
  - [NW Wisconsin](#)
  - [SW Wisconsin](#)
  - [SE Minnesota](#)
- [MCCMS Ombuds Services](#)

For more information on available resources, please contact the **Title IX Coordinator**:

Amy Boyer  
Title IX Coordinator  
Office Phone: 507.284.4714  
Cellular: 507.269.9873  
Email: [Boyer.Amy@mayo.edu](mailto:Boyer.Amy@mayo.edu)

## PREVENTION AND EDUCATION

We are committed to preventing violence through education and awareness programs. Information aimed to educate the community on recognizing signs of abuse, understanding consent, and promoting healthy relationships is available on the Mayo Clinic intranet only:

- [Mental Health Counselors – Student Services](#)

## SEXUAL MISCONDUCT: RISK REDUCTION FOR INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE, STALKING, SEXUAL HARASSMENT, AND SEXUAL ASSAULT

While victim-blaming is never appropriate and MCCMS fully recognizes that only those who commit sexual offenses are responsible for their actions, MCCMS provides the suggestions that follow to help members of the campus community reduce their risk of being victimized and their risk of committing sexual offenses.

### REDUCING THE RISK OF VICTIMIZATION

- Make any limits and/or boundaries you may have known as early as possible.
- Tell a sexual aggressor, “no” as clearly and firmly as possible.

- Remove yourself, if possible, from an aggressor’s physical presence.
- Reach out for help, either from someone who is physically nearby or by calling someone. Bystanders around you may be waiting for a signal that you need help.
- Take affirmative responsibility for your alcohol and/or drug consumption, understanding that alcohol and drugs can increase your vulnerability to sexual victimization.
- Look out for your friends and ask them to look out for you. Respect them, and ask them to respect you, but be willing to challenge each other about high-risk choices.

## **REDUCE THE RISK OF BEING ACCUSED OF A SEX OFFENSE**

- Show your potential partner respect if you are in a position of initiating sexual behavior.
- If they say “no,” accept it and don’t push. If you want a yes, ask for it, and don’t proceed without clear permission.
- Communicate your intentions to your potential sexual partner clearly and give that person a chance to share their intentions and/or boundaries with you.
- Respect personal boundaries. If you are unsure what’s okay in any interaction, ask.
- Avoid ambiguity. Just ask. Don’t make assumptions about consent, about whether someone is attracted to you, how far you can go with that person, or if the individual is physically and mentally able to consent. If you have questions or are unclear, you don’t have consent.
- Don’t take advantage of the fact that someone may be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, even if that person chose to become that way. Their loss of control does not put you in control.
- Be on the lookout for mixed messages. That should be a clear indication to stop and talk about what your potential partner wants or doesn’t want to happen. They may be undecided about how far to go with you, or you may have misread a previous signal.
- Respect the timeline for sexual behaviors with which others are comfortable and understand that everyone is entitled to change their minds.
- Recognize that even if you don’t think you are intimidating in any way, your potential partner may be intimidated by or fearful of you, perhaps because of your sex, physical size, or a position of power or authority you may hold.
- Do not assume that someone’s silence or passivity is an indication of consent. Pay attention to both verbal and non-verbal signals to avoid misreading intentions.
- Understand that consent to one type of sexual behavior does not automatically grant you consent to other types of sexual behaviors. If you are unsure, stop and ask.
- If your partner indicates a need to stop, or withdraws consent, respect them. Immediately.
- If you’ve had consent with your partner previously, still check in with them. Just because something was okay with them before doesn’t mean it will be okay in the future.

## **A BRIEF SUMMARY OF TITLE IX’S RECENT HISTORY**

In 2011, the Department of Education (ED) perceived that colleges needed to be more victim-centered in addressing sexual violence and should have more transparent and accessible policies and procedures for addressing complaints. At that time, ED issued a set of guidelines for colleges under Title IX in what is known as *the Dear Colleague Letter*. That letter resulted in

investigation-centered approaches that were trauma-informed, confidential, and relatively informal. Almost immediately, accused students and employees began to sue colleges for violations of their due process rights. By 2017, ED took a different perspective and withdrew *the 2011 Dear Colleague Letter* while also announcing that new Title IX regulations were needed to better safeguard the due process rights of accused individuals. The regulatory process took two years, with new regulations published in May 2020 that took effect on August 14, 2020. The 2020 Title IX regulations required all colleges to revise or rewrite their policies and procedures for addressing sex offenses, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. MCCMS has worked diligently to ensure that its newly revised policies and procedures are now compliant with these regulations. This was not an easy process. The regulations include fifteen pages of new requirements, and more than 2000 pages of explanation of the provisions within those fifteen pages. They are complex and legalistic.

**To summarize:**

- Title IX protects students and employees who are impacted by sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. When these behaviors occur, and a formal complaint is made, MCCMS is obligated to address and remedy the complaint to ensure that no one is denied effective access to the educational program or activities of the MCCMS.
- Colleges have jurisdiction requirements that they must follow to determine whether a complaint falls within Title IX or is to be addressed within other MCCMS policies and procedures.
- Complainants are well-protected by the regulations in terms of supportive measures that are offered by institutions to try to address the impact of sex offenses.
- Complainants and Respondents are each entitled to an Advisor of their choosing (who can be an attorney) throughout the resolution process, and MCCMS can provide a non-attorney Advisor to each party, if needed.
- The regulations have created options for informal resolution that were not available before 2020.
- To protect Respondents' due process rights, institutions are required to use a formal grievance process for certain types of allegations. That formal process includes an investigation, a live hearing, questioning of the parties through their Advisors, a determination by an objective Decision-maker, and an appeal.

**WHEN DOES TITLE IX APPLY?**

Title IX only applies when MCCMS has jurisdiction over the complaint. This happens when the Complainant is participating in (or attempting to participate) in the College's educational program or activities, AND the Respondent is a student or employee of MCCMS/Mayo Clinic, AND the behavior occurred within the College's control in the United States (meaning not on private property, outside the scope of the educational program, etc.). If it is unclear whether Title IX applies to your situation, contact the Title IX Coordinator for additional assistance. If Title IX does not apply to your situation, the conduct may still be addressable under other MCCMS policies.

## CONCLUSION

MCCMS is dedicated to fostering a safe and inclusive environment for all members of the community. We encourage anyone affected by violence to seek help and utilize the resources available. Together, we can work towards eliminating violence and promoting a culture of respect and support.

For any further assistance or information, please contact:

- **Compliance Hotline: 888-721-5391**
- **Compliance Intranet Site: <https://intranet.mayo.edu/charlie/integrity-compliance-program/>**
- **Title IX Coordinator:**

Amy Boyer  
Title IX Coordinator  
Office Phone: 507.284.4714  
Cellular: 507.269.9873  
Email: [Boyer.Amy@mayo.edu](mailto:Boyer.Amy@mayo.edu)

You can find more information about Title IX and your rights at the U.S. Department of Education's Title IX and Sex Discrimination page at:

[https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/tix\\_dis.html](https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/tix_dis.html)

## DEFINITIONS

- **Dating Violence:** Violence committed by a person who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim. The existence of such a relationship will be determined based on the reporting party's statement and with consideration of the length of the relationship, the type of the relationship, and the frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship.
- **Domestic Violence:** Acts of violence committed by a current or former spouse or intimate partner of a victim, by a person with whom the victim shares a child in common, by a person who is cohabitating with or has cohabitated with the victim as a spouse or intimate partner, by a person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction in which the crime of violence occurred, or by any other person against an adult or youth victim who is protected from that person's acts under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction in which the crime of violence occurred.
- **Sexual Assault:** Any actual or attempted sexual contact with another person without that person's consent. As used in this policy, sexual contact includes intentional contact by the accused with the victim's genital area, groin, inner thigh, buttocks, or breasts, whether clothed or unclothed, or unlawfully coerced touching by the victim of another's genital area, groin, inner thigh, buttocks, or breasts, whether clothed or unclothed. Sexual Assault is a crime under Minnesota, Arizona, Florida, and Wisconsin law. See Minn. Stat. § 609.341 et seq.; A.R.S. § 13-1406 et seq.; Fla. Stat. § 794.005, et seq.; Wis. Stat. § 940.225. Sexual assault includes, but is not limited to, an offense that meets any of the following definitions:
  - Fondling: The touching of the private body parts (including the genital area, groin, inner thigh, buttocks, or breast) of another person for the purpose of sexual gratification, without consent.
  - Incest: Sexual intercourse between persons who are related to each other within the degrees wherein marriage is prohibited by law.
  - Rape: The penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus with any body part or object, oral penetration by a sex organ of another person, or oral contact with the sex organ of another person, without consent.
  - Statutory rape: Sexual intercourse with a person who is under the statutory age of consent.
- **Sexual Harassment:** Conduct on the basis of sex that constitutes Quid Pro Quo Sexual Harassment, Hostile Environment Sexual Harassment, Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, or Stalking.
- **Stalking:** Engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to fear for their safety or the safety of others; or suffer substantial emotional distress.