



WILLIAM JAMES
COLLEGE

Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)



Introduction

This guide explains the Recipient resources and options available to individuals impacted by sex-based harassment including sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking.

Below, you will find valuable information and resources to familiarize yourself with options if you or another individual experiences sex-based misconduct.

In compliance with federal law (Title IX), William James College (WJC) has appointed a Title IX Coordinator whose role is to ensure that members of the community receive Title IX protections as guaranteed by law and institutional policy. Contact information for the WJC Title IX Coordinator and other key resources is listed in the next section.

This can be an overwhelming time for someone who has experienced sex-based misconduct. William James College regrets that you may have had such an experience. We want you to know that we are here for you and want to ensure you are empowered to make the choices that are best for your needs, without pressure and with respect for your autonomy and privacy.

Choose how to proceed. You have options. You can: (1) do nothing until you are ready, (2) pursue a WJC resolution, (3) initiate criminal proceedings, 4) initiate a civil process against the perpetrator, and/or 5) pursue healing options that do not require reporting to any official. You may pursue whichever combination of options is best for you. If you pursue a WJC resolution, your options can include an investigation, informal resolution, and/or supportive measures. Those options are summarized here and explained in detail in the [Equal Opportunity, Harassment, and Non-Discrimination Policy and Resolution Process for all Faculty, Students, Employees, and Third Parties](#). It is also available by scanning the QR code.



If You Have Experienced Sex-Based Misconduct

1. If you are off campus and experiencing an emergency, you can call local police by dialing 911. If you are on campus, or in the City of Newton you may call the Newton Police Department at (617) 796-2100.
2. Go to a safe location as soon as you are able.
3. Contact the Title IX Coordinator following for immediate assistance on campus or in the community:
Sandy Tente (*not confidential*)
Director of Talent, Training & Culture
William James College
One Wells Avenue, Newton, MA 02459
Office: (617) 327-6777, extension 1182
sandy_tente@williamjames.edu
Pronouns: She, Her, Hers
4. **Medical Attention:** Seek immediate medical attention if you are injured or believe you may have been exposed to the risk of an STI/STD or pregnancy.

Mass General Brigham (formerly Newton-Wellesley Hospital)
2014 Washington Street, Newton, MA 02462
(610) 243-6000

Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners are available to assist you at Mass General Brigham Emergency Room.



5. Evidence Preservation: Preserving evidence is critical to potential criminal prosecution and to obtaining restraining/protective orders, and it is particularly time sensitive. The following steps will help preserve evidence:

For instances of Sexual Assault:

- Seek forensic medical assistance at the nearest hospital, ideally within 120 hours of the incident (sooner is better).
- Avoid urinating, showering, bathing, washing hands or face, or douching, if possible, but evidence may still be collected even if you do.
- If oral sexual contact took place, refrain from smoking, eating, drinking, or brushing teeth.
- If clothes are changed, place soiled clothes in a paper bag (plastic destroys evidence) or a secure evidence container (if provided one by law enforcement).
- 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.
- Seeking medical treatment, in general, can be essential, even if it is not for the purpose of collecting forensic evidence.
- 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.

**For instances of Stalking/Dating Violence/
Domestic Violence/Sex-Based Harassment:**

- Evidence in the form of text and voice messages will be lost, in most cases, if the impacted individual changes their phone number.
- Make a secondary recording of any voice messages and/or save the audio files to a cloud server.
- Take screenshots and/or a video recording of any text messages or other electronic messages (e.g., Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook).
- Save copies of email and social media correspondence, including notifications related to account access alerts.
- Take time-stamped photographs of any physical evidence, including notes, gifts, etc., in place when possible.
- Save copies of any messages, including those showing any request for no further contact.
- Obtain copies of call logs showing the specific phone number being used rather than a saved contact name if possible.

Speaking With Someone at William James College

You can choose how to proceed. You have options. You can: (1) do nothing until you are ready, (2) pursue a WJC resolution, (3) initiate criminal proceedings, 4) initiate a civil process against the perpetrator, and/or 5) pursue healing options that do not require reporting to any official. You may pursue whichever combination of options is best for you. If you pursue a WJC resolution, your options can include an investigation, informal resolution, and/or supportive measures. Those options are summarized below and explained in detail in the [Equal Opportunity, Harassment, and Non-Discrimination Policy and Resolution Process for all Faculty, Students, Employees, and Third Parties](#), also available by scanning the QR code.



To make informed choices, all parties should be aware of confidentiality and privacy considerations, as well as institutional mandatory reporting requirements.

Confidential Reporting

A confidential resource is not required to share information about disclosures of sex-based harassment with the College/University. If an impacted individual would like the details of an incident to be kept confidential, they may speak with the following:

Sheldon G. Aaron

Assistant Professor, Counseling and Behavioral Health Department
sheldon_aaron@williamjames.edu

Joan Axelrod

Director of the Academic Resource Center
joan_axelrod@williamjames.edu

Dr. Robyn Bratica

Associate Professor, School Psychology Department
Director, MA/CAGS in School Psychology
robyn_bratica@williamjames.edu

Dr. Matthew Carper

Assistant Professor, Clinical Psychology Department
Associate Director, Center for Psychological Science
Consulting Psychologist, Youth and Family Psychotherapy Services
matthew_carper@williamjames.edu

Ellen Collins

Associate Director of Payroll and Benefits
ellen_collins@williamjames.edu

Amanda Omalek

Department Coordinator
Organizational and Leadership Psychology Department
amanda_omalek@williamjames.edu

Dr. Marta Pagan-Ortiz

Assistant Professor, Clinical Psychology
marta_paganortiz@williamjames.edu

Dr. Susan Powell

Professor, Counseling and Behavioral Health Department
susan_powell@williamjames.edu



Scan to see list of [confidential resources](#) online

In addition, impacted individuals may speak with professionals unaffiliated with Recipient without concern that Policy will require them to disclose information to the institution without permission:

- Licensed professional counselors and other medical providers who are not employed by William James College.
- Local rape crisis or domestic violence counselors such as the Boston Area Rape Crisis Center (BARCC). For assistance 24 hours a day, you may contact the BARCC hotline at 800-841-8371.
- Domestic violence resources such as Casa Myrna Vasquez. For assistance 24 hours a day, you may contact the SafeLink hotline, a Massachusetts statewide toll-free domestic violence hotline, at 877-785-2020.
- Local or state assistance agencies
- Clergy/Chaplains
- Attorneys

Mandated Reporting

All employees not designated as confidential above are mandated reporters. This means they are required to make disclosures about sex-based misconduct with the Title IX Coordinator. The Title IX Coordinator will reach out to offer support and the opportunity to initiate a complaint to the impacted party, but the impacted party can choose whether to respond or participate in any meeting or process.



Filing a Complaint at William James College

You may initiate a Complaint and Investigation with the Title IX Coordinator: An impacted party may initiate a Complaint with the Title IX Coordinator and request the Office open an investigation into the allegations. The assigned investigator(s) will interview parties and relevant witnesses, collect evidence, and write an investigation report OR provide a summary of evidence for the parties' review. After the investigation is complete, individual meetings with a Decision-maker will take place, and the Decision-maker will determine whether a violation of WJC policy occurred. This is a WJC administrative process, not a criminal or civil process.

Sandy Tente (*not confidential*)

Director of Talent, Training & Culture

William James College

One Wells Avenue, Newton, MA 02459

Office: (617) 327-6777, extension 1182

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Scan or click to see [Incident/Report Notice](#) online.



Contacting Law Enforcement

William James College will provide assistance contacting law enforcement, if the impacted individual wishes to do so. Contacting law enforcement is not required to receive support or to engage other options for resolution through the College/University. Local law enforcement can assist with evidence collection, evidence preservation, taking statements, pressing criminal charges, and obtaining protective or restraining orders. Local law enforcement agencies include:

Newton Police Department at (617) 796-2100.

WJC will also help facilitate contact with any other law enforcement agencies not listed above if those agencies would have jurisdiction over the alleged misconduct or could otherwise provide support for or information to the impacted individual.

If any impacted individual would prefer to have a support person accompany them to any meeting or interview with law enforcement, WJC will help find an appropriate resource at the college or in the local community.

If any impacted individual is interested in support with contacting law enforcement, they should contact:

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Resolution Options at Williams James College

There are a variety of procedural options for resolution of a complaint of sex-based misconduct at William James College:

Initiate a Complaint and Investigation with the Title IX Coordinator

An impacted party may initiate a Complaint with the Title IX Coordinator and request the Office open an investigation into the allegations. The assigned investigator(s) will interview parties and relevant witnesses, collect evidence, and write an investigation report OR provide a summary of evidence for the parties' review. After the investigation is complete, individual meetings with a Decision-maker will take place, and the Decision-maker will determine whether a violation of WJC policy occurred. This is a WJC administrative process, not a criminal or civil process.

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Informal Resolution

An impacted party may seek to resolve the allegations through an Informal Resolution, according to the parameters set out in Policy. All involved parties and the Title IX Coordinator must consent to Informal Resolution. Informal Resolution is a College/University administrative process, not a criminal or civil process. Recipient offers four approaches to Informal Resolution:



Supportive Resolution: WJC can provide individualized support measures designed to maintain or restore the impacted individual's access To WJC's education program and activities. See below for a list of possible supportive measures. For more information on supportive measures, see Policy or contact

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Educational Conversation: The Title IX Coordinator can resolve the allegations informally by having a conversation with the person alleged to have committed the policy violation to discuss the allegations and institutional expectations. If the impacted individual wishes to have this conversation, the Title IX Coordinator may accompany them, if desired.

Accepted Responsibility: The person alleged to have committed the policy violation is willing to accept responsibility for violating policy and accept sanctions, and the impacted individual and William James College accepts the resolution terms.

Alternative Resolution: Could include, but is not limited to mediation, shuttle negotiation, restorative practices, and facilitated dialogue as a means to reaching an agreed-upon resolution.

If the impacted party chooses to initiate an investigation, Informal Resolution is available at any time during an investigation (see above) prior to a final determination. No investigation is required, though, to have access to Informal Resolution options.

No Action Taken: Unless an imminent and serious threat to the health or safety of the impacted individual, or the wider College/University community exists, if the impacted individual declines to pursue College/University action to resolve the allegations of sex-based harassment, the College/University will provide support but not pursue resolution. The impacted individual may pursue any of the above resolutions at any time.


Impacted individuals may also seek criminal charges or civil remedies, outside the administrative resolution options at WJC, as outlined above. For more information on criminal charges or civil remedies please reach out to the Newton Police Department at (617) 796-2100.

Supportive Measures and Rights in the Resolution Process

Supportive Measures

William James College will assist any impacted party with accessing counseling, advocacy services, health care, legal support, student financial aid, and visa and immigration assistance, both on campus and in the community.

The Title IX Coordinator will discuss the availability of supportive measures after an alleged incident of discrimination, harassment, and/or retaliation. No complaint or investigation, either campus or criminal, needs to occur before this option is available. Such measures may include, but are not limited to:

- Referral to counseling, medical, and/or other healthcare services
 - Referral to the Employee Assistance Program
 - Referral to community-based service providers
 - Referral for visa and immigration assistance
 - Student financial aid counseling
 - Education to the institutional community or community subgroup(s)
 - Altering work arrangements for employees or student-employees
 - Safety planning
 - Transportation assistance
 - Implementing contact limitations (no contact orders) between the Parties
 - Academic support, extensions of deadlines, or other course/program-related adjustments
 - Trespass, Persona Non Grata (PNG), or Be-On-the-Lookout (BOLO) orders
 - Timely warnings
 - Stay away orders
 - Class schedule modifications, withdrawals, or leaves of absence
 - Any other actions deemed appropriate by the Administrator(s)
- 

Rights of Parties at William James College

Under the Policy and procedures, the parties have the right to:

- An equitable investigation and resolution of all credible allegations of prohibited discrimination, harassment, retaliation, and Other Prohibited Conduct, when reported in good faith to Recipient officials.
- Fundamentally fair resolution as defined in WJC's procedures.
- Timely written notice of all alleged violations, including the identity of the parties involved (if known), the specific misconduct being alleged, the date and location of the alleged misconduct (if known), the implicated Policies and procedures, and possible sanctions.
- Be able to select an Advisor of their choice to accompany and assist the party in all meetings and/or interviews associated with the Resolution Process.
- Have WJC policy and procedures followed without material deviation.
- Be treated with respect by WJC officials.
- Have WJC's officials respond promptly to alleged policy violations.
- Have WJC maintain supportive measures for as long as necessary, ensuring they remain confidential, provided confidentiality does not impair the institution's ability to provide the supportive measures or comply with the law.
- Preservation of confidentiality/privacy, to the extent possible and permitted by law.

These rights are some of the most important, but not the only rights provided by WJC



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Q Can an attorney be my Advisor?

A Yes. You have the right to an Advisor of your choice, which can include an attorney.

Q Will my parents/guardians find out about this incident?

A It depends. If you are a minor, members of the Title IX team may have certain mandatory reporting obligations, which may include notifying your parents/guardians of the incident. If you are not a minor, any incident disclosed to a Mandatory Reporter is a part of your Recipient education record, which is protected under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). This means that your education record cannot be shared with anyone with whom you have not given WJC permission to share, except in emergency situations.

Q Do I have to resolve this through a Resolution Process with WJC?

A No. You have options, as outlined above. The Title IX Coordinator can explain those options and answer your questions.

Q Is there a time limit for reporting?

A There are no time limits on initiating a complaint; however, the passage of time may impact your options.

Q Will I get in trouble if I was drinking underage during the incident?

A No. To encourage reporting and participation in the Resolution Process, Recipient offers parties and witnesses amnesty from minor policy violations, such as underage alcohol consumption or the use of illicit drugs, related to the incident.

Q What happens if the Respondent fails to comply with the sanctions after a Resolution Process?

A Failure to abide by the sanction(s)/action(s) imposed by the date specified, whether by refusal, neglect, or for any other reason, may result in additional sanction(s)/action(s), including suspension, expulsion, and/or termination.

Q What happens if the Respondent transfers, leaves, or resigns prior to the conclusion of the Resolution Process?

A It depends on the circumstances. The Title IX Coordinator can provide more information.

Q What if law enforcement is involved?

A WJC's action(s) or processes do not change, generally, because there are civil or criminal charges involving the underlying incident(s). WJC may undertake a short delay in its investigation if circumstances require.





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