



TITLE IX AND VAWA AT MONTGOMERY COLLEGE

A Resource Guide on Title IX and
the Violence Against Women Act



MONTGOMERY COLLEGE

MC MONTGOMERY
COLLEGE





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INTRODUCTION

This guide is intended to help explain the College’s responsibilities under Title IX, the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), and the College’s Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedure (31001-CP). Additionally, this guide will:

- provide specific resources available both on and off campus
- provide details on available supportive measures
- clarify the right to an advisor and how they can assist parties throughout the process
- define terms used to describe prohibited conduct
- outline possible sanctions for policy violations
- answer common questions asked by parties (complainants and respondents)



IF YOU HAVE EXPERIENCED SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

If you are off campus and experiencing an emergency, you can call local police by dialing 911. You may also call the local police department's non-emergency line at 301-279-8000.

1. Go to a safe location as soon as you are able.
2. Seek immediate medical attention if you are injured or believe you may have been exposed to the risk of an STI/STD or pregnancy.
3. Contact any of the following for immediate assistance on campus:

- Title IX coordinator, Kristen Roe
240-567-4279
kristen.roe@montgomerycollege.edu
Regular business hours, Monday–Friday
- Montgomery College Public Safety Office
240-567-3333
24 hours/7 days a week
- Montgomery College Counseling Departments
Regular business hours, Monday–Friday
 - Germantown
240-567-7734
 - Rockville
240-567-5063
 - Takoma Park/Silver Spring
240-567-1600

4. Contact any of the following for immediate assistance off campus:

- Montgomery County Victim Assistance Sexual Assault Program
240-777-4357 (24-hour crisis line)
- Montgomery County Police Non-Emergency Line
301-279-8000

5. 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.

Shady Grove Adventist Forensic Medical Unit
9901 Medical Center Drive
Rockville, MD 20850
240-826-6225

6. Choose How To Proceed

You have options. You can: (1) do nothing until you are ready, (2) pursue resolution by the College, 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 the College, your options can include a formal response, informal resolution, and/or supportive measures. If you wish to have an incident investigated and resolved by the College, students should contact the Title IX coordinator. Employees should contact either Human Resources or the Title IX coordinator. College procedures will be explained in this guide. Those who wish incidents to be handled criminally should contact local law enforcement and have the right to be assisted by the College in doing so.

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 counselors in the Counseling and Advising Department. Campus counselors are available to help on an emergency basis. Their service is free of charge. Local community-based resources, such as crisis centers, are also confidential and have no duty to report disclosed information to the College.

Confidential Resources

- College counseling and advising staff
- Off-campus
 - Licensed professional counselors and other medical providers
 - Local rape crisis counselors
 - Domestic violence resources
 - Local or state assistance agencies
 - Clergy/chaplains
 - Attorneys

Mandated Reporting

All employees not designated as confidential are mandated reporters. This means they are required to share information with the Title IX coordinator, though

that does not obligate the person who alleges assault to any formal involvement. The Title IX coordinator will simply reach out to the individual to offer support and the opportunity to file a formal complaint.

Mandated reporters include any College administrator, supervisor, faculty member, public safety officer, coach, or trainer. Any employee of the College who receives a report of sexual misconduct must promptly relay such report to the Title IX coordinator.

You may request that the Title IX coordinator provide you with supportive measures and resources without initiating a formal resolution process. If you wish to pursue a formal resolution process, the Title IX coordinator will be unable to honor any request for confidentiality. The respondent must be provided sufficient information, including the identity of the complainant, to allow them to appropriately respond.

If the College decides it is obligated to pursue formal resolution based on the notice you have given, the Title IX coordinator can initiate a complaint. You are not obligated to participate in the resolution process as the complainant. However, you can choose to participate as a witness. Regardless of whether you participate, you will have all the rights to which a complainant is entitled, if you want them. The ability of the College to enforce its policies may be limited if you decide not to participate at all.

Duties with respect to minors (those under age 18) may require reporting to state agencies and/or local law enforcement. As a result, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

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

While victim-blaming is never appropriate, and Montgomery College fully recognizes that only those who commit sexual offenses are responsible for their actions, the College provides the following suggestions to help members of the College 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 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 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.
- 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.

Reducing 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. 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.
- 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.

SUMMARY OF TITLE IX'S PRINCIPLES

- Title IX protects students and employees impacted by sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. When these behaviors occur, and a formal complaint is made, the College 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 College.
- Colleges have jurisdiction requirements that they must follow to determine whether a complaint falls within Title IX or is to be addressed within other College policies and procedures.
- Complainants are well-protected by the regulations in terms of supportive measures offered by institutions to try to address the impact of sex offenses.
- Both parties have the right to a support person and an attorney or non-attorney advisor throughout the resolution process. The College can provide a non-attorney advisor to each party, if needed.

- The regulations allow for informal resolution in some cases.
- 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 the College 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 the College, 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 College policies and referred accordingly.

VAWA'S RELEVANT PROVISIONS

- A requirement for institutions to maintain statistics about the number of incidents of dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking that meet the specific definition of those terms
- A requirement for institutions to provide prevention programs to incoming students and new employees that must include: a statement that the institution prohibits dating and domestic violence crimes, sexual assault, and stalking; the definition of consent in reference to sexual activity; a description of safe bystander intervention options; information on risk reduction; information on the institution's policies and procedures after a sex offense occurs; and a description of all of these within the College's annual security report (montgomerycollege.edu/_documents/life-at-mc/public-safety/annual-security-report.pdf)
- A requirement to provide ongoing prevention and awareness campaigns for students and employees and to describe these in the annual security report
- A requirement to describe each type of disciplinary proceeding used by the institution; the steps, anticipated timelines, and decision-making process for each type of disciplinary proceeding that includes how to file a disciplinary complaint and how the institution determines which type of proceeding to use based on the circumstances of an allegation

of dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking

- A requirement for institutions to describe the range of protective (supportive) measures that the institution may offer
- A requirement for institutions to provide a prompt, fair, and impartial disciplinary proceeding in which: officials are appropriately trained and do not have a conflict of interest or bias for or against any party; for the complainant and respondent to have equal opportunities to have others present, including an advisor of their choice; for the complainant and respondent to receive simultaneous notification, in writing, of hearing results and any available appeal procedures; for procedures to be completed in a reasonably prompt timeframe; for the complainant and respondent to be given timely notice of meetings at which one or the other or both may be present; and for the complainant, the respondent, and their advisors to be given timely and equal access to information that will be used during formal and informal disciplinary meetings and hearings

There are many similarities between Title IX and VAWA compliance. Ultimately, both ensure complainants and respondents have full understanding of their rights, the institution's responsibilities, and transparency with navigating the institution's process for resolving reported sex offenses.

POLICY TERMINOLOGY AND SEX OFFENSE DEFINITIONS

There is certain terminology used in both the policy and procedures that are important for you to know. Additionally, members of the Title IX team will use these

terms in their written and verbal communication. Below is a chart of the most common terminology used and its definition.

Term	Definition
Actual Knowledge	Notice of sexual harassment or allegations of sexual harassment to the College's Title IX coordinator or any official of Montgomery College who has the authority to institute corrective measure on behalf of the College
Complainant	An individual who is alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment
Formal Complaint	A document filed by a complainant or signed by the Title IX coordinator alleging sexual harassment against a respondent and requesting that the College investigate the allegations of sexual harassment
Respondent	An individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment
Supportive Measures	Non-disciplinary, non-punitive individualized services offered as appropriate, as reasonably available, and without fee or charge to the complainant or the respondent before or after the filing of a formal complaint or where no formal complaint has been filed
Advisor	A person chosen by a party or appointed by the institution to accompany the party to meetings related to the resolution process, to advise the party on that process, and to conduct questioning for the party at the hearing, if any
Confidential Resource	An employee who is not a mandated reporter of notice of harassment, discrimination, and/or retaliation
Decision-Maker	The person who hears evidence, determines relevance, and makes the final determination of whether the policy has been violated and/or assigns sanctions
Investigator	The person or persons designated by the College to gather facts about an alleged violation of the policy, assess relevance and credibility, synthesize the evidence, and compile this information into an investigation report of relevant evidence and a file of directly related evidence
Mandated Reporter	An employee of the College who is obligated by policy to share knowledge, notice, and/or reports of harassment, discrimination, and/or retaliation with the Title IX coordinator
Notice	When an employee, student, or third-party informs the Title IX coordinator or other official with authority of the alleged occurrence of harassment, discrimination, and/or retaliation
Parties	The complainant(s) and respondent(s), collectively

Montgomery College's Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedure (31001-CP) is intended to define expectations for appropriate conduct and outline resolution processes to address conduct that does not meet these expectations. Visit montgomerycollege.edu/policies-and-procedures/title-ix/sexual-misconductpolicy-and-procedures to view the College's full policy.

Sex offenses, including sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and/or stalking are violations of the College's Sexual Misconduct Policy (31001-CP). A number of federal laws and regulations, including Title IX, VAWA, and the Clery Act, mandate how institutions of higher education must respond to sex offenses. Many types of sex offenses also constitute violations of Maryland law.

Members of the campus community, guests, and visitors have a right to be free from sexual offenses and to be protected by College policy regardless of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. All members of the campus community must conduct themselves in a way that does not infringe upon the rights of others. When individuals are found to have violated policy, the College will impose sanctions, as noted in the sanctions section of this guide.

Sex Offence Definitions

The following are definitions of conduct prohibited by the College's sexual misconduct policy.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment, as an umbrella category, includes the offenses of sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking and is defined as:

- Unwelcome conduct on the basis of sex¹ or is sexual in nature that satisfies one or more of the following:

- Quid Pro Quo

- an employee of the College
- conditioning² the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the College,
- on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct.

- Sexual Harassment

- Unwelcome conduct,
- determined by a reasonable person,
- to be so severe,
- pervasive, and
- objectively offensive
- that it effectively denies a person equal access to the College's education program or activity.

- Sexual Assault, defined as:

- any sexual act³ directed against another person
- without the consent of the complainant,
- including instances in which the complainant is incapable of giving consent.

- Dating Violence, defined as:

- violence,
- on the basis of sex,
- committed by a person,
- who is in or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the complainant.
 - The existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on the complainant's statement and with consideration of the relationship's length, the type of relationship, and the frequency of interaction between the person involved in the relationship.
 - For the purposes of this definition, dating violence includes, but is not limited to, sexual or physical abuse or the threat of such abuse.
 - Dating violence does not include acts covered under the definition of domestic violence.

¹ Including sexual orientation, sex stereotypes, gender identity, and gender expression

² Implicitly or explicitly

³ This includes four sub-offenses clearly defined in the College's Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedure (31001-CP)

- Domestic Violence, defined as:

- Violence,
- on the basis of sex,
- committed by a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the complainant,
- by a person with whom the complainant shares a child in common, or
- by a person who is cohabitating with, or has cohabitated with, the complainant as a spouse or intimate partner, or
- by a person similarly situated to a spouse of the complainant under the domestic or family violence laws of your state, or
- by any other person against an adult or youth complainant who is protected from that person's acts under the domestic or family violence laws of your state.

- Stalking, defined as:

- Engaging in a course of conduct,
- on the basis of sex,
- directed at a specific person, that would
 - cause a reasonable person to fear for the person's safety, or the safety of others; or
 - suffer substantial emotional distress.

Consent

Consent is knowing, voluntary, and clear permission by word or action to engage in sexual activity.

In all sexual encounters, it is important that you obtain consent. Each of us is responsible for obtaining consent and has a right to choose to give consent or not give consent. Consent is:

- Informed, knowing, and voluntary (freely given)
- Active (not passive)
- Affirmative, clear words or actions that create mutually understandable permission regarding the conditions of sexual or intimate activity

- Not something that can be given by someone who is known to be, or who should be known to be, mentally or physically incapacitated
- Not something that can be obtained by use of physical force, compelling threats, intimidating behavior, or coercion

If consent is withdrawn, sexual activity must stop immediately. Any party can place conditions on their willingness to consent, and those conditions must be respected.

People may experience the same interactions differently. Therefore, each party is responsible for making sure that their potential partner has provided ongoing, clear consent to engage in any sexual activity or contact.

Consent to some forms of sexual activity (e.g., kissing, fondling, etc.) should not be construed as consent for other kinds of sexual activities (e.g., intercourse).

To legally give consent in Maryland, individuals must be at least 16 years old.

Force

Force is the use of physical violence and/or physical imposition to gain sexual access. Force also includes threats, intimidation (implied threats), and coercion that is intended to overcome resistance or produce consent (e.g., "Have sex with me or I'll hit you," which elicits the response, "Okay, don't hit me, I'll do what you want.>").

Forced sexual activity is, by definition, non-consensual, but non-consensual sexual activity is not necessarily forced. Silence or the absence of resistance alone is not consent. Consent is not demonstrated by the absence of resistance. While resistance is not required or necessary, it is a clear demonstration of non-consent.

Coercion

Coercion is unreasonable pressure for sexual activity. Coercive conduct differs from seductive conduct based on factors such as the type and/or extent of pressure used to obtain consent. When someone is clear that they do not want to engage in certain sexual activity, that they want to stop, or that they do not want to go past a certain point of sexual interaction, pressure beyond that point can be coercive.

Incapacitation

This is defined as a state in which individuals are unable to make rational, reasonable decisions because they lack the

capacity to understand the “who, what, when, where, why, or how” of a situation or interaction. Individuals cannot sexually consent if they are unable to understand what is happening, or if they are disoriented, helpless, asleep, or unconscious for any reason. That applies even if it is because they voluntarily consumed alcohol or drugs. Unless consent is “knowing,” it is not valid.

Individuals engaging in sexual activity who know or should have known that the other party is incapacitated are engaging in sexual misconduct.

The fact that a respondent was intoxicated and therefore did not realize that the complainant was incapacitated does not excuse sexual assault.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT PROCEDURES

The College’s full grievance process for sexual harassment can be viewed at montgomerycollege.edu/_documents/policies-and-procedures/31001-sexual-misconduct.

The College treats complainants and respondents equitably by providing remedies to a complainant when

a determination of responsibility for sexual harassment has been made against the respondent and by following a grievance process that complies with both Title IX and VAWA regulations.

Here is an overview of the major steps in the process.

Step	What Occurs During This Step
<p>Step One: Intake</p>	<p>The Title IX coordinator may assist the complainant with understanding the policy and procedures, their options, and accessing resources. Assuming the complainant chooses to file a complaint and move forward with a formal or informal resolution process, the next step is an initial assessment. If there is an anonymous report, third-party report, or an unidentified complainant, the Title IX coordinator will attempt to: (1) take appropriate action to determine who was impacted and/or involved in the reported behavior to offer them supportive measures and resources and explain their process options, and (2) take reasonable action to stop the behavior, remedy its effects on individuals and the campus community, and prevent it from recurring in the future.</p> <p>All resolutions will be conducted by officials who receive annual training on issues related to sexual harassment, which includes domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. The Title IX coordinator, investigators, decision-makers, and any person who facilitates an informal resolution process are required to be trained on: the definitions of sexual harassment; the scope of the College’s education program or activity; how to conduct an investigation and grievance process that includes hearings, appeals, and informal resolution processes, as applicable; and serving impartially, including avoiding prejudgment of the facts at issue, identifying conflicts of interest, and avoiding bias.</p> <p>Additionally, decision-makers must receive training on any technology used at a live hearing and on issues of relevance of questions and evidence, including when questions and evidence about the complainant’s sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior are not relevant. Any materials used for training will not rely on sex stereotypes and will promote impartial investigations and adjudications of formal complainants of sexual harassment. View provided training materials at montgomerycollege.edu/policies-and-procedures/title-ix/training-records.html.</p> <p>The College’s resolution process prioritizes confidentiality to the greatest extent possible. The institution will protect the confidentiality of parties throughout the resolution process, consistent with the provisions of state and federal law. Title IX-related resolutions are not typically subject to publicly available open records requests (e.g., FOIA) provisions. Any required release of information about a resolution will not include identifying information about the complainant. Information about the respondent will only be released to the extent permitted by law.</p>

Step	What Occurs During This Step
<p>Step Two: Initial Assessment</p>	<p>An initial assessment of the allegations is made by the Title IX coordinator to determine appropriate jurisdiction and applicable policies/procedures. Under federal Title IX regulations, the Title IX coordinator is required to dismiss any formal complaint if one or more of the following is true:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The alleged conduct would not constitute sexual harassment as defined within the Sexual Harassment Policy, even if proved • The alleged conduct did not occur in Montgomery College’s education program or activity • The alleged conduct did not occur against a person in the United States • The complainant is not participating or attempting to participate in Montgomery College’s education program or activities at the time of filing the complaint <p>Additionally, the Title IX coordinator may dismiss any formal complaint if one or more of the following is true:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At any time during the investigation or hearing a complainant notifies the Title IX coordinator in writing that the complainant would like to withdraw the formal complaint or any allegations therein • The respondent is no longer enrolled or employed by the College • Specific circumstances prevent the College from gathering evidence sufficient to reach a determination as to the formal complaint or allegations therein <p>Upon a dismissal required or permitted under federal Title IX regulations, the Title IX coordinator will promptly send written notice of the dismissal and the rationale to the parties simultaneously. The parties (the complainant and respondent) will have an opportunity to appeal this decision by following the appeal procedures in the College’s Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedure (31001-CP).</p> <p>If a dismissal occurs, the Title IX coordinator may refer or reinstate the allegations for resolution under an alternative process, if appropriate.</p>
<p>Step Three: Choose an Advisor</p>	<p>Each party is entitled to an advisor of their choice to accompany them to any and all meetings pertaining to the complaint. An advisor can be anyone, including but not limited to an attorney, friend, roommate, or parent. Advisors can be extremely helpful in assisting parties with navigating the Title IX resolution process, especially when it comes to the hearing. The College is required to have a live hearing as part of its formal grievance process. At the live hearing, the decision-maker must permit each party’s advisor to ask the other party and any witnesses all relevant questions and follow-up questions, including those challenging credibility. If a party does not have an advisor, the College will provide an advisor, without fee or charge, from a pool of trained advisors. College-appointed advisors are not attorneys.</p> <p>For representation, complainants and respondents may wish to contact organizations such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maryland Coalition Against Sexual Assault Sexual Assault Legal Institute (SALI) Program https://mcasa.org/survivors/sali

Step	What Occurs During This Step
<p>Step Four: Investigation</p>	<p>Trained campus investigators will conduct a prompt, thorough, equitable, fair, and impartial investigation. They will interview the parties and witnesses and prepare a report. Your advisor can accompany you to all interviews. Details about the investigation process are in the College's Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedure (31001-CP). As part of the investigation, parties and their advisors will be given access to all relevant and directly related evidence and will have the opportunity to review and comment.</p>
<p>Step Five: Hearing</p>	<p>The College resolution process provides a neutral and independent decision-maker. The decision-maker will have the opportunity to question investigators, parties, and witnesses during a hearing. Hearings can be held in person or via videoconference. The parties may make opening and closing statements. During the hearing, each party's advisor will have the opportunity to question the other party and witnesses.</p> <p>Standard of Evidence</p> <p>The College uses a preponderance of evidence standard of evidence. This means that the decision-maker considers whether, given the available relevant, credible evidence, it is more likely than not that a violation of policy occurred.</p> <p>Past History</p> <p>Questions and evidence about the complainant's sexual predisposition cannot be asked. Questions about a complainant's prior sexual behavior cannot be asked unless:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Such questions and evidence are offered to prove that someone other than the respondent committed the conduct alleged by the complainant, OR • The questions and evidence concern specific incidents of the complainant's prior sexual behavior with respect to the respondent and are offered to prove consent.
<p>Step Six: Final Determination</p>	<p>The parties will be informed of the outcome of the College's resolution of a complaint in writing, without significant delay between the notifications to each party. This notice will include the final determination, any sanctions imposed, a rationale for the final determination and any sanctions, the institution's procedures for the parties to appeal, any change to the results that occurs prior to the time that such results become final, and when the College considers those results to be final.</p>
<p>Step Seven: Appeal</p>	<p>All parties involved in sexual harassment proceedings may appeal a decision within 10 working days on the basis of grounds permitted by the policy. All parties are included in any appeal reconsideration and have equal rights of participation. All appeals are conducted by written exchange of materials. There is only one level of appeal. That decision is final. See the College's Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedure (31001-CP) for further details on appeal procedures.</p>

Times for Resolution

Montgomery College is committed to resolving complaints within a reasonably prompt timeframe. The College's policy and procedures detail this timeline more specifically. Montgomery College's process allows for the temporary delay of the grievance process or limited extensions of time frames for good cause with written notice to the complainant and the respondent. This notification will include specifics of the delay or extension with a detailed reason for the action. Parties who wish to request a delay

in the process, or an extension for an aspect of the process, should contact the Title IX coordinator.

Informal Resolution Process

To initiate an informal resolution process, a complainant must submit a formal complaint first. After submission of the formal complaint, the Title IX coordinator will provide additional information if an informal resolution is an option. Parties who wish to initiate an informal resolution process should contact the Title IX coordinator.

All parties must agree, in writing, to initiate an informal resolution process. The parties may agree as a condition of engaging in informal resolution that statements made or evidence shared during the informal resolution process will not be considered in the formal grievance process unless all parties consent.

It is not necessary to pursue informal resolution first to pursue a formal grievance process, and any party participating in informal resolution can stop the process at any time and begin or resume the formal grievance process.

There are three main types of informal resolution:

- **Supportive Resolution**

When the Title IX coordinator can resolve the matter informally by providing supportive measures (only) to remedy the situation.

- **Alternative Resolution**

When the parties agree to resolve the matter through an alternative resolution mechanism such as facilitated dialogue, usually before a formal investigation takes place.

- **Accepted Responsibility**

When the respondent accepts responsibility for violating policy, and desires to accept the sanction(s) and end the resolution process.

Alternative Resolution Approaches

Alternative resolution is an informal approach (currently limited to facilitated dialogue) by which the parties reach a mutually agreed upon resolution of an allegation. All parties must consent to the use of an alternative resolution approach.

The Title IX coordinator may look to the following factors to assess whether alternative resolution is appropriate, or which form of alternative resolution may be most successful for the parties:

- The parties' amenability to alternative resolution
- Likelihood of potential resolution, taking into account any power dynamics between the parties
- The parties' motivation to participate
- Civility of the parties
- Results of a violence risk assessment/ongoing risk analysis
- Disciplinary history

- Whether an emergency removal is needed
- Skill of the alternative resolution facilitator with this type of allegation
- Complaint complexity
- Emotional investment/capability of the parties
- Rationality of the parties
- Goals of the parties
- Adequate resources to invest in an alternative resolution (time, staff, etc.)

The ultimate determination of whether alternative resolution is available or successful is to be made by the Title IX coordinator. The Title IX coordinator is authorized to negotiate a resolution that is acceptable to all parties, and/or to accept a resolution that is proposed by the parties, usually through their advisors. Alternative resolution agreements are not subject to appeal once agreed upon by all parties.

Respondent Accepts Responsibility for Alleged Violations

The respondent may accept responsibility for all or part of the alleged policy violations at any point during the resolution process. If the respondent indicates an intent to accept responsibility for all of the alleged misconduct, the formal process will be paused, and the Title IX coordinator will determine whether informal resolution can be used.

If informal resolution is applicable, the Title IX coordinator will determine whether all parties and the recipient are able to agree on responsibility, sanctions, and/or remedies. If so, the Title IX coordinator implements the accepted finding that the respondent is in violation of recipient policy and implements agreed-upon sanctions and/or remedies, in coordination with other appropriate administrator(s), as necessary.

This result is not subject to appeal once all parties indicate their written assent to all agreed upon terms of resolution. When the parties cannot agree on all terms of resolution, the formal grievance process will resume at the same point where it was paused.

When a resolution is accomplished, the appropriate sanction or responsive actions are promptly implemented to effectively stop the harassment or discrimination, prevent its recurrence, and remedy the effects of the discriminatory conduct, both on the complainant and the community.

Rights of Complainants and Respondents

- The right to an equitable investigation and resolution of all credible allegations of prohibited harassment, discrimination, and/or retaliation made in good faith to Montgomery College officials
- The right to timely written notice of all alleged violations, including the identity of the parties involved (if known), the precise misconduct being alleged, the date and location of the alleged misconduct (if known), the implicated policies and procedures, and possible sanctions
- The right to timely written notice of any material adjustments to the allegations (e.g., additional incidents or allegations, additional complainants, unsubstantiated allegations) and any attendant adjustments needed to clarify potentially implicated policy violations
- The right to be informed in advance of any public release of information by Montgomery College regarding the allegation(s) or underlying incident(s), whenever possible
- The right not to have any personally identifiable information released by Montgomery College to the public without consent provided, except to the extent permitted by law
- The right to be treated with respect by Montgomery College officials
- The right to have Montgomery College policy and procedures followed without material deviation
- The right not to be pressured to mediate or otherwise informally resolve any reported misconduct involving violence, including sexual violence
- The right not to be discouraged by Montgomery College officials from reporting sexual harassment, discrimination, and/or retaliation to both on-campus and off-campus authorities
- The right to be informed by Montgomery College officials of options to notify proper law enforcement authorities, including on-campus and local police, and the option(s) to be assisted by Montgomery College in notifying such authorities, if the party so chooses. This also includes the right not to be pressured to report.
- The right to have allegations of violations of this policy responded to promptly and with sensitivity by Montgomery College Public Safety and/or other Montgomery College officials
- The right to be informed of available supportive measures, such as counseling; advocacy; health care; legal, student financial aid, visa, and immigration assistance; and/or other services, both on campus and in the community
- The right to a Montgomery College-implemented no-contact order when a person has engaged in or threatens to engage in stalking, threatening, harassing, or other improper conduct
- The right to be informed of available assistance in changing academic and/or working situations after an alleged incident of discrimination, harassment, and/or retaliation, if such changes are reasonably available. No formal report, or investigation, either campus or criminal, needs to occur before this option is available.
- The right to have Montgomery College maintain such actions for as long as necessary and for supportive measures to remain confidential, provided confidentiality does not impair the College's ability to provide the supportive measures
- The right to receive sufficiently advanced, written notice of any meeting or interview involving the other party, when possible
- The right to have the investigator(s), advisors, and/or decision-maker identify and question relevant available witnesses, including expert witnesses
- The right to provide the investigator(s)/decision-maker with a list of questions that, if deemed relevant, may be asked of any party or witness
- The right to have inadmissible prior sexual predisposition/history or irrelevant character evidence excluded by the decision-maker
- The right to know the relevant and directly related evidence obtained and to respond to that evidence
- The right to a fair opportunity to provide the investigator(s) with their account of the alleged misconduct and have that account be on the record
- The right to receive a copy of all relevant and directly related evidence obtained by the investigation, subject to privacy limitations imposed by state and federal law,

and a ten (10) day period to review and comment on the evidence

- The right to receive a copy of the final investigation report, including all factual, policy, and/or credibility analyses performed, and to have at least ten (10) days to review and comment on the report prior to the hearing
- The right to be informed of the names of all witnesses whose information will be used to make a finding, in advance of that finding, when relevant
- The right to regular updates on the status of the investigation and/or resolution
- The right to have complaints addressed by investigator(s), Title IX coordinator(s), and decision-maker(s) who have received relevant annual training
- The right to preservation of confidentiality/privacy, as permitted by law
- The right to meetings, interviews, and/or hearings that are closed to the public
- The right to petition that any Montgomery College representative in the process be recused on the basis of disqualifying bias and/or conflict of interest
- The right to have an advisor of their choice to accompany and assist the party in all meetings and/or interviews associated with the resolution process
- The right to the use of the appropriate standard of evidence, preponderance of the evidence, to make a finding after an objective evaluation of all relevant evidence
- The right to be present, including presence via remote technology, during all testimony given and evidence presented during any formal grievance hearing
- The right to have an impact statement considered by the decision-maker following a determination of responsibility for any allegation, but prior to sanctioning
- The right to be promptly informed in a written notice of outcome letter of the finding(s) and sanction(s), of the resolution process (if any), and a detailed rationale of the decision including an explanation of how credibility was assessed, delivered simultaneously (without undue delay) to the parties

- The right to be informed in writing of when a decision by the institution is considered final and any changes to the final determination or sanction(s) that occur post notification of outcome
- The right to be informed of the opportunity to appeal the finding(s) and sanction(s) of the resolution process, and the procedures for doing so in accordance with the standards for appeal
- The right to a fundamentally fair resolution as defined in these procedures

Sanctions and Remedies

Sanctions may be imposed on any student or student organization found to have violated the Student Code of Conduct (34003-CP).

Dismissal

Permanent denial of enrollment at the College.

Emergency Suspension

A suspension imposed prior to a discipline review or appeal when necessary to ensure the safety and well-being of the members of the College. This action is recommended by the campus dean of student development and approved by the vice president/provost or designee. Upon the completion of the discipline review, additional sanctions may be imposed.

Suspension

Denial of enrollment for a specified period of time after which the student is eligible to return. During this time the student cannot qualify for graduation and register for or attend classes or other College functions.

Disciplinary Probation

Continued enrollment at the College but only under special conditions for a specified period of time. Conditions may include exclusion from a particular area of the College, exclusion from specific activities of the College, or denial of related privileges and/or services. Misconduct during the probationary period or violation of any conditions of the probation may result in more severe disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal.

Restitution

Required reimbursement for damage to or misappropriation of property. This may take the form of appropriate services or other compensation.

Community Service

Requires a set number of hours of uncompensated service to the College or a community agency.

Warning

Issuance of a written warning, admonition, or reprimand.

Permanent Record

Entries regarding the disciplinary conference will be added to the student's permanent record at the College. These records will be kept for seven years and disclosed only in accordance with applicable federal and state law. These records will be expunged if a student is found not to have violated the Student Code of Conduct.

Administrative Hold

A hold on all student academic files is placed so that the student may not register. This sanction may be imposed when a student withdraws from the College prior to or during disciplinary proceedings.

Organizational Sanctions

Sanctions for organizational misconduct may include revocation of the use of College premises or privileges for a specified period of time, revocation of recognition or registration, or suspension of activities or events, as well as other appropriate sanctions.

Discharge of Administrative, Associate, and Support Staff (Policy 34003)

Any employee whose behavior, act(s), or performance is unacceptable shall be subject to dismissal for cause.

Examples of employee sanctions:

- Warning—verbal or written
- Performance improvement plan/management process
- Enhanced supervision, observation, or review
- Required counseling
- Required training or education
- Probation
- Denial of pay increase/pay grade
- Loss of oversight or supervisory responsibility
- Demotion
- Transfer
- Reassignment
- Assignment to new supervisor
- Restriction of stipends, research, and/or professional development resources
- Suspension with pay
- Suspension without pay
- Termination
- In addition to or in place of the above sanctions/responsive actions, the recipient may be assigned any other responsive actions as deemed appropriate.

PREVENTION AND AWARENESS PROGRAMS

Bystander Intervention

The College offers bystander intervention programming to all new students in an effort to ensure that each member of the campus community is invested in creating a safe campus environment. Program participants are instructed on safe options for preventing harm and intervening when a risk of sexual misconduct exists.

VAWA Training

Incoming students and new employees are provided with the option to participate in education and training on awareness and risk reduction of sexual violence, dating violence,

domestic violence, stalking, and consent in compliance with the Violence Against Women Act.

Ongoing Campaigns

Ongoing awareness and prevention campaigns are provided throughout the academic year to students, faculty, and staff.

SHaW Center Programs

The College's Student Health and Wellness (SHaW) Center provides programs and resources to raise awareness about sexual violence. Visit montgomerycollege.edu/life-at-mc/student-health-and-wellness/personal-safety-education.html for more information.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

<p>Can an attorney be my advisor?</p>	<p>Yes. You have the right to an advisor of your choice, which can include an attorney.</p>
<p>Will my parents/guardians find out about this incident?</p>	<p>It depends. If you are a minor, members of the Title IX team have certain mandatory reporting obligations, which may include notifying your parents/guardians of the incident.</p>
<p>Do I have to resolve this through a formal grievance process?</p>	<p>No. You have options. If you are a complainant and wish to resolve informally, you must first make a formal complaint. Upon receipt of this formal complaint, the Title IX coordinator will provide you with additional information. Any party who wishes to resolve the matter informally should contact the Title IX coordinator. All parties must agree, in writing, to informally resolve for this to be an option.</p>
<p>Is there a time limit on when I can report?</p>	<p>There is no statute of limitations on when a complaint can be filed. However, there are certain jurisdictional requirements that must be met to pursue a formal grievance process under Title IX.</p>
<p>Will I get in more trouble if I was drinking underage during the incident?</p>	<p>The College maintains a policy of offering parties and witnesses amnesty from minor policy violations such as underage consumption of alcohol or the use of illicit drugs related to the incident.</p>
<p>What happens if the respondent fails to comply with the sanctions?</p>	<p>Respondents are expected to comply with the assigned sanctions, responsive actions, and/or corrective actions within the timeframe specified by the final decision-maker. Failure to abide by the sanction(s)/action(s) imposed by the date specified, whether by refusal, neglect, or any other reason, may result in additional sanction(s)/action(s), including suspension, expulsion, and/or termination.</p>
<p>What happens if the respondent transfers, leaves, or resigns prior to the conclusion of the formal resolution process?</p>	<p>If a respondent permanently withdraws or resigns, the resolution process ends with a dismissal, as the College no longer has disciplinary jurisdiction over the withdrawn student or former employee. However, the College will continue to address and remedy any systemic issues or concerns that may have contributed to the alleged violation(s), and any ongoing effects of the alleged harassment, discrimination, and/or retaliation.</p>
<p>What if law enforcement is involved?</p>	<p>College action(s) or processes are not typically altered or precluded on the grounds that civil or criminal charges involving the underlying incident(s) have been filed or that criminal charges have been dismissed or reduced. The College may undertake a short delay in its investigation if circumstances require. Communication will be sent to the parties explaining the reason(s) for the delay and the anticipated duration of the delay.</p>



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Montgomery College is an academic institution committed to promoting equal opportunity and fostering diversity among its student body, faculty, and staff.