

Resource Guide for
Respondents in Policy
on Institutional Equity
Sexual Misconduct
Matters 2022–23

Northwestern

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Being accused of sexual misconduct can be confusing and unsettling. This guide provides information on the sexual misconduct complain resolution process and the resources available to you. If you have been accused of sexual misconduct, you are referred to as a respondent during the complain resolution process.

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Northwestern University is committed to fostering an environment in which all members of our campus community are free from sexual misconduct of

Reports to police and the University

A complainant may report an incident to law enforcement and request a police investigation. A complainant may report an incident to Northwestern and request a University sexual misconduct investigation. University sexual misconduct investigations can occur at the same time as police investigations. A complainant may choose to report sexual misconduct to law enforcement, Northwestern, both, or neither.

Complaint investigation and resolution

Northwestern typically investigates complaints by meeting with the complainant, respondent, and witnesses and reviewing relevant evidence. The University uses the preponderance of the evidence standard, which means that if the evidence shows that it is more likely than not that sexual misconduct occurred, the respondent will be found responsible.

Investigations are usually conducted by staff from the Office of Equity, who are trained in handling sexual misconduct matters. See pages 6–7 for a flowchart of the sexual misconduct complaint resolution process.

Violations of the Policy on Institutional Equity may result in sanctions and corrective actions. These actions may include required training or counseling, warning, probation, suspension, expulsion, demotion, termination, or revocation of tenure.

The irrelevant prior sexual history of the parties will not be considered as evidence in the investigation.

Timeline

Though the University strives to resolve all cases in a prompt and timely manner, the timeline varies based on the circumstances of the case. Additionally, the timeline for a case may be affected by breaks in the academic calendar, availability of the parties and witnesses (including due to leave of absence), scope of the investigation, need for interim actions, and unforeseen or exigent circumstances. The parties will be periodically updated on the status of their case. In cases where there is a simultaneous law enforcement investigation, the University may need to temporarily delay its investigation while law enforcement gathers evidence. However, the University will generally proceed with its investigation and resolution of a complaint during any law enforcement investigation.

Although the length of each investigation will vary, the University strives to complete each investigation within 90 days of sending the written notice of investigation.

Privacy

Northwestern handles sexual misconduct reports discreetly, with information shared only with those who need to know in order to investigate and resolve the matter.

All participants in an investigation will be informed that privacy helps enhance the integrity of the investigation, protect the privacy interests of the parties, and protect the participants from statements that might be interpreted to be retaliatory or defamatory. For these reasons, the complainant and respondent will be asked at the beginning of the investigation to keep the information related to the investigation and resolution private, to the extent consistent with applicable law. Witnesses and advisors will be asked to keep

Overview of the Policy on Institutional Equity

Confidential resources

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)
(provides counseling services to students)
847-491-2151 (24 hours)
northwestern.edu/counseling

Office of Religious and Spiritual Life
(provides spiritual guidance for students and other members of the University community)
847-491-7256
northwestern.edu/religious-life

Employee Assistance Program
(provides crisis intervention and short-term counseling to faculty and staff as well as their household family members)
northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/well-being/programs/employee-assistance-program

Faculty Wellness Program
(provides free consultations for faculty members to identify appropriate resources for personal and professional concerns)
facultywellness@northwestern.edu
northwestern.edu/faculty-wellness

Office of the Ombudsperson
(provides confidential and informal assistance for resolving University-related concerns, is independent of the University's formal administrative structure, and considers all sides of an issue in a neutral manner)
847-467-2430
ombuds@northwestern.edu
northwestern.edu/ombuds

Medical resources

Northwestern University Health Service
847-491-8100 (Evanston)
312-695-8134 (Chicago)

**NorthShore University HealthSystem/
Evanston Hospital**
847-570-2111

**Northwestern Memorial Hospital
(Chicago)**
312-926-2000

**AMITA Health Saint Francis Hospital
(Evanston)**
847-316-4000

Supportive measures

Supportive measures are individualized services offered to parties involved in incidents of sexual misconduct. Supportive measures may include

- academic assistance
- housing or workspace relocation
- dining arrangements
- time off from class or work
- student financial aid arrangements
- transportation arrangements
- no-contact directives
- safety planning

Contact the Office of Equity to request supportive measures. Such measures will be kept confidential to the extent possible.

Office of Equity Northwestern University

Fostering a culture of access, belonging, and accommodation.

Northwestern University does not discriminate or permit discrimination by any member of its community against any individual on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, parental status, marital status, age, disability, citizenship status, veteran status, genetic information, reproductive health decision making, or any other classification protected by law in matters of admissions, employment, housing, or services or in the educational programs or activities it operates. Harassment, whether verbal, physical, or visual, that is based on any of these characteristics is a form of discrimination. Further prohibited by law is discrimination against any employee and/or job applicant who chooses to inquire about, discuss, or disclose their own compensation or the compensation of another employee or applicant.

Northwestern University complies with federal and state laws that prohibit discrimination based on the protected categories listed above, including Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Title IX requires educational institutions, such as Northwestern, to prohibit discrimination based on sex (including sexual harassment) in the University's educational programs and activities, including in matters of employment and admissions. In addition, Northwestern provides reasonable accommodations to qualified applicants, students, and employees with disabilities and to individuals who are pregnant.

Any alleged violations of this policy or questions with respect to nondiscrimination or reasonable accommodations should be directed to Northwestern's Office of Equity, 1800 Sherman Avenue, Suite 4-500, Evanston, Illinois 60208, 847-467-6165, equity@northwestern.edu.

Questions specific to sex discrimination (including sexual misconduct and sexual harassment) should be directed to Northwestern's Title IX Coordinator in the Office of Equity, 1800 Sherman Avenue, Suite 4-500, Evanston, Illinois 60208, 847-467-6165, TitleIXCoordinator@northwestern.edu.

A person may also file a complaint with the Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights regarding an alleged violation of Title IX by visiting www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/complaintintro.html or calling 800-421-3481. Inquiries about the application of Title IX to Northwestern may be referred to Northwestern's Title IX Coordinator, the United States Department of Education's Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, or both.