

# Tell Someone

Responding to Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence  
at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health (SPH)

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***What is sexual harassment?***

***What is sexual violence?***

***How to handle it.***

***Where to go for help.***

## ***What is sexual harassment?***

The Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health has adopted the following definition of sexual harassment:

The determination of what constitutes sexual harassment will vary with the particular circumstances, but it may be described generally as unwanted sexual behavior, such as physical contact or verbal comments, jokes, questions, or suggestions, which adversely affects the working or learning environment of an individual.

Sexual harassment is any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual violence, including rape and sexual assault, is a form of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment might come from a faculty member or other Harvard employee, a peer, or a third party involved in University programs. Sexual harassment of any type is unacceptable in our community. Because harassment is not tolerated at Harvard, the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health has formal complaint procedures for responding to sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment can take many different forms. It can range from sexually explicit jokes that create a hostile learning environment, to rape and sexual assault. Sexual harassment occurs when an instructor makes sexual favors a condition of success in a course and also can occur when he or she repeatedly makes unwelcome sexual remarks or engages in physical contact. Sexual harassment can include repeated, unwanted sex-based text messages or e-mails or obscene calls or messages. It also can include being continually followed, contacted, or watched in a manner that is unwelcome and based on sex.

Harvard seeks to maintain a learning environment free from sexual harassment, and is committed to creating a community free from discrimination. Sexual harassment is a barrier to the educational, scholarly, and research purposes of the University. Whether the harasser is a faculty member or other University employee, a peer, or a third party involved in University programs, such behavior is not tolerated. Harvard has both formal and informal procedures and resources in place to assist students who have experienced or witnessed sexual harassment.



### ***What is sexual violence?***

Sexual violence, including rape and sexual assault, are types of sexual harassment. These sexually violent acts may violate federal law, including Title IX; state criminal law; and Harvard policy. As a result, if you believe you have experienced sexual violence, you may file a complaint with the appropriate Title IX coordinator from your school and you may also file a criminal complaint with the Harvard University Police Department (HUPD). Different standards are used to assess a complaint under Harvard policy and a criminal complaint. To discuss your options, speak with one of the resources listed at the bottom of this policy statement.

### ***In their own words...***

*“My dissertation advisor would frequently interrupt our conversations with comments on my appearance or clothing. It made me feel like there was more concern with my looks than with my scholarship.”*

*“My lab director approached me when we were alone in the lab. I made it clear that I wasn’t interested. I’m a guy who can be pretty blunt. However, he continues to bother me in the lab and I’m afraid to tell anyone because they might wonder about me.”*

*“My advisor has repeatedly asked me out to dinner. I have told him that I am not interested, but he reminds me every so often that he hopes that I’ve changed my mind. It’s very discouraging and I’m concerned that it could jeopardize my graduate career.”*

*“Another student in my lab group keeps sending me e-mails and asking me out and refuses to take ‘no’ for an answer. I’ve said plainly and repeatedly that I’m not interested. Now he has started spreading rumors about my sex life around the lab.”*

### ***Why does sexual harassment continue to occur?***

Those who engage in acts of sexual harassment are unlikely to stop unless they are challenged. It is therefore imperative that those who experience sexual harassment be supported and encouraged to come forward. Unfortunately, many people who experience sexual harassment do not come forward because they are afraid that no one will believe them. Others blame themselves. Sometimes those who have experienced sexual harassment fear they are making too much of the experience, and sadly, sometimes, they are told as much by those in whom they confide. They should not stop there. They should speak to someone else.

If you have experienced sexual harassment (or if you are not sure), you may find it difficult to come forward when you feel vulnerable or threatened. There are, however, a wide variety of resources available to you.

### ***Where can I get help?***

SPH is committed to helping anyone who has experienced sexual harassment, including sexual violence, to access the wide variety of resources available at Harvard and elsewhere. Some of the resources listed below will be able to keep your information private, but they may have to share your information with those responsible for stopping or preventing sexual harassment on campus. Before speaking with someone, make sure that you understand whether they can assure you confidentiality, or how they will keep your information private. 3

***Private Resources:*** These people will keep your information as private as possible, meaning that they will only share it with those who have a need to know. For example, they may need to disclose what you tell them to the appropriate Title IX coordinator, that is, the person responsible for addressing sexual harassment within the Harvard community. The Title IX coordinator also will handle your information carefully, maintaining as much privacy as possible.

***Confidential Resources:*** These people are able to adhere to strict standards of confidentiality and can help you think through your situation and options, without sharing what you have told them other than in limited circumstances. There are a few exceptions to their ability to maintain confidentiality and you can ask about those exceptions before you speak to them.

***Deans, Advisors, Faculty Members, Campus Administrators, Coaches, and Residential Life Staff:*** Deans, advisors, faculty members, campus administrators, coaches, and residential life staff will keep the information that you provide as private as possible, meaning that they will only share it with those who have a need to know. For example, they may need to disclose what you tell them to the appropriate Title IX coordinator.

***Title IX Officer and Title IX Coordinators:*** The University-wide Title IX Officer and the SPH Title IX coordinators can speak with you about your options, support services, and how to file a complaint. They, too, will handle your information carefully, maintaining as much privacy as possible, but may need to share it with those who have a need to know. Each school has Title IX coordinators designated to receive complaints against students, as well as against faculty and against staff.

***Medical professionals, social workers, rape-crisis counselors, and clergy:*** Medical professionals at Harvard include licensed clinicians at Harvard University Health Services (HUHS) and the University Mental Health Services. These professionals have certain standards of confidentiality. Similarly, rape crisis counselors, including counselors at the Office of Sexual Assault Prevention & Response (OSAPR), have certain confidentiality standards. Rape crisis counselors also are available at the Boston Area Rape Crisis Center (BARCC). BARCC also coordinates counseling and legal assistance resources. Harvard clergy also have certain standards of confidentiality.

In all instances, it is always best to first have a conversation about keeping information private or confidential, and what both of those mean in regards to your conversation with the professional.

Your Title IX coordinator or OSAPR can let you know if other resources are available.

### *Working with the Police*

If you have experienced sexual violence or other sexual harassment that you believe may rise to the level of a violation of criminal law, you may make a report to HUPD. All HUPD officers, male and female, are qualified to handle crimes of a sensitive nature. In addition, HUPD offers the Rape Aggression Defense (RAD) system, which is a free program dedicated to teaching hands-on defense training. For information, visit the HUPD Web site at [www.hupd.harvard.edu/prevention\\_defense.php](http://www.hupd.harvard.edu/prevention_defense.php)

It is never too late to TELL SOMEONE. You may contact any of the above resources at any time. If you have been sexually harassed, you deserve and will receive support.

### *If you or a friend have been raped or sexually assaulted:*

1. Get to a safe place as soon as possible.
2. Ask a friend or someone else you trust to be with you.
3. Call one of these organizations for help and support:
  - Office of Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (24 hours) / **617-495-9100**
  - Harvard University Police Department / **617-495-1212**  
(provides transportation to the Beth Israel Hospital or a hospital of your choice.)
  - Harvard University Health Services | **617-495-5711**
  - Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center | **617-667-8141**
  - Rape Crisis Intervention Center | **617-667-8141**
  - Boston Area Rape Crisis Center | **617-492-8306** or **1-800-841-8371**
  - Cambridge Police Department / **617-349-3300**

### *What happens next?*

If you are experiencing harassment and would like assistance in deciding a course of action, you can talk to the resources listed in this brochure. Designated Title IX coordinators can talk to you about the University's responsibility to respond and protect its students from sexual harassment, including sexual violence; can explain and, as appropriate, offer interim measures; answer questions about the complaint process; and address concerns about potential retaliation. Copies of the procedures for making a complaint are available at the following sites:

Students: Student Handbook regarding complaints against students,  
<http://www.SPH.harvard.edu/student-handbook/appendix/appendix-b-disciplinary-procedures>

Student handbook regarding grievance procedures regarding student complaints against faculty or staff: <http://www.SPH.harvard.edu/student-handbook/appendix/appendix-c-grievance-procedures-for-students>

Faculty: For complaints by faculty members against other faculty members or staff members: [SPH Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedures for Faculty](#)

Non-Faculty Academic Appointees:

For complaints by non-faculty academic appointees with complaints regarding other academic appointees (faculty members and non-faculty academic appointees) or staff members: [SPH Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedures for Non-Faculty Academic Appointees](#)

Staff: The Harvard University Sexual Harassment and Drug-Free Workplace document: [http://harvie.harvard.edu/system/files/Forms/Labor\\_Employee\\_Relations/Personnel Manual/sexualharassmentbrochure.pdf](http://harvie.harvard.edu/system/files/Forms/Labor_Employee_Relations/Personnel_Manual/sexualharassmentbrochure.pdf)

In addition, in cases of sexual violence or potential criminal violations, SPH strongly encourages students to consider reporting the assault to the police and filing charges with the Office of the District Attorney of Middlesex County. Advice on the legal options and process is available from the Victim/Witness Bureau listed in this brochure; OSAPR staff, the Title IX Coordinator or HUPD can assist you in contacting them.

## ***Resources***

### ***INDIVIDUALS***

Title IX Coordinator for Complaints against Students: Stacey Herman, Associate Dean for Student Services, Kresge Room G-10, 677 Huntington Ave., Boston, MA 02115, [sherman@SPH.harvard.edu](mailto:sherman@SPH.harvard.edu), | 617-432-4703.

Title IX Coordinator for Complaints against Faculty and Non-Faculty Academic Appointees: Dr. Mahnaz El-Kouedi, Associate Dean of Faculty Affairs, 90 Smith St. First Floor, Boston, MA 02120, [elkouedi@SPH.harvard.edu](mailto:elkouedi@SPH.harvard.edu), | 617-432-1381.

Title IX Coordinator for Complaints against Staff: Linda Picard, Senior Director of Human Resources, 90 Smith Street Suite 141, Boston, MA, 02120, [lpicard@SPH.harvard.edu](mailto:lpicard@SPH.harvard.edu), | 617-432-2719.

Director, Office of Sexual Assault Prevention and Response: Alicia Oeser, Director, Office of Sexual Assault Prevention and Response, 731 Holyoke Center, 1350 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge MA 02138, [oeser@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:oeser@fas.harvard.edu), | 617-496-5636.

### ***UNIVERSITY SERVICES***

Office of Sexual Assault Prevention & Response | 617-495-9100

University Mental Health Services | 617-495-2042

Harvard University Health Services | 617-495-5711

Harvard Chaplains | 617-495-5529

Harvard University Police Department | 617-495-1212

### ***COMMUNITY RESOURCES***

Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center's Rape Crisis Intervention Center | 617-667-8141

Boston Area Rape Crisis Center | 617-492-8306 or 1-800-841-8371

Cambridge Police Department Sexual Assault Unit | 617-349-9342

The Cambridge Hospital Victims of Violence Program | 617-591-6360

Middlesex District Attorney Victim/Witness Bureau | 781-897-8490

Victim Rights Law Center | 617-399-6720