

6 Strategies for Responding in the Moment

How can you ensure a safe and helpful conversation if a student or employee discloses information to you about an incident of alleged sexual harassment? Refer to these 6 strategies in the moment to make sure you fulfill your duties as a mandatory reporter employee.

1 Know your policy.

Familiarize yourself with your institution's sexual harassment policy. Note pieces such as:

- How your institution defines and responds to sexual harassment.
- What supportive measures your institution offers.

2 Know your boundaries.

You have a duty to inform the Title IX Coordinator of any alleged harassment disclosed to you, but the complainant will always decide whether to report the incident to the police.

Contact the police immediately if you believe the complainant is not safe.

3 Listen without judgment.

- a. Stay calm and offer to find a private space to talk.
- b. Disclose your duty to notify the Title IX Coordinator early in the conversation.
- c. Assure complainants of their privacy but explain you cannot guarantee confidentiality.
- d. Refrain from asking questions other than those to assess personal safety.
- e. Avoid using victim-blaming language, like questions that begin with "why?"

4 Share supportive measures.

Measures could include advocacy support, counseling or medical support.

5 Answer questions.

Offer time to address the complainant's questions about policies and procedures, including questions about the Title IX Coordinator's role.

6 Provide your contact information.

Offer your contact information and that of your Title IX Coordinator.