

Sexual Violence Survivor's Guide

Resources to aid in your recovery

UMASS Lowell



CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY RESOURCES AND SERVICES

UMass Lowell is committed to the safety and security of the campus community, and is dedicated to providing accessible resources for survivors of sexual assault. All services listed here are free. Please remember, filing a police report is not necessary in order to receive help.

Any person who is a survivor of sexual violence or harassment has the right to file a Title IX complaint with a Title IX Coordinator or Deputy Coordinator

Student Reporting

Annie Ciaraldi, Associate Dean of Student Affairs for Compliance and Violence Prevention
Title IX Deputy Coordinator
Student Affairs, University Crossing, Suite 200
Phone: 978-934-2100
Email: Ann_Ciaraldi@uml.edu
Website: www.uml.edu/prevent

Employee or Student Reporting

Clara Orlando, Director of Equal Opportunity and Outreach, UMASS Lowell Title IX Coordinator
Human Resources, Wannalancit, 3rd floor
Phone: 978-934-3567
Email: Clara_Orlando@uml.edu
Website: www.uml.edu/prevent

If you would like to file a complaint with the University's Conduct Office please contact

Bohdan Zaryckyj, Coordinator of Conduct / Title IX Deputy Coordinator
Student Affairs, University Crossing, Suite 200
Phone: 978-934-5068
Email: Bohdan_Zaryckyj@uml.edu
Website: <http://www.uml.edu/student-services/Student-Conduct/default.aspx>

If you would like to file a police report please contact the University Police Department

Emergency Phone: 978-934-4911 Non-Emergency Phone: 978-934-2398
University Crossing, Suite 170

If you would like to file an anonymous report please contact the University Counseling Center or a Campus Minister

Counseling Center: 978-934-6800, University Crossing, Wellness Center, 3rd floor

Campus Ministry: Catholic Ministry, Bernadine Kensinger
Phone: 978-934-5032

Protestant Ministry, Imogene Stulken
Phone: 978-934-5104

Christian Student Fellowship, Chris A. James and Patrick Schwartz
Phone: 978-934-5063

There are resources at the University and in the Community providing support, counseling, and guidance, as well as confidential reporting:

Dr. John Pakstis, Director
UMass Lowell Counseling Services
Wellness Center, University Crossing, 3rd floor
Phone: 978-934-6800
Website: <http://www.uml.edu/student-services/counseling/>
Email: Counseling@uml.edu

Diana Walker-Moyer, Associate Director of Student Health Services
UMass Lowell Health Services
Wellness Center, University Crossing, 3rd floor
Phone: 978-934-6800
Website: <http://www.uml.edu/student-services/health>
Email: Health_Services@uml.edu

The Center for Hope & Healing: Agency of Rape Crisis Services of Greater Lowell, Inc.
114 Merrimack St. Suite 304, Lowell, MA 01852
24 hour Hotline: 1-800-542-5212 Phone: 978-452-7721
Website: <http://www.centerforhopehealing.org>

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YOU HAVE SURVIVED A TRAUMA

Rape and sexual assault are traumatic experiences that may interrupt your life at home, work and school, affecting your relationships with friends, family, and co-workers. This guide can help you begin sorting out your emotions and concerns and to understand the facts surrounding sexual assault.

You have survived, and now you can begin to recover. Although this process is often slow and confusing, with understanding and persistence you can accomplish a great deal. You have control over how you recover.

The reassurance and support of friends, family, or significant others is very important during this time, but their reaction to your experience may not be what you anticipate or would like it to be. People in your life will react in different ways; some may express blame, others may give you their full support. If you feel ready, you should allow those who offer their support to help you through this period – it will aid you in your recovery process. But the decision to talk about your experience is a personal choice. You do not have to share your experience with anyone until you feel ready.

When you are ready, UMASS Lowell's services can help, and there are services in the community ready to assist you too. Please see the "Campus and Community Resources and Services" to know what is available to you.

FACTS ABOUT SEXUAL VIOLENCE

The first step in recovery is to know the facts. "Sexual Violence" is a general term that includes rape, date or acquaintance rape, marital rape, incest, sexual harassment, voyeurism and indecent exposure. Sexual assault is a violent act committed primarily by a perpetrator who needs to feel powerful and in control by forcing someone else to participate in unwanted sexual activity.

Often the victim fears for his or her life or physical well-being and feels that there is no choice but to do what the attacker wants. But submission does not equal consent. If you submit, it does not mean that you agreed to or accepted the situation. A victim is never responsible for being sexual assaulted. The responsibility for the assault lies with the attacker.

You have rights under the law, under Title IX, and under the Student Conduct Code; you have the right to file charges. You have the right to be free of retaliation from the alleged perpetrator of your assault or from anyone associated with him or her. You have the right to seek medical and psychological care.

WHAT TO DO TO HELP YOURSELF

Sexual assault can cause significant trauma and disrupt your physical and emotional health. Your recovery path will take many stages, but the important thing is to take care of yourself.

IMMEDIATE ACTION AFTER BEING SEXUAL ASSAULTED

If you have been sexually assaulted, it is important to see a doctor as soon as possible and definitely before washing or taking a shower so that physical evidence can be collected. Even though you may not feel ready at this time to consider filing charges against your attacker, the physical evidence will be preserved in case you decide to press charges at a later date. You can call an ambulance, tell a staff member, or ask a friend to bring you to the hospital; no matter how you get there, be sure to get immediate medical attention. Remember, you do not need to file a police report to get help. In this area, Lawrence General Hospital is the closest SANE (sexual assault nurse examiner) site; it is beneficial for you to be examined by a SANE Nurse so that you are well taken care of, and evidence is properly collected.

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF PHYSICALLY

The idea of seeing a doctor may seem unpleasant, but it is important for you to see a medical professional. Medical attention will help your immediate physical health and may prevent further damage to your health. You don't have to go alone; having a friend or family member with you during the examination may help you feel at ease during the procedure. *A rape crisis counselor from the Center for Hope and Healing may also be able to arrange for an advocate to accompany you.*

Ask your medical professional to explain what she or he is doing before the examination so that you know what to expect. Make sure your medical professional understands your situation. You may be more sensitive than a person who hasn't been assaulted and may need more time and reassurance during medical procedures, no matter how routine. You have the right to interrupt or refuse any medical procedure you do not wish to undergo.

You can get treatment for your physical injuries and be tested for sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) either at a hospital or by your private doctor. Early detection of STDs is very important. Discuss any medical concerns you have with your doctor or counselor, but do not let concerns and fears prevent you from receiving the medical treatment you need and deserve. Many sexual assault survivors find that receiving medical attention helps them regain a sense of control over their bodies.

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF EMOTIONALLY

Many sexual assault survivors feel isolated in the aftermath of the assault. In order to reduce those feelings, reach out for support to those who you are close to you; call family members, friends, or a counselor from the Center for Hope and Healing. It might help you feel better to have someone to talk to, and you might want people around you so that you feel safe.

Consider professional support or counseling; having someone to talk to about how you are feeling may help you to deal with the emotions you are experiencing. Additionally, a counselor can help you express your needs to others and learn how to get those needs met.

CONSIDER YOUR LEGAL RIGHTS AND KNOW WHAT SERVICES ARE AVAILABLE ON AND OFF CAMPUS

One of the most important decisions you may struggle with is whether or not to report the crime to the police (either University or local depending on where the assault occurred), the Campus Conduct Staff or the Title IX Coordinator. Whether or not you decide to press charges, you deserve support and should know about the range of services available to you.

1. You may report the crime to the police and still decide not to prosecute.
2. You may report the crime to the police and decide to prosecute. Within the court system you have the right to be notified of judicial proceedings against the accused and be present. You have the right to have an advocate present with you for support. You may have the right to provide a victim's impact statement if there is a sentencing hearing.
3. You have the right to file a Title IX complaint against the alleged perpetrator; in this process the complaint will be investigated and the findings turned over to the conduct office for adjudication.
4. You have the right to report the assault to the Campus Conduct Office where the University will seek conduct charges against the alleged perpetrator. Your rights and the process for these proceedings are found in the Student Code of Conduct.

COUNSELING

Sexual Assault can change your feelings about yourself and those around you. You may not feel the way you did before the assault – physically, emotionally, socially, or sexually. Counseling can help you deal with these issues and aid you in your recovery. There are different options for you to choose from when seeking counseling; you may seek assistance here on campus at the Counseling Center. You may choose to seek counseling at the Center for Hope and Healing in the City of Lowell, or you may seek private therapy outside of the University. No matter where you seek help, be sure the therapist or counselor has experience working with survivors of sexual assault or violence.

INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING

Counselors will listen, clarify, support and explore options with you. Individual counseling sessions with a supportive counselor can help you identify issues you would like to resolve regarding the assault. Together you will develop appropriate and attainable goals for yourself.

GROUP COUNSELING

Group counseling will give you the opportunity to share your feelings with other survivors, and although each person recovers at a different pace, group counseling provides an environment

in which survivors can share their experiences along with their techniques for recovery. Many group members find inspiration and motivation in the stories of other survivors and get a unique kind of support that helps them return to the lives they led before the assault.

YOUR RESPONSE TO SEXUAL ASSAULT

Your response to an assault may cover a wide range of physical and emotional symptoms, even some that may not seem to result directly from the attack. Learning to recognize these responses will help you gain control of them. You may experience these symptoms immediately or later in your life, or you may never experience any of them. Every survivor responds differently. You may even experience some symptoms that are not on this list.

POSSIBLE PHYSICAL RESPONSES AND SYMPTOMS

Muscle tension	Changes in sleeping patterns	Pain
Shortness or breath	Changes in eating patterns	Flashbacks
Injury	Nightmares	Fatigue
Involuntary shaking	Gynecological disturbances	Sexual dysfunction

POSSIBLE EMOTIONAL RESPONSES AND SYMPTOMS

Feeling dirty	Suicidal thoughts	Anxiety
Denial	Shock/numbness	Preoccupation with safety
Relief	Guilt or self-blame	Shame
Fear	Grief	Depression

POSSIBLE EMOTIONAL RESPONSES AND SYMPTOMS (Continued)

Loss of trust	Feeling stuck	Indecision
Anger	Crying, or inability to cry	Irritability
Apprehension	Feeling of loss of control over one's life	
Changes in perception of the world		

POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER

If you have experienced a sexual assault you may be left with painful wounds that are invisible to others but very real to you. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) can occur when people experience terrifying situations that they cannot control. In cases of sexual assault symptoms can include all of the responses listed previously. These symptoms can intrude into your daily life and prevent you from working, maintaining relationships, or completing everyday tasks. If you feel this is happening, you may want to seek help. A counselor or therapist can help you identify and overcome PTSD, which is a normal reaction to a violent assault.

VICTIMS WITH PTSD MIGHT ENCOUNTER:

- Intrusive flashbacks, dreams, dwelling on the assault
- Persistent or intense distress, anxiety, panic attacks, stress, sleep disturbance, irritability, fear, anger, apprehension, indecision, difficulty in concentrating, being easily startled, heightened awareness, and sensitivity
- Feelings of detachment, feeling like you are a different person now
- Persistent avoidance of people, places, things associated with the assault
- Ambivalence or uncertainty about the future
- Avoidance of normal daily activity
- Depression
- Reliving the event as if it were still occurring

SOME ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The following list may help you feel better about your experience since the assault:

- Accept that many of your responses are normal even if they do not feel comfortable.
- Coping means different things to different people. Develop a routine that is comfortable for you and that has a positive outcome. Having a routine can be very stabilizing in the face of traumatic stress.
- Recognize that your assault will also affect others around you and their responses may vary.
- Take care of your health. A regular diet can lead to well-being. Sugar and caffeine can increase your stress level. Alcohol and drugs may delay reactions and ultimately make them worse.
- If you find you are abusing alcohol or drugs, you should see a counselor immediately.
- Allow time for adequate amounts of rest and relaxation. Some techniques to consider are meditation, deep breathing, listening to music, reading, religious rituals or anything that focuses and relaxes you.
- Physical activity is a great stress-reducer, even a short walk. Try to work some exercise into your daily routine.
- We all need people. Social contact can make you feel less isolated and more connected. Supportive listeners can include friends, family, religious leaders, teachers, professors, professional counselors, or counseling groups.

Recovery takes time. Patience and understanding are important in the recovery process. In addition to the support of friends, family, and loved ones, there are counselors at the UMASS Lowell Counseling Center, counselors at the Center for Hope and Healing, and other University personnel who can assist you. All of these people are here to help you and can play an important role in your healing process.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR SURVIVORS

ON CAMPUS RESOURCES: LOWELL AND HAVERHILL CAMPUSES

Campus Resources	Address/Location on Campus	Phone Number
University Police	University Crossing Suite 170 220 Pawtucket St., Lowell, MA 01854	Emergency Phone: 978-934-4911 Non-emergency Phone: 978-934-2398 Website: http://www.uml.edu/police Email: Police@uml.edu
UML Counseling Services	University Crossing, Wellness Center, 3 rd Floor Lowell, MA 01854	Phone: 978-934-4331 Website: http://www.uml.edu/student-services/counseling/ Email: Counseling@uml.edu
UML Health Services (including Health Wellness)	University Crossing, Wellness Center, 3 rd Floor Lowell, MA 01854	Phone: 978-934-4991 Website: http://www.uml.edu/student-services/health Email: Health_Services@uml.edu
University EMS	Donahue Hall EMS Office First Floor 91 Pawtucket St. Lowell, MA 01854	Emergency Phone: 978-934-4911 Non-emergency phone: 978-934-4785 Website: http://www.uml.edu/uml-ems/ Email: UMass_EMS@uml.edu
Office of Equal Opportunity & Outreach	Wannalancit Room 301 600 Suffolk St, Lowell, MA 01854	Phone: 978-934-3560 Website: http://www.uml.edu/hr Email: Clara_Orlando@uml.edu
Human Resources (Title IX Coordinator)	Director of Equal Opportunity & Outreach, UMASS Lowell Title IX Coordinator Wannalancit Suite 301 600 Suffolk St, Lowell, MA 01854	Phone: 978-934-3567 Email: Clara_Orlando@uml.edu Website: http://www.uml.edu/hr
Campus Ministry & Religious Organizations	Catholic Ministry University Crossing, 3 rd Floor Lowell, MA 01854	Phone: 978-934-5032 Email: Catholic_Center@uml.edu Website: http://www.uml.edu/student-services/Campus-Ministry.aspx

	<p>Protestant Ministry University Crossing, 3rd Floor Lowell, MA 01854</p>	<p>Phone: 978-934-5104</p> <p>Email: Catholic_Center@uml.edu</p> <p>Website: http://www.uml.edu/student-services/Campus-Ministry.aspx</p>
	<p>Christian Student Fellowship University Crossing, 3rd Floor Lowell, MA 01854</p>	<p>Phone: 978-934-5063</p> <p>Email: Catholic_Center@uml.edu</p> <p>Website: http://www.uml.edu/student-services/Campus-Ministry.aspx</p>
Office of Multicultural Student Affairs	University Crossing, 3 rd Floor, Lowell, MA 01854	<p>Phone: 978-934-4336</p> <p>Email: Multicultural_Affairs@uml.edu</p> <p>Website: http://www.uml.edu/student-services/multicultural/</p>
The Wellness Corporation (Employee Assistance Program)		<p>Phone: 1- 800-828-6025</p> <p>Website: http://wellnesscorp.personaladvantage.com/</p>

Thanks to the City of Lowell's Center for Hope and Healing, UMASS Lowell Counseling Center, UMASS Lowell Student Health Center, and the NY State Safe Horizon Rape Crisis Program for the information in this guide.