

# RESPONDING TO A DISCLOSURE OF **SEXUAL HARASSMENT**



## HOW TO FILE A REPORT

**Be sure** to file your report without delay.

**Include** all known information in your report.

**Be sure** to include your identity and contact information.

**Email:** [apatascher@northampton.edu](mailto:apatascher@northampton.edu)

**Web:** [northampton.edu/titleix](http://northampton.edu/titleix)

**Phone:** 570.369.1960

A GUIDE FOR FACULTY AND STAFF

REMEMBER

# SILVER

When someone discloses to you that they have been harmed, remember the acronym **SILVER**.

## S

### **Safety:**

If this is an active situation call Public Safety.

## I

### **Inform:**

Inform of your role as a required reporter.

## L

### **Listen:**

Listen without judgment.

## V

### **Validate:**

Validate their feelings and reactions.

## E

### **Empower:**

Empower them with choices.

## R

### **Refer, Resources, Report:**

Refer to Resources and Report!



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[northampton.edu/titleix](http://northampton.edu/titleix)  
570.369.1960

## INITIAL RESPONSE

- **Ensure immediate safety.** When someone discloses to you that they have been harmed, you want to ensure their immediate safety! (physical, medical, mental health)
- **Inform Individual of your obligation to report.** It is important to be upfront about your duty to report. While it may dissuade someone from reporting, it is better to be transparent. Frame your duty to report as one designed to help them get the support they need. Your duty to report stems from our commitment to getting our community members the information and resources needed to make an informed decision about next steps, if they want to take any.
- **File a report.**



View NCC's Title IX policy at [northampton.edu/titleix](https://northampton.edu/titleix) for more information.

## SAMPLE SCRIPT

“

.....

I really appreciate you sharing this with me, and I want to help you. I need to let you know, though, that as a (insert your role) at Northampton Community College (NCC), I have an obligation to report any incidents involving things like sex- or gender-based discrimination, harassment, or violence when I become aware of them. My duty to report stems from NCC's commitment to getting our community members the information and resources needed to make an informed decision about next steps, if they want to take any.

So I'll need to let our Title IX Coordinator, Alyson Patascher, know about what you've just told me. [pause]

I want you to know that, while I cannot keep what you've told me confidential, I can keep it private.

I'm only telling people I need to tell, and they only share the information with other people who need to know. Only a very limited group of people will know. Does that make sense? [pause]

We have this policy so that when people are experiencing these kinds of challenges we can help them understand their rights, options, and resources.

.....”

## TIPS FOR RESPONDING

- **Do NOT investigate.** Investigating allegations of sexual violence and harassment is the responsibility of law enforcement and the Title IX Office. By conducting your own investigation, you may compromise any potential formal investigations that take place later.
- **Lead with empathy without judgment or blame.** There's no right or wrong way to respond to trauma and you can express compassion in many different ways. It's ok to say “I'm sorry that happened to you,” or “How can I support you?”
- **Practice active listening.** Empower the individual to talk about their experience at their own pace. Turn it into a conversation
- **Encourage them to preserve evidence.** While there is no time limit on reporting, some evidence may no longer be accessible after a certain amount of time.
- **Provide them with resources.** Direct them to [northampton.edu/titleix](https://northampton.edu/titleix) for more information.
- **Be available to answer questions about next steps.** If you don't know the answer, contact the Title IX Coordinator for more information.
- **Take care of yourself.** Make sure you utilize resources including the Employee Assistance Program (EAP).