

# Safety Week Fall 2023 - SEXUAL MISCONDUCT PREVENTION

Faculty, staff, and students of the University of St. Thomas are expected to commit themselves to be examples of the highest standards of personal and professional conduct. As an educational institution, UST affirms by this policy statement that acts of sex and gender-based harassment are detrimental to the integrity of the institution and cannot be tolerated in our community. The University will take prompt and equitable action to eliminate sex and/or gender-based harassment, prevent its recurrence, and remedy its effects, no matter if the conduct occurred on or off-campus when it has the propensity to create a hostile environment on campus.

The University of St. Thomas (“UST”, “St. Thomas” or “the University”) is committed to providing timely support and assistance to victims and/or survivors of sexual misconduct, interpersonal violence, and/or gendered harassment.

“Sexual misconduct” is an umbrella term that refers collectively to the below offenses that are prohibited by the University of St. Thomas. Those offenses are the following:

- Sexual Harassment
- Sexual Assault, which includes Non-Consensual Sexual Penetration and Sexual Touching
- Forms of Interpersonal Violence or Intimate Partner Violence, which include Dating Violence and Domestic Violence
- Sexual Exploitation
- Stalking, regardless of if it occurs in the context of an intimate relationship
- Non-sexual gender-based harassment and discrimination

Students or employees who experience an incident of sexual misconduct or one of the other prohibited offenses should consider the information and resources provided below.

## EMERGENCY INFORMATION

### **FOR IMMEDIATE ASSISTANCE**

1. Confidential Support: Any student in need of immediate emotional support should contact Counseling and Disability Services and request to speak with a confidential counselor (after hours, contact the police department or your housing staff to access the counselor on call). You may also access the Counseling and Disability Services website, [www.stthom.edu/CDS](http://www.stthom.edu/CDS). Survivors (employees or students) may also contact AVDA (sexual and domestic violence resource center off campus) to speak with a confidential advocate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by calling (713) 224-9911. Access the AVDA website at [www.avda-tx.org](http://www.avda-tx.org).
2. Reporting: Students and employees are *strongly* encouraged to report sexual misconduct or other prohibited conduct to University authorities and the police in order to protect themselves and others. Even if the survivor does not want to make a formal incident report with the University or cooperate with law enforcement, he or she still may have the right to other victims’ services, including reasonable accommodations and interim protective measures in addition to support services. To file a report, any person can contact any of the following or file a report online at [www.stthom.edu/sexualmisconduct](http://www.stthom.edu/sexualmisconduct):
  - a. **Title IX Coordinator for Students:** (available during regular business hours) Ben Nguyen, Dean of Students, 3909 Graustark, Room 215Q, Crooker Center, [deanofstudents@stthom.edu](mailto:deanofstudents@stthom.edu), (713) 525-3570.
  - b. **Title IX Coordinator for Employees:** (available during regular business hours) Human Resources, 3818 Graustark Street, Room 104, [titleixcoord@stthom.edu](mailto:titleixcoord@stthom.edu), (713) 525-3818

*Reporting to the Title IX Coordinator will not result in a criminal investigation but will result in an administrative investigation to determine if this policy was violated. If the incident occurred on campus, limited information will be shared with the UST Police for purposes of determining if a Timely Warning Notice should be sent out to the community and for purposes of capturing and counting crime data.*

- c. UST Police Department (available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week) (713) 525-3888 [www.stthom.edu/police](http://www.stthom.edu/police).

*Reporting to the UST Police may initiate a criminal investigation into your complaint. The UST police will also determine if a Timely Warning Notice should be sent out to the community and will capture and count the crime date if the offense was reported to have occurred on campus or on a property owned or controlled by the institution. The UST police will report your complaint to the Title IX Coordinator. You can tell the police as much or as little as you would like.*

- d. Houston Police Department: (available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week) **Call 911 for emergencies or (713) 837-0311**. Visit the Houston PD's website, [www.houstontx.gov/police](http://www.houstontx.gov/police), for more information or to obtain the address or contact information for a specific division within the PD.

*Important Note-* The Houston PD may not share the details of your report with UST (however, the campus police must notify the Title IX Coordinator of a report made to their office). If you report to the city police, you should also report to the Title IX Coordinator so on-campus accommodations, interim protective measures, and resources may be provided, like change in class schedule, housing, work location, or transportation options if you request these and if they are reasonably available.

**Hospitals in and around the Houston area:**

Memorial Hermann Hospital	6411 Fannin Street Houston, Texas 77030 (713) 704-1261	Forensic Nurse Response Team available at any Memorial Hermann Hospital in the greater Houston area
Ben Taub Hospital	1504 Ben Taub Loop Houston, Texas 77030 (713) 873-2000	Forensic Kits available

**STRATEGIES FOR AVOIDING SEXUAL ASSAULT:**

**General Guidelines:**

- If approached by someone you sense to be a potential threat, try to stay out of reach.
- If you feel you are in danger of being attacked, try to escape the situation by running away if you can.
- Try in any way you can to attract attention to yourself. Scream "Call 911!"
- Trust your instincts. If a person, place, or situation makes you uneasy, leave or change it immediately.

someone you do not know arrive separately and meet in a public place.

- Be assertive. Speak up if a situation makes you uncomfortable. Make it clear that paying for a meal does not entitle him to anything else, or offer to pay your own way.
- Set your own limits and communicate these limits to your date.

**Reducing Your Risk on Dates:**

- Find out more about your date. Go beyond the basics. Ask about his feelings towards men/women and relationships. If he/she is

**Reducing your Risk at Home (Residence Halls):**

- Make sure your home (residence hall) has a door viewer and a deadbolt lock.
- Make sure all entrances are well-lit.
- Keep your blinds and curtains closed at night.

#### Reducing your Risk at Parties:

- When you go to a party or club, go with friends. Arrive together, watch out for each other, and leave together.
- Don't leave your beverage unattended or accept a drink from an open container.
- Don't leave with a stranger, no matter how attractive or persuasive he or she may be.

#### Reducing your Risk at your Vehicle:

- Always lock your vehicle when leaving and entering it.

- Have your keys in hand so you do not have to search for them.
- Look in the back seat before entering your vehicle.

#### Reducing your Risk on the Street:

- When walking alone, act self-assured and confident that you know where you are going.
- Walk on the traffic side of the sidewalk, not close to alleyways and bushes.
- If you suspect that someone is following you cross the street or walk quickly to a well-lit, well-populated location.

For more information about sexual misconduct or code of conduct violations visit: <https://www.stthom.edu/dos>