

# AFTER SEXUAL VIOLENCE

## A Guide to a Supportive, Compassionate Response

2020 Policy Update Version

*The Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Office (SVPRO) is a confidential place for those who have been impacted by any form of sexual or gender-based violence, harassment, or harm, regardless of where or when it took place. SVPRO aims to be a safer space for all UBC students, faculty, and staff by respecting each person's unique and multiple identities and experiences. All genders and sexualities are welcome.*

### What is sexual violence?

Sexualized violence, referred to in UBC policy as "sexual misconduct," includes sexual assault, harassment, and other forms of harm related to sex, sexuality, gender, gender identity, or gender expression. Other examples include indecent exposure, stalking, voyeurism, and recording or distributing photos or videos without consent.

### SVPRO Services for Staff:

- Confidential **consultations** related to disclosures of sexual misconduct, incidents, programs, trainings, events, and departmental climate
- **Support** services for survivors\* including safety planning and the implementation of safety measures, academic concessions, workplace supports, and more
- Continuing **Education** opportunities towards the prevention of sexualized violence

\* not all individuals who have experienced sexualized violence will identify with the term survivor. We use the term interchangeably with variations of "person who experienced harm" or "impacted individual" to make room for the different ways people choose to identify.

**SVPRO is a survivor-centred space.**

**Reporting is NOT required to access support**

📍 6363 Agronomy Road, 4th floor, Room 4071  
Office Hours: Monday-Friday 8:30am-4:30pm

✉ svpro.vancouver@ubc.ca. | 🖥 svpro.ubc.ca

📞 604-822-1588 - now available 24/7  
in partnership with WAVAW Rape Crisis Centre.

**WE BELIEVE YOU**

**UBC** Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Office

# Key Principles of UBC's Sexual Misconduct Policy

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**Intersectionality:** Everyone's experience is inherently influenced by the unique nexus of their identities, histories, and geographies; and what is safe and accessible for each person may look different given their relationship to systems of oppression and marginalization. We will respect and support every survivor's decisions.

**Culture Change:** UBC recognizes the institution's role in countering rape culture, including the attitudes, behaviours, and policies that undermine equity and autonomy.

**Trauma-informed:** Respecting an impacted individual's right to self-determination throughout the process, including whether or not to report. Steps are taken to mitigate trauma activation. *Support from SVPRO is completely separate from the reporting system, which is overseen by the Investigations Office.*

**Power-informed:** In recognition of the impact of a power imbalance on a person's relative ability to give voluntary consent, faculty and staff are prohibited from engaging in a relationship with a student if they could impact that student's academics, work or future career or studies.

**Procedural Fairness:** An impartial process rooted in transparency and upholding the right of all parties to be heard.

## Role of Staff under the Sexual Misconduct Policy

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Staff members play a critical role in supporting the wellbeing of survivors and achieving the goals of the Sexual Misconduct Policy in a number of areas:

- Providing a trauma informed response to a disclosure of sexualized violence (see next page)
- Administering support services that survivors have access to under the Sexual Misconduct Policy (see Support Services on the next page)
- Upholding privacy by not sharing any information regarding the disclosure until you have consulted with SVPRO about what (if anything) needs to be shared and with whom, in order to protect confidentiality and minimize retraumatization
- Maintaining the survivor's right to choice and control by respecting their decisions about reporting. The Sexual Misconduct Policy directs staff and faculty NOT to report a disclosure unless asked to do so by the survivor. Instead consult SVPRO regarding next steps.
- Taking responsibility for creating and sustaining a culture of consent in the workplace, including online.

Under the Academic Concession Policy, no documentation is required for a first concession on compassionate grounds, and documentation from SVPRO or other support services can be provided for subsequent concessions.

For questions about a concession request related to sexualized violence, please contact SVPRO for a consultation.

If you receive a disclosure that involves a possibility of harm to anyone in the UBC community, or may involve a need for medical assessment, please contact SVPRO immediately at 604-822-1588

# SVPRO Support Services

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- safety planning
- hospital and police accompaniment
- coordination of safety measures
- residence re-location or short term emergency housing
- access to available emergency funding
- class schedule changes
- academic concessions
- temporary work reassignment, location reassignment, or scheduling changes

These and other SVPRO support services are available to those impacted by sexualized violence in any form, including those who have been targeted, have witnessed an incident, or have supported a survivor. *All support services are available for Faculty and staff, not limited to those supporting students.*

*SVPRO also offers training and resources around responding to workplace incidents, anti-sexism/ harassment, supporting survivors/responding to disclosures, and more. This training supports leadership staff in working towards cultures of consent and safety for their teams. Connect with SVPRO to learn more.*

## Providing a Trauma-Informed Response to a Disclosure

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### 1. Recognize a Disclosure

- Someone tells you about their experience. It may be recent, or something from the past. Sometimes people do not explicitly state that they have experienced sexualized violence. If sexuality or gender is involved and harm occurred consider it a disclosure.
- People who have been harmed present in very different ways, including emotional expression that can be heightened or appear non-existent. How someone presents does not give us information about seriousness/severity, or that persons' needs.
- A disclosure is not the same thing as a report. Reports are made to the Investigations Office (IO) if the person who experienced harm chooses to report to UBC. It is entirely up to them. The IO can provide confidential consultations to anyone who is thinking of making a report.

### 2. Respond with Empathy

- Focus on supporting the person who disclosed to you rather than finding out what happened.
- In order to mitigate trauma impact, the most vital messages to communicate are that it is not their fault, you believe them, and they deserve support, whatever form they may want that to take.

### 3. Refer for Support

- Centre the survivor and their wishes. Ask what support they need right now. Let them know what supports are available. Help make a connection to support.
- Sometimes someone discloses for a specific purpose, such as a need for an academic concession or a safe place to stay. If so, let them know SVPRO can help survivors access and coordinate campus services specific to their need, without the survivor having to retell their story.

## Staff Roles and Confidentiality

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- To protect privacy, we keep information about Sexualized Violence confidential, which means we only share it when required, and we inform someone if we will have to share what they tell us. Supervisory requirements may apply to us; they are not a breach of confidentiality and are provided for in the Sexual Misconduct Policy.
- To maintain privacy where information sharing may be necessary, an explanation of *why* this occurs can mitigate anxiety about the unknown. A response should also focus on what the person who experienced harm can control. The way the necessity of information sharing is communicated to the person can significantly impact their experience of disclosing.

*Example: We work as a team in our department to make sure anyone who has experienced harm gets the best possible information and response. I will need to let my supervisor know about this conversation, but I do not need to share any details. Our supervisors receive additional training so they have more information about next steps and resources. If you like, you can connect with them directly, or I can let my supervisor know we spoke. There's also a great confidential resource on campus, the Sexual Violence Prevention & Response Office (SVPRO), if you want to connect with support and learn about other resources and options.*

## Additional Support Services

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In addition to offering a referral to SVPRO, you can also share these resources when someone discloses:

### AMS Sexual Assault Support Centre

Room 3127 in the Nest, 6133 University Blvd | 604-827-5180 | [sasc@ams.ubc.ca](mailto:sasc@ams.ubc.ca) | [amssasc.ca](http://amssasc.ca) | 8:00am-10:00pm every day

### WAVAW Rape Crisis Centre

Crisis line available 24/7 604-255-6344 | [admin@wavaw.ca](mailto:admin@wavaw.ca) | [wavaw.ca](http://wavaw.ca)

### VictimLinkBC

1-800-563-0808 [VictimLinkBC@bc211.ca](mailto:VictimLinkBC@bc211.ca)  
<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/justice/criminal-justice/victims-of-crime/victimlinkbc>  
Available by phone or email 24/7

### Do Not Use Early Alert for Sexualized Violence

To help maintain privacy, and in order to help survivors connect with support as quickly as possible, you are encouraged to offer a referral to and/or reach out directly to SVPRO instead of entering an Early Alert. Any information entered into Early Alert about sexualized violence will be sent to SVPRO and removed from Early Alert, but this creates unnecessary delays and sharing of personal information, so should be avoided.

## Territory Acknowledgement

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SVPRO Content is created on the unceded, occupied, traditional territories of the x<sup>w</sup>məθk<sup>w</sup>əyəm (Musqueam) First Nation. Anti-violence work, and our work in SVPRO would not be possible without knowledge shared by Indigenous Peoples.

**We acknowledge** that colonization is an ongoing process of violence against land, against peoples, against nations, and against bodies.

**We must be accountable** to this legacy and work towards cultures that respect autonomy and self-determination.

**We invite you** to join us in building a culture of consent that takes us from solemn acknowledgement to supportive action.