

# Required Referral FAQs

*How to respond when a student discloses sexual harassment or misconduct*

## ***What is a “required referral”? Do I need to make required referrals?***

At St. Olaf, all employees of the college (including student employees) who are not confidential resources are obligated to make “required referrals.” All non-confidential employees of the College need to make “required referrals” when incidents of sexual harassment or misconduct come to their attention. These employees must submit required referrals to the [Title IX Coordinator](#) or any other member of the [Title IX team](#). Student workers, while working in the capacity of their job, are also expected to make required referrals. Disclosures of incidents that occurred off campus, incidents that occurred prior to a student’s time at St. Olaf, or incidents that may have already been reported should still be referred to the Title IX Coordinator.

## ***Why do we need required referrals?***

These referrals help ensure that students who experience sexual harassment are put in contact with the people best equipped to help them, including the Title IX Coordinator. Getting connected with the Title IX Coordinator helps make certain that students have the opportunity to learn about what options and resources are available to them so that *they* can decide how they would like to proceed. Lastly, these required referrals help ensure that we keep our campus safe by helping the Title IX Office identify patterns or violence, repeat offenders, and other concerning behavior that needs to be addressed.

## ***What does “sexual harassment or misconduct” include?***

Sexual harassment and sexual misconduct includes sexual assault, sexual harassment, dating violence, domestic violence, stalking, and sexual exploitation. For a full list of those terms and their definitions, please refer to St. Olaf’s [Policy](#).

## ***What do I say to a student who discloses to me?***

Let the student know that you are obligated to refer the student’s experience to the College, even if the student requests confidentiality. It is best to attempt to make this obligation clear as early in the conversation as possible so that the student can decide how much information to share with you. It is also recommended to add your responsibility to make required referrals to your syllabi or supervisory information so that students can understand your obligations early on in the semester (especially if your class includes coursework that could potentially lead to disclosures from students). Feel free to copy-paste any of the [templates](#) we’ve created into your syllabi and/or supervisory information.

Explain to the student that referring the disclosure to the College helps to ensure that students are connected with those trained to address and respond to incidents of sexual harassment. You can also explain that making a required referral to the Title IX Coordinator does not automatically initiate any sort of process, such as the College’s Grievance Process (i.e. investigation and hearing process).

## ***How do I make a referral to the College after a disclosure, and what do I include in that referral?***

Referrals regarding sexual harassment and misconduct should go to the [Title IX Coordinator](#) or any other member of the [Title IX Team](#) within 24 hours after the disclosure. Referrals can be made in person, via email, over the phone, or by utilizing St. Olaf’s [online reporting form](#). Referrals should include all the information the student shared (the student’s name; date, time, and/or location of the incident; names of other students involved; etc.). *Please note that you should not attempt to investigate or ask additional questions about the incident beyond what the student voluntarily shares.*

***What does the College do after it receives a required referral from an employee?***

After an employee has made their referral, the [Title IX Coordinator](#) sends an email to the student who disclosed. The email includes information about resources and options available to the student. The email clearly states that the student is not obligated to meet with the Title IX Coordinator if the student is not ready to do so.

If a student does choose to meet with the Title IX Coordinator, they will learn more about all the options, resources, accommodations, and other supportive measures available to them. Meeting with the Title IX Coordinator does not automatically initiate the College’s Grievance Process.

***What information should I give to the student during or after a disclosure?***

Explain to the student that there are [confidential resources](#) available on campus who do not have the same obligation to refer incidents to the College, and help get the student connected with those resources if desired.

You can also let the student know that after the referral to the College is made, the student will receive an email from the [Title IX Coordinator](#) that explains options and resources available to the student. The student is not required to meet with the Title IX Coordinator and is able to decline making an official report to the college if desired.

***What are some tips for speaking with an individual who discloses experiencing sexual harassment or misconduct to me?***

Listen with care and without judgment. Ask what the individual needs or what would be helpful to them. Offer the various resources available to the student both on and off campus. Explain what supports are available to students who report to the College (such as academic accommodations, a no-contact directive, etc.). Remind the student that reporting to the College will not initiate a Grievance Process. Some helpful phrases are below:

“I am sorry this happened to you.”  
“How can I help?”  
“Do you feel safe?”

“Have you had a chance to get medical attention?”  
“Thank you for telling me.”  
“What happened is not your fault.”

***Who is classified as a confidential resource at St. Olaf?***

The [College Pastors and Chaplains](#), employees at [Health Services](#), counselors and employees at the [Counseling Center](#), and advocates through the student-led [Sexual Assault Resource Network](#) (SARN) are all confidential resources.

***Where can I learn more information about Title IX at St. Olaf?***

Our [Title IX website](#) and [Policy](#) includes an abundance of information about St. Olaf’s response to sexual harassment and misconduct. It also contains guidance on how to seek help and resources after experiencing sexual harassment or misconduct. Additionally, our [Title IX Resource Card](#) is a helpful resource to give to any student who discloses to you. It includes a list of resources for the student and reminders for you about making a required referral. Hard copies of these cards are available upon request to the Title IX Coordinator.

***For questions about required referrals, Title IX, or St. Olaf’s Policy, please contact:***

Pamela McDowell, Title IX and Section 504 Coordinator  
[mcdowell@stolaf.edu](mailto:mcdowell@stolaf.edu) | 507.786.3465  
Tomson Hall 180B