CUNY Protocol Guidelines for
Residence Life and Student Housing Staff
Addressing Allegations of Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence for
CUNY Student Housing & Residence Life

These Guidelines are intended to serve two purposes:

(1) to provide guidance to Residence Life Staff on informing students and visitors within CUNY residence halls about how to report allegations of sexual harassment and sexual violence;

(2) to clarify the reporting protocol for Residence Life Staff in the event that they are informed of any allegations of sexual harassment or sexual violence.

Confidentiality:

(1) Alleged victims have the right to confidentiality and to make informed decisions about when and to whom to disclose information.

(2) Therefore, Residence Life Staff, including Resident Assistants (RAs), must make it clear to students that Residence Life Staff have the duty to report alleged incidents of sexual harassment and sexual violence to their supervisors.

(3) Residence Life Staff, in addition to providing immediate support, must provide to all members of the residence hall community specific contact information of college employees, including counselors, who are exempt from the duty to report and who will maintain confidentiality except when there are imminent threats of harm, as explained below.

(4) For ongoing support and resources beyond the capacity of the Residence Life Staff, staff members are strongly encouraged to refer individuals reporting such incidents to staff members who can maintain confidentiality.

(5) The duty to report does not prevent Residence Life Staff from providing support and resources to individuals who may have experienced sexual harassment or sexual violence.

Requirements for providing information for students living in or visiting the residence halls:

(1) Information about how to report allegations of sexual harassment and sexual violence, as well as information about confidentiality, must be provided to all students living in the residence halls and to all visitors during sign-in hours in the residence hall.
Students living in the residence halls must receive this information verbally and in writing at the beginning of each semester as well as throughout the year in a variety of media, including but not limited to: at orientation; floor/hall meetings; emails; posters; flyers in mailboxes; and where possible, social media platforms.

This information must also be prominently displayed in residence hall common areas; points of entry; residence life offices, including each campus student housing office; the main lobby bulletin boards and other bulletin boards in the residence halls throughout the year.

It is important that this information about how to report allegations of sexual harassment and sexual violence, as well as information about confidentiality, be easily visible and accessible to students and visitors, and include emergency contact information, so that both residents and visitors know whom to contact in case they experience and/or are witnesses to sexual harassment or sexual violence.

**Protocol for residence hall staff:**

1. If an individual or bystander reports an incident of sexual harassment or sexual violence to Residence Life Staff, including RAs, the Residence Life Staff must first attend to the safety and wellbeing of everyone involved. This should not be done at risk to the safety of the staff. Immediate notification of Public Safety should occur at any point where an individual’s safety is at risk.

2. The Residence Life Staff must report the incident to the Director of the Residence Hall (Director of Residence Life or Residence Director, as applicable).

3. The Director of the Residence Hall must immediately contact by phone or in person at least one of the following three individuals at the College to notify them of an incident of sexual harassment or sexual violence – the Director of Public Safety, the Title IX Coordinator or the Chief Student Affairs Officer (typically the Dean of Students or Vice President for Student Affairs). If the Director of the Residence Hall is not the most senior staff member in the residence life department, the person reporting must contact his/her direct supervisor.

4. The Director of the Residence Hall must also immediately document the incident in writing and send the document via email to the following people: the Director of Public Safety, the Title IX Coordinator, the Chief Student Affairs Officer, and the CUNY Associate Director of Residence Life & Student Housing. If the incident occurs after regular business hours, the email notification should be sent no later than 9 a.m. on the next business day of the incident. The email must be sent as confidential and must not include specific names of individuals involved, but should simply state the details of the incident using terms such as “complainant” and “accused” to identify the persons involved.

5. Once the above steps are completed, the Director of Public Safety, the Title IX Coordinator, and the Chief Student Affairs Officer are required under CUNY policy to take steps to investigate the incident further.

6. The Director of the Residence Hall should coordinate follow-up with the complainant and the accused to make sure he/she is referred to the appropriate resources on his/her home campus such as: Counseling Services; Health Services. The complainant must be informed of his/her right to file a report with the police. In addition, in the case of an
alleged incident of sexual violence, an immediate referral to the hospital or health services should be made for evidence collection purposes, since any such evidence must be collected within 72 hours of the alleged incident.

(7) Follow-up with the Residence Life Staff member who documented the incident is also required at this time to ensure that he/she is also provided the appropriate support after handling an alleged incident of sexual harassment or sexual violence.

Continuous follow-up by Residence Life professional staff should occur with the complainant, the accused (if they continue to reside in the residence hall), and student staff members until further notice.

Partnering Departments & Resources:

**CUNY College**
Residence Life and Student Housing
Health Services
Counseling Services
Title IX Coordinator
Chief Student Affairs Officer (Dean of Students or Vice President for Student Affairs)
Campus Public Safety

**CUNY Central**
Central Office of Student Affairs
Office of the General Counsel
University Public Safety

**New York City**
New York City Police Department