Responding to Sexual Assault

Northwest Arkansas Community College (NWACC) makes available literature on date rape and sexual assault through the Student Information Center brochure rack and the Washington County Center. The Arkansas Coalition Against Sexual Assault: www.acasa.us is an informative resource for sexual assault issues.

The registered sex offender's website is accessible for viewing by going to the PUBLIC SAFETY link: http://www.nwacc.edu/publicsafety. Simply click on the **Arkansas Crime Information Center** link. NWACC's Department of Safety (DPS) maintains a folder of all registered sex offenders. To view this folder, visit the DPS office between the hours of 8:00am and 4:30pm.

The Arkansas statute of rape is genderless, which means that both men and women can be rape victims and perpetrators. Sexual assault can occur whenever consent is not freely given by the victim; whenever the victim fears that he or she will be injured if he or she does not submit; whenever the victim is incapable of giving consent or resisting due to alcohol or drugs; and whenever the perpetrator uses physical force, threat, coercion, or intimidation to overpower the victim.

If you are a victim of sexual assault…….

Your first priority should be to get to a place of safety. You should then obtain necessary medical treatment. You are encouraged to go to a hospital emergency room to receive appropriate medical care and/or evidence collection. NWACC strongly advocates that a victim of sexual assault report the incident as soon as possible. Time is a critical factor for evidence collection and preservation. If the assault is reported within 72 hours of its occurrence and you cooperate with the police in providing information and evidence, the State of Arkansas pays for the medical examination. Also, if the offense is reported to the police, Victims Compensation can pay for the treatment or other injuries that occurred during the rape. An assault should be reported directly to Public Safety and/or the Dean of Students, and/or VP of Learner Support Services:

Public Safety	BH 1205	479-619-4229
Ms. Dale Montgomery, Dean of Students	SC 230 C	479-619-4234
Todd Kitchen, VP of Learner Support Services	SC 213D	479-619-4232

You may also contact one of the local police departments by dialing 911, or listed below are the direct numbers for some of our area police stations:

Bentonville Police:	479-271-3170
Fayetteville Police:	479-587-3555
Rogers Police:	479-621-1172
Springdale Police:	479-751-4542

Filing a police report with an NWACC Public Safety officer will not obligate you to prosecute, nor will it subject you to scrutiny or judgmental opinions from officers. Filing a report if you are a victim of sexual assault will help ensure that you:

- Understand your options
- Are provided with the opportunity for collection of evidence helpful in prosecution, which cannot be obtained later (ideally a victim of sexual assault should not wash, douche, use the toilet or change clothing prior to a medical/legal exam). You should not disturb the area where the assault occurred.
- Obtain access to confidential counseling from counselors specifically trained in the area of sexual assault crisis intervention.
- Receive necessary medical treatment and tests.
- Are advised of the importance of writing down detailed information about the assault – where, when, who, and if the assailant is a stranger to remember his or her height, hair color, scars, and clothing.
- Are advised to seek emotional support from a friend, counselor, or anyone who can help provide that support.

If you are a victim of sexual assault, you may choose for the investigation to be pursued through the criminal justice system and NWACC, or only the latter. A college representative from the Public Safety department or the Dean of Students will guide you through the available options and will support you in your decision. These college representatives will provide options for support and will assist you in connecting with community resources, and local police if desired. NWACC may provide you with professional counseling services through a partnership with Ozark Guidance Center.

Community resources include, but are not limited to:

Northwest Arkansas Rape Crisis Center
589 White Rd, Suite A
Springdale, AR 72762
479-927-1025 / Fax 479-927-1023 24 Hour Hotline: 1-800-794-4175
www.nwarcc.com

Arkansas Coalition Against Sexual Assault (ACASA)
479-527-0900
www.acasa.us

Ozark Guidance Center
2508 SE 20th St.
Bentonville, AR 72712
479-273-9088
www.ozarkguidance.org

Benton County Prosecutor's Office
Victim Witness Coordinator
479-271-1030

NWACC disciplinary proceedings are detailed in the *Student Handbook.* The accused (respondent) and the victim (complainant) will each be allowed to include someone to accompany them throughout the investigation and hearing procedures. Both the complainant and the respondent will be informed of the outcome of the investigation. NWACC possible sanctions imposed for disciplinary purposes against the perpetrators of a sexual assault in the event of a finding of "in violation" include expulsion, suspension, dismissal, disciplinary probation, educational sanctions, denial of certain privileges, and counseling. The perpetrator could also be subjected to criminal prosecution in the state courts. Retaliation against a complainant for reporting an offense is not permissible.

Student victims have the option to change their academic situation after an alleged sex offense, if such change is reasonably available. The VP for Learner Support Services or the Dean of Students can provide information about this option and assist you with the process.