

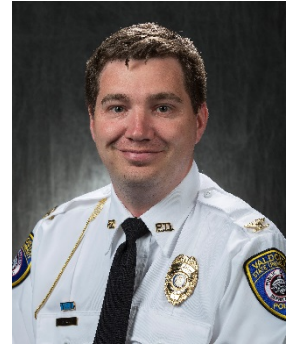
2016 Safety & Security Report

VALDOSTA STATE UNIVERSITY



Dear Student, Faculty and Staff member;

Valdosta State University (VSU) is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for our students, faculty, staff and visitors. One way with which we can achieve a safe and secure environment is through transparency. As such, the Department of Public Safety has prepared the Annual Security and Fire Safety Report.



This report will provide you with information on safety and security of the VSU Campus. Inside you will find information on the Department of Public Safety, our policies and procedures for reporting crime, crime prevention programs, victim assistance services, fire safety, and other material to assist you. This report is provided in compliance with the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Crime Statistics Act (Clery Act) and the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA).

VSU takes campus safety very seriously and is committed to our efforts to maintain a safe, secure environment for our students, faculty, staff and visitors. You are encouraged to read this report and use the report to assist in providing for your continual safety.

Your personal safety is a priority at VSU. Maintaining a safe campus requires a dedicated partnership between the members of the University community and the Department of Public Safety.

Safety is everyone's responsibility. We need your partnership and assistance to keep VSU a safe place to live, work, and learn.

Sincerely,

C. Alan Rowe
Interim Director of Public Safety / Chief of Police

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EQUAL OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT

Valdosta State University is an equal opportunity educational institution. It is not the intent of the institution to discriminate against any applicant for admission or any student or employee of the institution based on the sex, race, religion, color, national origin, disability, or sexual orientation of the individual. It is the intent of the institution to comply with the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and subsequent Executive Orders as well as Title IX, Equal Pay Act of 1963, Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974, Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

ANNUAL SECURITY REPORT

REPORTING CRIMES AND OTHER EMERGENCIES

The University has a number of ways for campus community members and visitors to report crimes, serious incidents, and other emergencies to appropriate University officials. It is critical for the safety of the entire University community that you immediately report all incidents to the Valdosta State University Police (229-259-5555) to ensure an effective investigation and appropriate follow-up actions, including issuing a Crime Alert or emergency notification.

Voluntary, Confidential Reporting

If crimes are never reported, little can be done to help other members of the community from also being victims. We encourage Valdosta State University community members to report crimes promptly and to participate in and support crime prevention efforts. The University community will be much safer when all community members participate in safety and security initiatives.



If you are the victim of a crime or want to report a crime you are aware of, but do not want to pursue action within the University or criminal justice system, we ask that you consider filing an online silent witness report. This allows members of the campus to report incidents directly to the Police Department. It must be noted that without the name of the person reporting or witness to corroborate a complaint, possible sanctions against the offender may be limited or non-existent. This form can be accessed at: [Silent Watch Form.](#)

Under the State of Georgia Open Records Act, government documents and information, including original police reports, are subject to release and public inspection. In addition, reports of sexual harassment and acts of sexual violence require the notification of Valdosta State University's Title IX Coordinator under federal regulation.

If a reporting person would like the details of an incident to be kept confidential, they may speak with a licensed professional counselor or health service provider on campus. They may also contact off-campus resources such as licensed professional counselors, local rape crisis counselors, domestic violence resources, local and state assistance agencies or clergy/chaplains/pastoral counselors. Information shared with these on or off campus sources will maintain confidentiality except in extreme cases of immediate threat, danger or abuse of a minor.

Counselors are requested to advise anyone seeking their assistance of the anonymous reporting resources to the VSU Police Department and these counselors may submit anonymous, aggregate statistical information for inclusion in the Clery Act reports unless they believe it could be harmful to the specific client, patient or parishioner.

Anyone may call the Valdosta State University Police at 229-259-5555 to report concerning information. Callers may remain anonymous.

Reporting to University Police

We encourage all members of the University community to report all crimes and other emergencies to the Valdosta State University Police in a timely manner. The University Police have a dispatch center that is available by phone at 229-259-5555 or in person twenty-four hours a day at the Oak Street Parking Deck, 2nd floor, 1410 North Oak Street, Valdosta, GA. Though there are many resources available, University Police should be notified of any crime, whether or not an investigation continues, to ensure the University can assess any and all security concerns and inform the community if there is a significant threat to the Valdosta State University community.

Emergency Phones

The University has installed more than 140 emergency phones throughout the University campus. Phones are located in public areas of buildings including parking garages, elevators, residence hall complexes, administration buildings, and other outdoor locations. Emergency phones provide direct communications to the University Police Dispatch Center. The caller can maintain contact with the dispatcher until the police arrive at their location. VSU Police personnel make routine checks to ensure the phones are operating properly. Please visit: [Emergency Phones](#).



Anonymous Reporting

University Police’s Silent Witness program that can be accessed through the Department’s website: [Silent Watch Form](#).

Reporting to Other Campus Security Authorities

While Valdosta State University prefers that community members promptly report all crimes and other emergencies directly to the University Police at 229-259-5555 or 911, we also recognize that some may prefer to report to other individuals or University offices. The Clery Act recognizes certain University officials and offices as “Campus Security Authorities (CSA).” The Act defines these individuals as being an “official of an institution who has significant responsibility for student and campus activities, including, but not limited to, student housing, student discipline and campus judicial proceedings. An official is defined as any person who has the authority and the duty to take action or respond to particular issues on behalf of the institution.”

While the University has identified several hundred CSAs, we officially designate the following offices as places where campus community members should report crimes:

Official	Campus Address	Telephone Number
University Police Department	1410 North Oak Street 2 nd floor Deck	229-259-3333 229-333-7816
Vice President for Student Affairs	Student Union Suite 3106	229-333-5941

Director of Human Resources	University Center Entrance 5	229-333-5709
Office of Student Conduct	Student Union Suite 3106	229-333-5941
Office of Legal Affairs	125 West Hall	229-333-5351
Office of Housing & Residence Life, including all RAs, GAs, & ACs	1226 Hopper Hall	229-333-520

Pastoral and Professional Counselors

According to the Clery Act, pastoral and professional counselors who are appropriately credentialed and hired by Valdosta State University to serve in a counseling role are not considered Campus Security Authorities when they are acting in the counseling role. As a matter of policy, the University encourages pastoral and professional counselors to notify those whom they are counseling of the voluntary, confidential reporting options available to them.

It's Up to Each of Us

The University takes great pride in the community and offers students, faculty and staff many advantages. This community is a great place to live, learn, work and study, however, this does not mean that the campus community is immune from all of the other unfortunate circumstances that arise in other communities. With that in mind, Valdosta State University has taken progressive measures to create and maintain a reasonable safe environment on campus.

Though the University is progressive with its policies, programs, and education, it is up to each one of us to live with a sense of awareness and use reasonable judgment when living, working and visiting on campus.

PREPARATION OF THE ANNUAL SECURITY REPORT AND DISCLOSURE OF CRIME STATISTICS

The University Police prepares this report to comply with the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security and Crime Statistics Act using information maintained by University Police, information provided by other University offices such as Student Affairs, Residence Life, and other Campus Security Authorities and information provided by local law enforcement agencies surrounding the main campus. Each of these offices provides updated policy information and crime data.

This report provides statistics for the previous three years concerning reported crimes that occurred on campus, in certain off-campus buildings or property owned, leased or controlled by Valdosta State University. This report also includes institutional policies regarding sexual assault, alcohol and other drugs.

The University distributes a notice of the availability of this Annual Security and Fire Safety report by October 1 of each year to every member of the University community. Anyone, including prospective students and employees, may obtain a paper copy of this report by contacting the University Police at 229-333-7816 or by visiting: [VSU Police on the web.](#)

ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT OF POLICE & PUBLIC SAFETY

The University Police Department protects and serves the Valdosta State community 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The Department is responsible for a number of campus safety and security programs including Emergency Management, community safety and Security education, physical security, including behavioral threat assessment, special event management and security technology.

The Department is comprised of:

- 25 State Certified Police Officers
- 6 Communications Officers
- 1 Records/Evidence Custodian
- 1 Administrative Assistant.

The police officers at Valdosta State University Police Department:

- Have a minimum of a G.E.D. or High School Diploma and all are offered the opportunity to attend classes at the University.
- Complete a mandatory State Police Certification course which is required by all police officers in the state of Georgia,
- Receive a minimum of 20 hours per year of in-service training certified by the Georgia Peace Officers Standards and Training Council to include the areas of firearms re-qualifications, use of force, hazardous materials, emergency first aid, CPR/AED, weapons and tactics,
- University Police officers are authorized under Georgia O.C.G.A. 20-3-72 to make arrests on, and within 500 yards of any property owned, controlled by the Board of Regents within the State of Georgia. Our officers have the same authority as municipal police officers in Georgia being authorized to carry firearms and empowered to make arrests. All criminal incidents are investigated by the University Police on the Valdosta State University campus and if necessary may obtain mutual aid from the local police agencies to include the Valdosta Police Department, Lowndes County Sheriff's Department, Remerton City Police and the Georgia Bureau of Investigation. All crimes that occur on campus or University property shall be reported to the University Police department.



The mission of the Valdosta State University Police Department is to preserve a safe and secure campus environment where diverse social, cultural, and academic values are allowed to develop and prosper through a combination of reactive, proactive, and educational law enforcement services.

Working Relationship with Local, State, and Federal law Enforcement Agencies

The University Police maintains a cooperative relationship with the Georgia Bureau of Investigation, the Valdosta Police Department, the Lowndes County Sheriff's Department and surrounding police agencies. This includes inter-operative radio capability and a joint police records computer system, training programs, special events coordination and investigation of serious incidents.

The Valdosta State University Police department participates in an Inter-municipal Mutual Aid Agreement that authorizes police officers and supervisors of the participating agencies to request mutual aid for incidents based upon a reasonable belief that such aid will enhance the public's and/or officer safety and efficiency. The agencies participating in the Agreement include the Valdosta City Police Department and the Lowndes County Sheriff's Department. The agreement also allows for joint training and cooperation on other matters, such as pre-planned large-scale special events, amongst the participating agencies.

Crimes Involving Student Organizations at Off-Campus Locations

Valdosta State University relies on its close working relationships with local law enforcement agencies to receive information about incidents involving Valdosta State University students and recognized student organizations, on and off campus. In coordination with local law enforcement agencies, the University Police will actively investigate certain crimes occurring on or near campus. If the University Police learn of criminal activity involving students or student organizations, it will coordinate with the appropriate external law enforcement agency to forward information about the situation to the Office of Student Conduct, as appropriate.

The University requires all recognized student organizations to abide by federal, state, and local laws, and University regulations. The University may become involved in the off-campus conduct of recognized student organizations when such conduct is determined to affect a Substantial University Interest as defined in the University Off-Campus Misconduct Policy found at: [Student Handbook](#).

TIMELY WARNING REPORTS – CRIME ALERTS

In an effort to provide timely notice to the campus community in the event of a Clery Act crime that may pose a serious or ongoing threat to members of the community, the University Police issues "Crime Alerts." The University Police will generally issue Crime Alerts for the following crimes: arson; aggravated assault; criminal homicide; robbery; burglary; sexual assaults; and hate crimes. University Police will post these warnings through a variety of ways, including but not limited to posters, e-mails, and media. The University also has the ability to send text message alerts to those who register their cell phone and/or home numbers through the University's Banner system. Text messaging and a network rolling computer banner may also be utilized for these alerts to the campus community.

The purpose of these Crime Alerts is to notify the campus community of the incident and to provide information that may enable community members to protect themselves from similar incidents. The University will issue Crime Alerts whenever the following criteria are met: 1) a crime is committed; 2) the perpetrator has not been apprehended; and 3) there is a substantial risk to the physical safety of other

members of the campus community because of this crime. Such crimes include, but are not limited to: 1) Clery Act crimes that are reported to any campus security authority or the local police; or 2) the University determines that the incident represents an on-going threat to the campus community.

Additionally, the University Police may, in some circumstances, issue Crime Alerts when there is a pattern of crimes against persons or property. At Valdosta State University, the Chief of University Police will generally make the determination, in consultation with the other University offices, if a Crime Alert is required. However, in emergency situations, any police supervisor may authorize a Crime Alert. For incidents involving off-campus crimes, the University may issue a Crime Alert if the crime occurred in a location used and frequented by the University population.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND EVACUATION PROCEDURES

The Emergency Management Coordinator, located in the University Police Department, is responsible for the Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan (CEMP). This plan is designed to be an all-hazards disaster response and emergency management plan that complies with FEMA guidelines for Higher Education that includes planning, mitigation, response, and recovery actions.

Our priorities are:

- Life safety, infrastructure integrity, and environmental protection during an emergency
- Coordination with the university departments to write, maintain, test and exercise the CEMP
- Cooperation, Integration, and Mutual Aid with local, state and federal planning, response and public safety agencies and their CEMPS.

A summary of the University's current emergency response procedures is located at: [Emergency Quick Reference Guide](#). Included at this web page is detailed information regarding the University's emergency notification policy, including how to enroll in the emergency notification system to ensure you receive emergency notices on University and cellular telephones.

Drills, Exercises and Training

Annually, the University conducts an emergency management exercise to test emergency procedures. The scenarios for these exercises change from year-to-year, and include several departments from across the campus.

To ensure the University's emergency management plans remain current and actionable, the University will conduct an emergency management exercise, at least a once a year. These exercises may include tabletop drills, emergency operations center exercises, or full-scale emergency response exercises. The University conducts after-action reviews of all emergency management exercises.

Emergency Notification

Valdosta State University is committed to ensuring that the campus community receives timely, accurate, and useful information in the event of a significant emergency or dangerous situation on campus or in the local area that poses an immediate threat to the health and safety of campus community members. Valdosta State University uses the emergency notification known as RAVE. RAVE is an emergency notification service available to students, staff, and anyone in the University community who wants to subscribe. RAVE can be used to send emergency messages within minutes of the occurrence of an incident. These messages may go out as text messages, emails, RSS feeds (banner) across the home page on the University's network or recorded messages.



Valdosta State University performs a University-wide annual test of the system. The following procedures outline the process the University uses when issuing emergency notifications.

Procedures Used to Notify the Campus Community

In the event of a situation that poses an immediate threat to members of the campus community, the University has various systems in place for communicating information quickly. Some or all of these methods of communication may be activated in the event of emergency notification to all or a segment of the campus community. These methods of communication include the mass notification system, RAVE (which disseminates voice phone calls and SMS text messages), the University's e-mail system, and verbal announcement within a building and public address system on police cars. The University will establish a telephone call-in center to communicate with the University community during an emergency situation.

Confirming the existence of a Significant Emergency or Dangerous Situation and Initiating the Emergency Notification System

The Department of Police and Public Safety and/or other campus first responders may become aware of a critical incident or other emergency situation that potentially affects the health and/or safety of the campus community. Generally, campus first responders become aware of these situations when they are reported to the Police Dispatch Center or upon discovery during patrol or other assignments.

Once first responders confirm that there is, in fact, an emergency or dangerous situation that poses an immediate threat to the health or safety of some or all members of the campus community, first responders will notify supervisors in the University Police Department or other authorized University office to issue an emergency notification.

The University's authorized representatives will immediately initiate all or some portions of the University's emergency notification system. If, in the professional judgment of first responders, issuing a notification potentially compromises efforts to assist a victim or to contain, respond to, or otherwise mitigate the emergency, the University may elect to delay issuing an emergency notification. As soon as the condition that may compromise efforts is no longer present, the University will issue the emergency notification to the campus community.

Determining the Appropriate Segment or Segments of the Campus Community to Receive an Emergency Notification

University and/or local first responders on the scene of a critical incident or dangerous situation will assist those preparing the emergency notification with determining what segment or segments of the University community should receive the notification. Generally, the entire campus community will receive the emergency notification. In addition to the emergency notification that may be used via the University mass notification system, the University will also post applicable messages about the dangerous condition on the University homepage to ensure the rest of the campus is aware of the situation and the steps they should take to maintain personal and campus safety. If the emergency affects a significant portion of the entire campus, University officials will distribute the notification to the entire campus community.

Determining the Contents of the Emergency Notification

The office responsible for issuing the emergency notification (usually the Police Communications Officer) will, in concert with the University and local first responders, will determine the contents of the notification. The University has developed a variety of template messages addressing several different emergency situations. The individual authorizing the alert will select the template message most appropriate to the on-going situation and modify it to address the specifics of the present incident. In those cases where there are no pre-determined template messages in the system, the individual authorizing the alert will develop the most succinct message to convey the appropriate information to the community. The goal is to ensure individuals are aware of the situation and that they know the steps to take to safeguard their personal and community safety.

Procedures for Disseminating Emergency Information to the Greater Community

In a situation where information needs to be disseminated outside of the campus, University officials will make the determination what information needs to be sent to other law enforcement agencies, radio, television and social media outlets. This function will be performed by the University Office of Communications in conjunction with the University Police.

Enrolling in the University's Emergency Notification System

We encourage members of the campus community to enroll in the RAVE system by visiting [VSU Campus Alert System](#) on the VSU website. We encourage University community members to regularly update their information through the same site.

SECURITY OF AND ACCESS TO UNIVERSITY FACILITIES

At Valdosta State University, administrative buildings are open from 8:00 a.m. until 5:30 p.m., Monday through Thursday, and 8:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. on Fridays. Academic buildings are scheduled to be open through a campus system based on the needs of the individual school. Access to individual classrooms and laboratories is limited to those enrolled in the courses meeting there and by the authority of the faculty

person teaching the individual classes. Access to closed buildings after hours is limited by the faculty approval process.

VSU police officers lock, unlock, and check all university buildings and other properties daily. Many of the buildings on campus are controlled by access card reader restricted access. Many campus facilities, buildings, and parking areas are under 24-hour video surveillance. Key issuance is based on employment status and rules and regulations of the University Key Shop.

The main campus is not a gated community and during business hours many areas are open to the public. Many cultural and athletic events are held in the University facilities which are open to the public. Other facilities such as the bookstore and library are likewise open to the public.

Special Considerations for Residence Hall Access

At Valdosta State University, all residence halls operate under a computerized Access Control and Security Monitoring System. Identification cards are coded so that only students who are residents in a particular hall are authorized electronic access entry to that hall; the system denies entry to all unauthorized persons. When any exterior emergency exit door is left ajar, an audible alarm is activated. Residence hall staff is responsible for checking and securing doors, when needed. When a door is malfunctioning, personnel are summoned for immediate repair. Remember to lock your doors and windows. All residence hall and apartment exterior doors are equipped with locks and with crash bars to ensure a quick emergency exit.



Only residents and their invited guests are permitted in the living areas of the residence halls. It is the resident's responsibility to ensure that his/her guest is aware of the University and residence hall policies. Guests are not provided with room keys or door access cards. Guests of the opposite sex must be escorted by a resident of the building at all times. All exterior doors are locked 24 hours a day. It is the responsibility of residents and staff members to challenge or report individuals who cannot be identified as residents or the guests of residents. When University Police receive a report of an unescorted person in a residence hall, a police officer is dispatched to identify that person.

Officers spend much of their time patrolling in and around the residence hall complexes. During low-occupancy periods such as holidays and scheduled breaks, students are consolidated into designated buildings and gain access via the University's electronic access control system. During the summer when groups who are not regularly associated with Valdosta State University are using the University residence halls, exterior doors are locked 24 hours a day. Each guest is issued an identification card that allows them access to gain entry into their assigned building. Residence halls are staffed 24 hours a day and University Police make periodic checks of the residence hall areas.

Security Considerations for the Maintenance of Campus Facilities

Valdosta State University is committed to campus safety and security. At the University, locks, landscaping and outdoor lighting are designed for safety and security. Sidewalks are designed to provide well-traveled, lighted routes from parking areas to buildings and from building to building. Sidewalks and building entrances are illuminated to provide for safety and security.



Environmental and Occupational Safety, in conjunction with representatives from the Police Department, SGA and Faculty Senate conduct surveys of University property each year to evaluate campus lighting. We encourage community members to promptly report any security concern, including concerns about locking mechanisms, lighting or landscaping to the University Police.

Student Conduct

Valdosta State University is obligated to provide all students with the University regulations, policies, and procedures governing student conduct. Valdosta State University policies and procedures, including the Code of Conduct for Students and the Off-Campus Misconduct Policy are published on the Student Conduct Website at: [Student Handbook](#).

CAMPUS SECURITY POLICIES, CRIME PREVENTION & SAFETY AWARENESS PROGRAMS

In addition to the many programs offered by the University Police and other University offices, the University has established a number of policies and procedures related to ensuring a reasonable safe campus community. These policies include:

Behavioral Intervention Team

In order to extend our efforts on emergency preparedness and prevention, Valdosta State University has established a Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT). The objective of the BIT is to put in place a structured process for evaluating potentially threatening situations that occur at the University. The multi-disciplinary team is comprised of members from around the University community (Residence Life, Dean of Students, Counseling Center, Academic Affairs, University Police, Human Resources and Student Conduct). If you would like further information about the BIT please visit their website at: [Behavioral Intervention Team](#).

Weapons Policy

Valdosta State University complies with all local, state and federal laws applied to firearms and weapons on campus. The possession, carrying and use of weapons, ammunition, or explosives is prohibited on University owned or controlled property. Failure to comply with the University weapons policy may result in arrest,

disciplinary action from the institution, or both. Georgia law (O.C.G.A. 16-11-127.1) also prohibits carrying weapons within a school safety zone, at school functions, or on a bus or other transportation furnished by a school.

Georgia law defines a weapon as meaning and including: any pistol, revolver, or any weapon designed or intended to propel a missile of any kind, or any dirk, bowie knife, switchblade knife, ballistic knife, or any other knife having a blade of two or more inches, straight-edge razor, razor blade, spring stick, knuckles, whether made from metal, thermoplastic, wood or other similar material, blackjack, any bat, club, or other bludgeon-type weapon, or any flailing instrument consisting of two or more rigid parts connected in such a manner as to allow them to swing freely, which may be known as nun chahka, nun chuck, nunchaku, shuriken, or fighting chain, or any disc, of whatever configuration, having at least two points or pointed blades which is designed to be thrown or propelled and which may be known as a throwing star or oriental dart, or any weapon of the like or kind.

Exemption:

House Bill 792 was signed by Governor Deal which added the following to O.C.G.A. 16-11-127.1, to become effective July 1, 2016. This bill permitted possession of certain electroshock devices:

“(19) Any person who is 18 years of age or older or currently enrolled in classes on the campus in question and carrying, possessing, or having under such person’s control an electroshock weapon while in or on any building or real property owned by or leased to such public technical school, vocational school, college or university or other public institution of postsecondary education; provided, however, that, if such person makes use of such electroshock weapon, such use shall be in defense of self or others. The exemption under this paragraph shall apply only to such person in regard to such electroshock weapon. As used in this paragraph, the term “electroshock weapon” means any commercially available device that is powered by electrical charging units and designed exclusively to be capable of incapacitating a person by electrical charge, including, but not limited to, a stun gun or Taser as defined in subsection (a) of Code 26 Section 16-11-106.”

This applies to commercially available devices designed exclusively to incapacitate a person by electrical charge.

Crime Prevention and Safety Awareness Programs



Valdosta State University Police Department maintains a strong working relationship with the community. This relationship includes offering a variety of safety and security programs, services and crime prevention programming to include sexual assault prevention. If you or your organization would like to request a specific program, please contact our Crime Prevention Office at 229-333-7816. Below are some of the programs offered by the Police Department, Health Promotions, Social Equity, Counseling Center, Alcohol & Other Drugs and the Student Conduct office:

Program	Program Type	Coordinating Entity	Frequency
Residence Assistance Training	Alcohol and Drug Awareness	Office of Alcohol and Other Drugs	Fall & Spring
KARMA QPR Training	Peer Mentor – for RA’s and student leaders	Office of Alcohol and Other Drugs	Ongoing
Alcohol Awareness Fairs	Alcohol Awareness Presentations – Campus wide	Office of Alcohol and Other Drugs	Fall
The Happening	Alcohol, drug, Sexual Assault, Safety Awareness	Student Affairs	Fall
It’s On Us	Bystander Intervention Awareness	Health Promotions	Ongoing
New Employee Orientation	Crime Awareness and Risk Management Training	Employee Development & Police Department	Ongoing
New Faculty Orientation	Crime Awareness	Employee Development & Police Department	Ongoing
Title IX Awareness	Programs & Services for Sexual Assault and Harassment Victims	Department of Social Equity	Ongoing
1st Responder to Sexual Assault	Sexual Assault Response Techniques	Counseling Center and Police Department	Annually
Safe Space Training	LGBT Issue Awareness	Office of Social Equity & Counselling Center	Ongoing
Sexual Harassment	Awareness and Prevention	Title IX Coordinator-Social Equity	Bi-Annually
Distress Fest & Depression Screening	Mental Health Awareness	Counseling Center	Annually
Active Shooter Awareness	Awareness Training	Police Department	Ongoing
International Student Orientation	Crime Awareness	Police Department	Bi-annually
Workplace Violence Awareness	Safety, Red Flags, and Prevention	Police Department	Annually
Suicide Prevention	For Students	Counselling Center	Annually
Interpersonal Violence	Academic Class	Counseling Center	Annually
Rape Aggression Defense	Prevention	Health Promotions	Ongoing
Therapeutic Thursday	Domestic Violence Awareness	Health Promotions	Annually

“It Happened Here”	Movie Screening – Prevention/Awareness	Health Promotions	Fall
Mental Health Awareness	Students	Counseling Center	Ongoing
Take Back The Night	Sexual Assault awareness and prevention	Health Promotions	Annually

VALDOSTA STATE UNIVERSITY’S RESPONSE TO SEXUAL AND GENDER VIOLENCE

Valdosta State University is committed to providing a safe learning and working environment, and in compliance with federal law has adopted policies and procedures to prevent and respond to incidents of sexual violence including sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence and stalking. These guidelines apply to all students, faculty, staff, contractors and visitors.

Personal Safety

Theft, disorderly conduct, and alcohol related offenses are very common on university campuses. However, they do not stand alone. Despite law enforcement’s efforts, serious crimes do occur on campuses. It is always important to report any suspicious activity to campus police and to remain alert to your surroundings, use well-lit areas to travel and utilize the buddy system or campus escort service when alone.

On the campus, and off campus, one needs to know their surroundings, they need to be aware of where they are and who is near them, they need to be alert and call for help if needed. Reporting suspicious people or activity is important on a campus and could help alert authorities to allow for intervention to prevent a crime.



The Campus Sexual Violence Elimination (SaVE) Act requires all colleges and universities to address sexual violence. Institutions of higher education must provide educational programming for all incoming students on the issues of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking. To comply with this federal mandate, Valdosta State University has partnered with EverFi, whose mission is to help students address critical skills such as alcohol abuse prevention and sexual violence awareness in institutions of higher education.

Defining Rape and Sexual Assault

In Georgia, Rape is defined as when a person has carnal knowledge of a female forcibly and against her will, or the carnal knowledge of a female who is less than ten years of age. Carnal knowledge in rape occurs when

there is any penetration of the female sex organ by the male sex organ. The fact that the person allegedly raped is the wife of the defendant shall not be a defense to a charge of rape. The statistics contained in this report reflect the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Uniform Crime Reporting definition, which defines rape as penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus with any body part or object or oral penetration by a sex organ of another person without the consent of the victim.

A sexual assault is any sexual act directed against another person, forcibly and/or against that person's will; or not forcibly or against the person's will where the victim is incapable of giving consent, as well as incest or statutory rape.

In Georgia, Consent is not defined in reference to sexual activity. However Valdosta State University defines Consent as: Words or actions that show a knowing and voluntary willingness to engage in mutually agreed-upon sexual activity. Consent cannot be gained by force, intimidation or coercion, by ignoring or acting in spite of objections of another, or by taking advantage of the incapacitation of another, where the respondent knows or reasonably should have known of such incapacitation. Consent is also absent when the activity in question exceeds the scope of consent previously given. Past consent does not imply present or future consent. Silence or an absence of resistance does not imply consent. Minors under the age of 16 cannot legally consent under Georgia law.

While these definitions are clear, victims often have difficulty reporting a sexual assault for numerous reasons such as knowing the perpetrator, fear of retaliation, fear of parents knowing about the incident, fear of getting in trouble with law enforcement. Despite these concerns, it is vital to report such incidents in order to get help.

The following information provides steps to follow should a sexual assault occur:

- Get to a safe place as soon as possible!
- Try to preserve all physical evidence – The victim should not bathe, shower, brush teeth, douche, use the toilet, or change clothing until s (he) has a medical exam.
- Contact a close friend or relative, if available, who can provide support and accompany the victim to the medical exam and/or police department. Advocates from the Women's Resource Center can be available to the victim to provide support.
- Get medical attention as soon as possible – An exam may reveal the presence of physical injury of which the victim is unaware. Following a sexual assault, antibiotics are typically given at the time of the exam to help prevent the victim from acquiring certain sexually transmitted diseases. Emergency contraceptive pills are offered to all victims at the time of the exam (if the victim presents within 120 hours) to help prevent pregnancy from occurring as a result of the rape. If the victim reports memory loss, loss of consciousness or other circumstances suspicious for a drug-facilitated assault, a urine test may be done if the victim presents within 96 hours. Some of the commonly used "date rape" drugs, however, are only detectable in the urine for 6-8 hours after ingestion.
- Contact the police – Sexual assault is a crime, it is vital to report it.
- It is important to remember reporting the crime is not the same as prosecuting the crime. The decision to prosecute may be made at another time. Final decision to prosecute is determined by the District Attorney.

- Consider talking to a counselor – Seeing a counselor may be important in helping the victim understand his/her feelings and begin the process of recovery.

Our Commitment to Addressing Sexual Assault

All forms of harassment including but not limited to, intimidation, coercion, threats, sexual or relationship violence and any other forms of disorderly conduct e.g. bullying, sexual assault, stalking / cyber stalking, and acts of retaliation are strictly prohibited by the University and violate the Student Code of Conduct and may violate Federal and State Laws. Violations of this policy are subject to disciplinary sanctions through the Office of Student Conduct. The Code of Conduct is contained in the Student Handbook located at: [Student Handbook](#).

Please review the aforementioned web site to review procedures, policies and protocols for reporting and addressing allegations of student sexual misconduct. The University provides the following to all sexual assault victims:

- Courteous, professional assistance in taking assault reports and providing assistance to a victim/survivor with her safety and well-being in mind.
- Payment for a sexual assault examination either through the Haven Rape Crisis Center or SGMC.
- Counseling services are available for a victim at the time of reporting or anytime following an assault. They also can assist a student with student related matters such as working with Student Affairs or Housing.
- University police are active participants in the Lowndes County Sexual Assault Response Team (SART). The department follows a strict protocol in assisting a sexual assault victim, taking reports, notifying the Haven sexual assault advocate, transporting the victim for medical services (unless an ambulance is needed) through the Haven and follow-up services as needed.
- Student Affairs is available to assist a victim with services such as room reassignment, working with faculty to assist with the student's schedule or missed classes, and if necessary assistance with withdrawal from school.



University Procedures for Responding to Reports of Sexual Assault

Reporting an Incident

If a student, employee or visitor has been the victim of an incident of sexual violence they should immediately report it to the Valdosta State University Police Department at 229-259-5555 located in the Oak Street Parking Deck at 1410 North Oak Street, Valdosta, GA. In case of an emergency or ongoing threat, if possible get to a safe location and report the incident by calling 911 local emergency police assistance or utilizing one of the campus emergency phones.

Students may also report to the Office of Student Affairs (229-333-5941), Student Conduct (229-333-5941), or any of the named Campus Security Authorities on campus. Employees may also report to Human Resources

(229-333-5709) or to local law enforcement by calling 911. Valdosta State University officials will assist any victim in notifying law enforcement, including local police, if they elect to do so. Victims are also entitled not to report to law enforcement. Any student or employee, who reports an incident of sexual violence, whether the offense occurred on or off campus, shall receive an explanation of their rights and options.

A sexual assault is any sexual act directed against another person, forcibly and/or against that person's will; or not forcibly or against the person's will where the victim is incapable of giving consent, as well as incest or statutory rape.

Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)

On March 7, 2013, President Obama signed the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act, which amended sections of the Higher Education Act of 1965 and the Clery Act. The following definitions are provided to clarify VAWA related incidents:

Domestic Violence:

Includes felony or misdemeanor crimes of violence committed by a current or former spouse of the victim, by a person with whom the victim shares a child in common, by a person cohabitating with or has cohabitated with the victim as a spouse, or by any other person against an adult or youth victim who is protected from that person's acts under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction. Georgia law defines domestic violence under the term "family violence." The term family violence means the occurrence of one or more of the following acts between past or present spouses, persons who are parents of the same child, parents and children, stepparents and stepchildren, foster parents and foster children, or other persons living or formerly living in the same household:

1. Any felony; or
2. Commission of the offenses of battery, simple battery, simple assault, assault, stalking, criminal damage to property, unlawful restraint, or criminal trespass.

Dating Violence: Means Violence committed by a person-

1. Who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim; and
2. Where the existence of such a relationship will be determined based on a consideration of the following factors:
 - a) The length of the relationship
 - b) The type of relationship
 - c) The frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship.

Stalking: Means engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to:

1. Fear for his or her safety or the safety of others; or
2. Suffer substantial emotional distress.

Georgia law further defines the offense of stalking as when a person follows, places under surveillance, or contacts another person at or about a place or places without the consent of the other person for the purpose of harassing and intimidating the other person. Under Georgia law, the term "contact" shall mean any

communication including, without being limited to , communication in person, by telephone, by mail, by broadcast, by computer, by computer network, or by any other electronic device.

Additional Procedures Victims Should Follow

If an incident of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence or stalking occurs it is important to preserve evidence to aid in the possibility of a successful criminal prosecution. Any clothing that has been removed which could contain evidence (blood, hair, semen) should be placed into a paper bag and given to authorities. Evidence of violence, such as bruising or other visible injuries, following an incident of domestic or dating violence should be documented including through preservation of photographic evidence. Evidence of stalking includes any communications, such as written notes, voice mail or other electronic communications should be saved and not altered in any way.

Time is of the essence in collecting and preserving evidence. This would also refer to giving statements and obtaining statements from potential witnesses.

On & Off Campus Resources

Valdosta State University, the City of Valdosta and Lowndes County all offer other important resources to the survivors of sexual violence including medical treatment, counseling and advocacy that they may wish to utilize. The VSU Counseling Center is available to assist any student or employee free of charge and will help them consider their options and navigate through any resources or recourse they may elect to pursue. A victim need not make a formal report to law enforcement or Valdosta State University to access these resources that include the following:

- Valdosta Police Department, 229-242-2606
- Remerton Police Department, 229-247-2320
- Lowndes County Sherriff, 229-671-2900
- Georgia State patrol, 229-333-5215
- Greenleaf Counseling Center, 229-247-4357
- South Georgia Medical Center, 229-333-1000
- Haven Rape Crisis Center, 229-242-1544
- Georgia Network to End Sexual Assault, 866-354-3672
- Victim Witness Services, District Attorney's Office, 229-671-3250
- Georgia Office of Victim Assistance, 404-559-4949
- Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, 800-547-0060
- Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINNE) Hotline, 800-656-HOPE
- Georgia Victim Witness Helpline, 800-338-6745
- Georgia Legal Services, 800-498-9469
- Georgia Network to End Sexual Assault, 866-354-3672
- Tapestri (a refugee and immigrant coalition against domestic violence), 404-299-2185
- National Domestic Violence Hotline, 800-799-SAFE (7233) 15.

Accommodations

Whether or not a student or employee reports to law enforcement or pursues any formal action, if they report an incident of sexual violence Valdosta State University is committed to providing them as safe learning or working environment as possible. Upon request Valdosta State University will make any reasonable available

change to a victim's academic, living, transportation, and/or working situation. Students may contact Student Affairs 229-333-5941 for assistance, and employees may contact Human Resources at 229-333-5709.

If a victim reports to law enforcement, they may assist them in obtaining a Temporary Restraining Order from a criminal court. Valdosta State University is committed to ensuring that any such order is fully upheld on all institutionally owned and controlled property. The University is also committed to protecting victims from any further harm, and the Student Affairs Student Conduct Officer may issue a temporary no-contact order pending the outcome of any conduct proceeding.

University Disciplinary Procedures in Sexual Assault Incidents

If you have been sexually assaulted, you have options for addressing the incident. You may want to discuss the situation with a counselor that can be provided by the Valdosta State University Counseling Center or a private practitioner. The University Police are always available to assist a victim with obtaining any support that he or she may need.

The University's student conduct process is designed to give a complainant (person making a charge) and a respondent (person charged) a fair, prompt and appropriate resolution through a process designed to help persons who need support as they proceed.

The Office of Student Conduct manages the resolution proceeding in which a student is an alleged perpetrator. The following is from appendix C of the student Code of Conduct located at [Student Handbook](#) regarding the student Sexual Misconduct Code:

Student Sexual Misconduct Code

The University System of Georgia and Valdosta State University are committed to ensuring a safe learning environment that supports the dignity of all members of the faculty, staff, administration, and student body. As part of the University System of Georgia, Valdosta State University does not discriminate on the basis of sex or gender in any of its education or employment programs and activities. To that end, this policy prohibits specific forms of behavior that, as defined in this code, constitute sexual misconduct and violate Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Valdosta State University will not tolerate sexual misconduct, which includes, but is not limited to domestic violence, dating, violence, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, sexual harassment, and stalking.

Every member of the campus community should be aware that sexual misconduct is prohibited by the Valdosta State University Student Code of Conduct, Faculty Handbook, and Employee Handbook, as well as by state and federal law, and should become familiar with the campus protocol for responding to reported violations. Valdosta State University also strongly encourages members of the community to report instances of sexual misconduct promptly to ensure that all parties involved receive appropriate support and fair treatment, and that allegations of sexual misconduct are addressed in a prompt, thorough and equitable manner.

Valdosta State University is dedicated to providing assistance and support to any student who has experienced any form of sexual misconduct, and can receive support through the VSU Counseling Center, as well as additional on-campus and off-campus support services. In addition to cooperating with law enforcement officials in the prosecution of alleged violations, Valdosta State University will take appropriate action to

respond to sexual misconduct through the Student Conduct Office for any student found responsible for violating this policy. VSU will respond to any staff or faculty member found responsible for violating this policy through established Human Resources procedures.

In addition to providing support services, prevention and awareness programs for students, faculty and staff, are provided to educate the campus community on consent, sexual assault, alcohol use, dating violence, stalking, bystander intervention and reporting, and are designed to stop sexual violence through promoting positive and healthy behaviors.

Definitions and Prohibited Sexual Misconduct

A. **Community:** Students, faculty and staff, as well as contractors, vendors, visitors, and guests.

B. **Complainant:** An individual lodging a complaint. The complainant may not always be the alleged victim.

C. **Consent:** Words or actions that show a knowing and voluntary willingness to engage in mutually agreed-upon sexual activity. Consent cannot be gained by force, intimidation or coercion, by ignoring or acting in spite of objections of another, or by taking advantage of the incapacitation of another, where the respondent knows or reasonably should have known of such incapacitation. Consent is also absent when the activity in question exceeds the scope of consent previously given. Past consent does not imply present or future consent. Silence or an absence of resistance does not imply consent. Minors under the age of 16 cannot legally consent under Georgia law.

D. **Dating Violence:** Violence committed by a person who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the alleged victim. Examples of dating violence include, but are not limited to:

- attempting to or committing an act that causes fear or injury
- assaulting with a deadly weapon or with intent to murder, rape or rob
- intentionally causing substantial physical harm
- following, placing under surveillance or contacting without direct or indirect consent for the purpose of harassing and intimidating
- violation of a restraining or protective order, condition of probation, bond or no-contact order
- threatening to commit a crime of violence or to damage property

E. **Domestic Violence:** Violence committed by a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the alleged victim, by a person with whom the alleged victim shares a child in common, by a person who is cohabitating with or has cohabitated with the victim as a spouse or intimate partner, by a person similarly situated to a spouse of the alleged victim under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction, or by any other person against an adult or youth victim who is protected from that person's acts under the domestic or family violence laws.

F. **Force:** Force is the use of physical violence and/or imposing on someone physically to gain sexual access. Force also includes threats, intimidation (implied threats) and coercion that overcome resistance or produce consent. The use of force in a sexual encounter constitutes a lack of consent.

G. **Incapacitation:** The physical and/or mental inability to make informed, rational judgments, and can result from mental disability, sleep, involuntary physical restraint, or from intentional or unintentional taking of alcohol and/or other drugs.

Whether someone is incapacitated is to be judged from the perspective of an objectively reasonable person.

Incapacitation in a sexual encounter constitutes a lack of consent.

H. **Nonconsensual Sexual Contact:** An intentional sexual touching upon a person, without consent or where the person is incapacitated, and/or by force, by another person or with any object. Sexual contact includes but is not limited to, intentional contact with the breasts, buttocks, groin, or genitals, or touching another with these body parts, or making another touch the alleged victim or themselves with or on any of these body parts.

I. **Privileged Employees:** Individuals employed by the institution to whom a complainant or alleged victim may talk in confidence, as provided by law. Disclosure to these employees will not automatically trigger an investigation against the complainant's or alleged victim's wishes. Privileged Employees are individuals specifically employed by the University to provide counseling, health, mental health, or sexual-assault related services (e.g., sexual assault resource centers, campus health centers, and campus mental health centers) for University students. Exceptions to confidentiality exist where the conduct involves suspected abuse of a minor (in Georgia, under the age of 18) or otherwise provided by law, such as imminent threat of serious harm. Further, Privileged Employees must still submit anonymous statistical information for Clery Act purposes.

J. **Respondent:** Individual who is accused to have engaged in conduct that violates this policy.

K. **Responsible Employees:** Those employees who must promptly and fully report complaints of or information regarding sexual misconduct to the Title IX Coordinator. Responsible Employees include any administrator, supervisor, faculty member, or other person in a position of authority who is not a Privileged Employee. Student employees who serve in a supervisory, advisory, or managerial role are in a position of authority for purposes of this policy (e.g., teaching assistants, residential assistants, student managers, orientation leaders, etc.). Responsible Employees are not required to report information disclosed at public awareness events (e.g., "Take Back the Night," candlelight vigils, protests, "survivor speak-outs" or other public forums in which students may disclose incidents of prohibited conduct).

L. **Retaliation** includes, but is not limited to, intentionally engaging in any form of intimidation, harassment, or harm against an individual because he or she made a complaint or assisted or participated in any manner in any investigation or process under the Sexual Misconduct policy, regardless of whether a claim of discrimination or harassment is substantiated or associated with a person or group of persons who are of a different race, color, religion, gender, age, ethnic or national origin, sexual orientation, disability, or veteran status. Retaliation may occur whether or not there is a power or authority differential between the individuals involved.

M. **Sexual Assault** refers to a range of non-consensual sexual contact, which can occur in many forms including but not limited to:

- Non-consensual contact with intimate body parts
- Non-consensual penetration with a foreign object
- Non -consensual penetration of the female sex organ by the male sex organ
- Non -consensual oral or anal sexual acts
- Lewd exposure of sexual organs in public
- Non -consensual kissing
- Sexual battery
- Rape.

N. **Sexual Exploitation**: Sexual exploitation occurs when an individual takes nonconsensual or abusive sexual advantage of another for his or her own advantage or benefit, or to the benefit or advantage of anyone other than the one being exploited. Examples of sexual exploitation may include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Invasion of sexual privacy.
2. Prostituting another individual.
3. Nonconsensual video or audio of sexual activity.
4. Nonconsensual distribution of video or audio of sexual activity, even if the sexual activity or video or audio taken of sexual activity was consensual.
5. Intentional observation of nonconsenting individuals who are partially undressed, naked, or engaged in sexual acts.
6. Knowingly transmitting an STD or HIV to another individual.
7. Intentionally and inappropriately exposing one's breasts, buttocks, groin, or genitals in nonconsensual circumstances.
8. Sexually-based bullying.

O. **Sexual Harassment**: Unwelcome verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct, based on sex or gender stereotypes, when:

- Submission to such conduct is made either implicitly or explicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or status in a course, program or activity;
- Submission or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or educational decisions affecting such individual; or
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of interfering with the individual's work or educational performance; of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working and/or learning environment; or of interfering with one's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity.

Examples of sexual harassment may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Physical Assault.
- Direct or implied threats that submission to sexual advances will be a condition of employment, work status, compensation, promotion, grades, or letters of recommendation.
- Sexual advances, physical or implied, or direct propositions of a sexual nature. This activity may include inappropriate/unnecessary touching or rubbing against another, sexually suggestive or degrading jokes or comments, remarks of a sexual nature about one's clothing and/or body, preferential treatment in exchange for sexual activity, and the inappropriate display of sexually explicit pictures, text, printed materials, or objects that do not serve an academic purpose.
- A pattern of conduct, which can be subtle in nature that has sexual overtones and is intended to create or has the effect of creating discomfort and/or that, humiliates another.
- Remarks speculating about a person's sexual activities or sexual history, or remarks about one's own sexual activities or sexual history that does not serve a medical or academic purpose.

Sexual harassment can occur regardless of the relationship, position or respective sex of the parties. Same sex harassment violates this policy as does harassment by a student of a faculty member or a subordinate employee of his/her supervisor.

P. Stalking: Engaging in a course of conduct directed toward another person based upon sex that would cause a reasonable person (i) to fear for his or her safety or the safety of immediate family members or close acquaintances, or (ii) to suffer substantial emotional distress. Stalking involves harassing or threatening behavior that an individual engages in repeatedly such as following a person, appearing at a person's home or place of business, making harassing phone calls, leaving written messages or objects, or vandalizing a person's property. Cyber Stalking is using the Internet, e-mail, or other electronic communications devices to stalk another person.

Reporting Sexual Misconduct

A complainant of sexual misconduct can choose among several reporting options: filing a criminal complaint with law enforcement officials; filing an institutional report with the university; or filing an anonymous report.

These processes are detailed below. An individual who believes he/she is a victim of sexual misconduct is encouraged to report allegations of sexual misconduct promptly.

A. Institutional Reports

Complainants of sexual misconduct who wish to file a report with the University should notify the Title IX Coordinator in the Office of Social Equity (229) 333-5463. Responsible Employees informed about sexual misconduct allegations involving any student must notify the Title IX Coordinator as soon as practicable. Responsible Employees should not attempt to resolve the situation, but must notify and report all relevant information to the Title IX Coordinator. Privileged Employees are not bound by this requirement but may, consistent with their ethical and legal obligations, be required to report limited information about incidents without revealing the identities of the individuals involved to the Title IX Coordinator. All members of the VSU community are encouraged to report incidents of sexual misconduct promptly to Dr. Maggie Viverette, Title IX Coordinator, in the Office of Social Equity (229) 333-5463 or email titleix@valdosta.edu.

Complainants are encouraged to report their complaints in writing, though oral complaints will also be accepted, taken seriously, and investigated, to the extent possible. While complaints should be made as quickly as possible following an alleged incident of sexual misconduct, all reports will be accepted regardless of when reported. Complaints should include as much information as possible – that is: (1) the type of sexual misconduct experienced; (2) the name of the respondent; (3) the date(s), time(s), and place(s) of the sexual misconduct; (4) the name(s) of any individual(s) with knowledge of the incident; (5) whether any tangible evidence has been preserved; and (6) whether a criminal complaint has been made.

Information from complaints will be shared only as necessary to investigate and to resolve the alleged sexual misconduct. Complaints will be investigated and resolved as outlined below. The University, through the Title IX Coordinator, will also assess the need for and institute interim measures as described below as appropriate and where reasonable, as well as work with the appropriate department to determine the need to issue a broader warning to the community in compliance with the Clery Act or to report activity to the authorities. Institutional reports will be investigated and adjudicated separately from any criminal complaints.

1. Confidentiality: Where a complainant or alleged victim requests that his or her identity be withheld or the allegation(s) not be investigated, the institutions should consider, through the Title IX Coordinator, whether this request can be honored while still providing a safe and nondiscriminatory environment for the institution. Honoring the request may limit the institution's ability to respond fully to the incident and may limit the institution's ability to discipline the respondent.

2. Retaliation: Anyone who, in good faith, reports what she or he believes to be misconduct under this Policy, or who participates or cooperates in, or is otherwise associated with any investigation, shall not be subjected to retaliation.

Anyone who believes he or she has been the target of retaliation for reporting, participating or cooperating in, or otherwise being associated with an investigation should immediately contact the Title IX Coordinator for the institution. Any person found to have engaged in retaliation in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action.

3. False Complaints: Individuals are prohibited from intentionally giving false statements to a university official. Any person found to have intentionally submitted false complaints, accusations, or statements, including during a hearing, in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action.

4. Amnesty: Individuals should be encouraged to come forward and to report sexual misconduct notwithstanding their choice to consume alcohol or to use drugs. Information reported by an individual during an investigation concerning use of drugs or alcohol will not be used against the particular individual in a disciplinary proceeding or voluntarily reported to law enforcement; however, individuals may be provided with resources on drug and alcohol counseling and/or education, as appropriate.

B. Law Enforcement Reports

Because sexual misconduct may constitute criminal activity, a complainant also has the option, should he or she so choose, of filing a report with campus or local police, for his or her own protection and that of the surrounding community. Complainants considering filing a report of sexual misconduct with law enforcement should preserve any evidence of sexual misconduct, including, but not limited to, the following:

1. Clothing worn during the incident including undergarments.
2. Sheets, bedding, and condoms, if used.
3. Lists of witnesses with contact information.
4. Text messages, call history, social media posts.
5. Pictures of injuries.
6. Videos

C. Anonymous Reports

Reports of sexual misconduct can be reported anonymously to University Police (229) 333-7816, or the UPD website at [Silent Watch Form](#). Anonymous reports can also be made via the Student Conduct Incident Report

<https://publicdocs.maxient.com/incidentreport.php?ValdostaStateUniv> or by contacting the Dean of Students Office at (229) 333-5941, or by contacting the Title IX Coordinator at (229) 333-5463.

D. Interim Protective Measures

The Title IX Coordinator or his/her designee may impose interim protective measures before the final outcome of an investigation and until final resolution of the allegations if failure to take the interim measures would constitute an immediate threat to the safety and well-being of the alleged victim or other members of the community, or to ensure equal access to the university's education programs and activities. Before any such measures are instituted, however, the Title IX Coordinator should, where practicable, provide the respondent with an initial opportunity to respond to the allegations and to the imposition of any interim protective measures specifically.

Imposing interim protective measures does not indicate that a violation of the Sexual Misconduct Policy has occurred, and is designed to protect the alleged victim and community, and not to harm the respondent. To the extent interim measures are imposed, they should minimize the burden on both the alleged victim and the respondent, where feasible. Interim measures may include, but are not limited to:

1. Change of housing assignment
2. Issuance of a “no contact” directive
3. Restrictions or bars to entering certain institution property
4. Changes to academic or employment arrangements, schedules, or supervision
5. Interim suspension; and
6. Other measures designed to promote the safety and well-being of the parties and the institution’s community.

An interim suspension should only occur where necessary to maintain safety, and should be limited to those situations where the respondent poses a serious and immediate danger or threat to persons or property. In making such an assessment, the university should consider the existence of a significant risk to the health or safety of the alleged victim or the campus community, the nature, duration, and severity of the risk, the probability of potential injury, and whether less restrictive means can be used to significantly mitigate the risk. Before an interim suspension is issued, the university must make all reasonable efforts to give the respondent the opportunity to be heard on whether his or her presence on campus poses a danger. If an interim suspension is issued, the terms of the suspension take effect immediately.

When requested by the respondent, a hearing to determine whether the intermediate suspension should continue will be held within three (3) business days of the request.

E. Seeking Medical Care

A physical medical exam should be conducted in all cases of sexual assault, regardless of the length of time that has elapsed since the violence. A victim shall have the right to have a forensic medical examination regardless of whether or not the victim participates in the criminal justice system or cooperates with law enforcement in pursuing prosecution of the underlying crime. A victim shall not be required to pay, directly or indirectly, for the cost of a forensic medical examination. O.C.G.A. § 17-5-72. Additionally, the investigating law enforcement agency shall maintain any physical evidence collected as a result of an alleged sexual assault.

Also under Georgia law, no prosecuting attorney, investigating law enforcement agency, or government official shall ask or require any victim of a sexual assault to submit to a polygraph examination or any other truth-telling device as a condition precedent to investigating such alleged crime. The refusal of a victim to submit to a polygraph examination or any other truth-telling device shall not prevent an investigation or prosecution of any sexual assault. O.C.G.A. § 17-5-73.

If the individual calls 911 dispatch or goes to the hospital and requests a Sexual Assault Kit, but does not want to make a report to law enforcement, The Haven Rape Crisis Advocate and a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner, (SANE) Nurse will be contacted.

Evidence will be collected and labeled with the individual's information by the (SANE) Nurse.

F. Support Services

Once an individual makes a complaint, or receives notice that a complaint has been made against him or her, that individual will receive information about support services, such as counseling, advocacy, housing assistance, academic support, disability services, health and mental health services, and legal services that are available on campus. Students can receive confidential counseling services on-campus through the VSU Counseling Center at no charge. In addition, the VSU Counseling Center can provide direct referrals to community based organizations that provide additional services and support. Other support services are listed on the Health Promotions website at: <http://www.valdosta.edu/student/health-promotions/rsvp/Sexual%20Assault%20Resources%20and%20Information.php>.

Any violation of the Sexual Misconduct Policy should be reported to the Title IX Coordinator.

- Title IX Coordinator, Office of Social Equity (229) 333-5463
- VSU Police (229) 333-7816 or (229) 259-5555
- VSU Dean of Students Office (229) 333-5941
- VSU Counseling Center (229) 333-5940
- The Haven Rape Crisis Center 1-800-334-2836 or (229) 244-4477

Process for Investigating and Resolving Institutional Reports of Student Sexual Misconduct

A. Jurisdiction: Valdosta State University shall take necessary and appropriate action to protect the safety and well-being of its community. Accordingly, sexual misconduct perpetrated against students by University System of Georgia students, faculty, or staff should be addressed whenever such acts occur on a campus, in connection with a University program or activity, or in a manner that creates a hostile environment for members of the University community. Further, the policy is applicable to all

University System of Georgia students, faculty, and staff, as well as contractors, vendors, visitors, guests or other third parties.

B. Advisors: Both the alleged victim and respondent, as parties to the matter, shall have the opportunity to use an advisor (including an attorney) of his/her choosing for the express purpose of providing advice and counsel at his/her own expense. The selected advisor shall not otherwise be a party or witness involved in the investigation. The advisor may be present during any meetings and proceedings involved in the investigatory or resolution process in which the advisee is also eligible to be present. The advisor may advise the advisee, including providing questions, suggestions, advice on the proceedings, and guidance on responses to any

questions of the participant, but shall not participate directly in the process. The University shall not prohibit family members of any party from attending if the party requests such attendance, but may limit the number to two family members.

C. Timeframe: Reasonable efforts will be made to complete the investigation and resolution within 60 calendar days of the initial complaint, though a longer period of time may be needed in some cases. The Title IX Coordinator will notify the respondent and the alleged victim, in writing, of any extension of this timeframe.

D. Investigations of Institutional Reports of Student Sexual Misconduct

1. The Title IX Coordinator is primarily responsible for directly overseeing the investigation and resolution of complaints, and coordinating possible remedial actions or other responses reasonably designed to minimize the recurrence of the alleged conduct as well as mitigate the effects of any misconduct. The Title IX Coordinator will ensure prompt, fair, and impartial investigations and resolutions of complaints alleging violations of the sexual misconduct policy. The Title IX



Coordinator shall be responsible for ensuring any individual participating in the investigation, resolution, or appeal of any sexual misconduct case has received regular training on issues pertaining to sexual misconduct.

2. The Title IX Coordinator shall designate an investigator to conduct a prompt, thorough, and impartial investigation into each complaint received. The investigation shall consist of interviews of the complainant, alleged victim, respondent, and witnesses, and the collection and review of documents or other physical or electronic information, as well as other information or evidence, as appropriate.

3. Unrelated charges and cases shall be investigated separately, unless the respondent consents to having them aggregated.

4. The respondent shall be provided with written notice of the complaint, pending investigation, possible charges, possible sanctions, and available support services. The notice should also include the identity of the Title IX Coordinator and any investigator(s) involved. Notice shall be provided via institution email. If confirmation of receipt is not received by the Title IX Coordinator or the investigator, the Title IX Coordinator or the investigator shall engage in other measures to ensure notice is received by the respondent. A copy shall also be provided to the alleged victim via the same means.

5. The investigator will timely begin the investigation and will schedule an initial interview with the complainant, alleged victim, respondent and any known relevant witnesses. The investigator should retain written notes and/or obtain written or recorded statements from each interview. The investigator shall also keep a record of any proffered witnesses not interviewed, along with a brief, written explanation.

6. Each party shall have three (3) business days to submit a written statement to supplement the notice of complaint and the verbal interview. In that response, the respondent shall have the right to admit or to deny

the allegations, and to set forth a defense— whether written or electronic —with facts, witnesses, and documents in support. If the respondent has not otherwise responded, a non-written response will be considered a general denial of the alleged misconduct.

7. Based on this response and other relevant information, the investigator shall continue to interview witnesses for both sides, to re-interview parties where necessary, and to collect and review documents or other physical or electronic information, as well as other steps, as appropriate.

8. Where the respondent is a student, the respondent has the right to remain silent during the investigation and resolution process, without an automatic adverse inference resulting. If the respondent chooses to remain silent, the investigation may ultimately still proceed and policy violation charges may still result, which may be resolved against the respondent.

9. The respondent and/or alleged victim may challenge the participation of the investigator on the grounds of personal bias by submitting a written statement to the Title IX Coordinator setting forth the basis for the challenge no later than three (3) business days after the party reasonably should have known of the bias. The Title IX Coordinator will determine whether to sustain or deny the challenge, and if sustained, to appoint a replacement.

10. At the conclusion of the investigation, and after consultation with the Title IX Coordinator, the investigator will issue a written report setting forth an explanation of the evidence against the respondent. The Title IX Coordinator will then issue to the parties a written report setting forth charges and possible sanctions.

11. The parties shall have at least three (3) business days to respond to the report in writing. The respondent's written response should outline his or her plea in response to the charge(s), and where applicable, his or her defense(s), and the facts, witnesses, and documents – whether written or electronic – in support.

12. The investigator shall, as necessary, conduct further investigation and update the report as warranted by the response(s), and will update the report as necessary.

13. Upon completion of the investigation, the investigator will review the evidence with the Title IX Coordinator. The Title IX Coordinator will ensure policies have been followed.

14. The Title IX Coordinator will contact the alleged victim(s) and the respondent(s) and schedule an opportunity to meet with each party individually. During these meetings, the Title IX Coordinator shall review the report with the parties (individually). Should the report be acceptable to all parties, an informal resolution may be made, which would not require the parties to move to the hearing phase of these procedures. Should the report not be acceptable by both parties, then the report shall be addressed by a hearing by the Sexual Misconduct Hearing Panel. If, the parties agree on the conduct, but not on the sanctions, then the sanctions shall be addressed by the Sexual Misconduct Hearing Panel.

15. Allegations of sexual misconduct involving a student that are brought against a VSU faculty or staff will be investigated as outlined above, but will be further addressed and/or resolved through the University's applicable employment policies, and in accordance with the procedures for dismissal outlined in the Board of Regents Policy including procedures for appealing such decisions.

16. Where the respondent(s) is a student, a hearing, as well as corresponding procedures/rights to appeal, shall be set and administered as set forth in Appendix B, Section II-VI, and a final report shall be provided to all parties, which will also provide a date, time, and location for a hearing on the matter.

17. The final report should also be provided to the Sexual Misconduct Hearing Panel for their consideration in adjudicating the charges brought against the respondent. The investigator may testify as a witness before the hearing panel regarding the investigation and findings, but shall otherwise have no part in the hearing process and shall not attempt to otherwise influence the hearing panel outside of providing testimony during the hearing.

Disciplinary Hearing Procedures for Student Sexual Misconduct

A finding of responsibility regarding sexual misconduct under this policy will be considered a Code of Conduct violation.

Disciplinary sanctions for violations of this policy will be imposed in accordance with the Code of Conduct Appendix C, Section VII. The range of sanctions includes, but is not limited to, the following measures: expulsion, suspension, reprimand, restriction, probation, and restitution. Student employees may additionally be subject to staff policies and procedures.

The following process shall apply for convening disciplinary hearings for violations of student sexual misconduct.

1. The hearing will be conducted by the Title IX Coordinator and/or his/her designee(s).
2. The respondent and the complainant shall be notified in writing of the specific charge(s) and of the date, time, and place where a hearing will be held.
3. The charge letter notifying the respondent and the complainant students of the hearing shall be date stamped no less than (5) business days prior to the date designated for the hearing.
4. The notification will inform the respondent and the complainant that an advisor of their choosing may accompany them during the hearing. The advisor is not there to represent either student before the hearing panel; the advisor is only there to advise the student in their response to the panel, and for support.
5. The respondent and the complainant shall be notified of the opportunity to present witnesses and evidence on their own behalf. Both parties will be permitted to pose questions to all witnesses at the hearing. (All questions are to be written and directed to the chairperson who asks the witness to then respond.) Only witnesses who have information directly related to the charges will be permitted. Character witnesses can submit written statements prior to the hearing. Advisors may actively assist in drafting questions. The Panel shall ask the questions as written, and will limit questions only if they are unrelated to determining the veracity of the charge leveled against the respondent(s).
6. Accommodations for the complainant or respondent may be made as an alternative to physical presence. The Title IX Coordinator may allow a party to testify in a separate room, when determined to be necessary. Where such a determination is made, special measures must be put in place to ensure no party is unfairly

disadvantaged by this procedure. A party must still give testimony in the presence of the Panel, and the opposing party must have the opportunity to view the testimony remotely and to submit follow-up questions.

7. Where the Title IX Coordinator determines that a witness or party necessary to the proceedings is unavailable and unable to be present due to exigent circumstances (e.g., on a study abroad program, medical restrictions on travel, etc.), he or she may establish special procedures for providing testimony from a separate location. In doing so, the Title IX Coordinator must determine there is a valid basis for the unavailability, ensure proper sequestration in a manner that ensures the testimony has not been tainted, and make a determination that such an arrangement will not unfairly disadvantage any parties. Should it be reasonably believed that a party or witness who is not physically present has presented tainted testimony, the testimony of that witness will be disregarded.

8. The standard of review shall be a preponderance of the evidence; however, any decision to suspend or to expel a student must also be supported by substantial evidence at the hearing.

9. The civil rules of evidence do not apply to the investigatory or resolution process.

10. An audio recording of the hearing will be made. A copy of the recording will be kept on file in the Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students Office in accordance with the records retention policy (Appendix D, Section VI).

11. The hearing shall be conducted in accordance with the policy set forth in Appendix C, Section V. of the Code of Conduct.

After proper notification is given, (note items 1-4 above) and if the respondent or the complainant do not appear at the hearing, then the hearing may proceed in their absence.

Section V. Sexual Misconduct Hearing Panel Procedures

The administration of discipline is viewed as an educational process not a criminal or civil trial proceeding. As such, the disciplinary procedures used are determined and administered by educators. Such procedures will give cognizance to the test of fairness, truth, and due process.

Should the final investigative report not be acceptable by both parties, then the report shall be addressed by a hearing. If, the parties agree on the conduct, but not on the sanctions, then the sanctions shall be addressed by a hearing.

The procedures used by the VSU Sexual Misconduct Hearing Panel for alleged sexual misconduct violations are as follows:

A. The VSU Sexual Misconduct Hearing Panel shall be composed of at least three faculty and staff members who have been trained specifically to hear violations of the Student Sexual Misconduct Code. The investigator shall not serve on the Panel, and no students shall serve on the Panel.

B. All hearings involving the respondent, the complainant, and the VSU Sexual Misconduct Hearing Panel pertaining to sexual misconduct are open meetings, but will be conducted in a manner consistent with the

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Both the respondent and the complainant have the right to be present during the entire hearing, except during deliberation. Accommodations for the complainant or respondent may be made as an alternative to physical presence.

C. Hearings are presided over by the Title IX Coordinator or his or her designee. The chair may exclude any person from the hearing who is materially interfering with the hearing proceedings. Any disruptions of a hearing can result in the immediate removal of the person disrupting the hearing, who if a student, could face disciplinary action. The chairperson makes such a determination with the input of the Title IX Coordinator, and when that determination is made those causing the disruption will be asked to leave the hearing and its premises. If they do not voluntarily leave, the University Police will escort them off the premises.

D. After deliberations, the hearing panel will determine, based on the preponderance of the evidence, and on the evidence presented at the hearing whether it is more likely than not that the violation in question did occur. Any decision to suspend or to expel a student must also be supported by substantial evidence as presented at the hearing. A Sexual Misconduct Hearing Panel hearing quorum is three. A hearing may not proceed with less than a quorum.

E. The Hearing Panel has three charges:

1. Determine the facts.
2. Determine if the respondent is responsible for the alleged violations.
3. If there is a finding of responsibility for any or all alleged violations, they are to develop a suitable disciplinary recommendation(s).

F. The final determination of the acceptability of the recommendation(s) as well as the implementation of the recommendation(s) will reside with the Vice President of Student Affairs and Dean of Students or his/her designee.

G. Both the respondent and complainant are entitled to seek a no-contact order that imposes reasonable restrictions of contact after a complaint has been filed, during the investigation and during and after the proceedings are in progress.

H. All parties to a report have a right not to face questions or discussion of their sexual history, unless the hearing officer determines that such information about the student is highly relevant to determining whether or not there has been a violation or it establishes a pattern of behavior consistent with the charges.

I. Both the complainant and the respondent have the right to appeal. The appeals procedure will follow Appendix C, Section VII of the Code of Conduct. Both parties will be informed if there is an appeal.

Disciplinary Sanctions for Student Sexual Misconduct

The following are possible disciplinary measures that may be imposed upon a student or organization for a finding of responsibility for violations of the Student Sexual Misconduct Code. In determining the severity of sanctions or corrective actions the following will be considered: severity, frequency and/or nature of the

offense, history of past discriminatory, harassing, or retaliatory conduct, the respondent's willingness to accept responsibility, previous institutional response to similar conduct, and the institution's interests. The Panel will determine the sanction after review of the investigatory findings.

The broad range of sanctions includes but is not limited to: expulsion; suspension for an identified time frame or until satisfaction of certain conditions, or both; temporary or permanent separation of the parties (e.g., change in classes, reassignment of residence, no contact orders, limiting geography of where parties can go on campus) with additional sanctions for violating orders; required participation in sexual or relationship sensitivity training/awareness education programs; required participation in alcohol and other drug awareness and abuse prevention programs; counseling or mentoring; volunteering/community service; loss of institutional privileges; delays in obtaining administrative services and benefits from the institution (e.g., holding transcripts, delaying registration, graduation, diplomas); additional academic requirements relating to scholarly work or research on sexual misconduct; financial restitution; or any other discretionary sanctions directly related to the violation or conduct.

Appeals Procedure for Student Sexual Misconduct

Parties shall have the right to appeal the outcome on any of the following grounds: (1) to consider new information, sufficient to alter the decision, or other relevant facts not brought out in the original hearing, because such information was not known or knowable to the person appealing during the time of the hearing; (2) to allege a procedural error within the hearing process that may have substantially impacted the fairness of the hearing, including but not limited to whether any hearing questions were improperly excluded or whether the decision was tainted by bias; or (3) to allege that the finding was inconsistent with the weight of the information. Appeals may be made by the alleged offender for the above reasons in any case where sanctions are issued – even those in which such sanctions are held “in abeyance,” such as probationary suspension or expulsion.

The appeal must be made in writing, and must set forth one or more of the bases outlined above, and must be submitted within five (5) business days of the date of the final report. Where the respondent or alleged victim appealing the outcome is a student, the appeal should be made to the Vice President for Student Affairs or his/her designee. The appeal shall be a review of the record only, and no new meeting with the respondent or alleged victim will be held. The non-appealing party shall be given the opportunity to respond to the appellant's submission.

The Vice President, or his/her designee, may affirm the original finding and sanction; affirm the original finding but issue a new sanction of greater or lesser severity; remand the case back to the Title IX Coordinator to correct a procedural or factual defect; or reverse or dismiss the case if there was a procedural or factual defect that cannot be remedied by remand. The Vice President of Student Affairs or his/her designee shall then issue a decision in writing to both the respondent and alleged victim simultaneously within a reasonable time period.

The decision of the Vice President of Student Affairs or his/her designee may be appealed in writing within five (5) business days (as determined by the date of the decision letter) to the President of the University solely on the three grounds set forth above. The President may affirm the original finding and sanction; affirm the original finding but issue a new sanction of greater or lesser severity; remand the case back to the Title IX Coordinator to correct a procedural or factual defect; or reverse or dismiss the case if there was a procedural

or factual defect that cannot be remedied by remand. The President's decision shall be issued in writing to both the respondent and alleged victim and shall be issued within a reasonable amount of time.

The President's decision shall be the final decision of the institution. Should the respondent or alleged victim wish to appeal the President's decision, he or she may appeal to the Board of Regents in accordance with the Board of Regents Policy 8.6.

Recusal/Challenge for Bias

Any party may challenge the participation of any University official, employee or student panel member in the disciplinary process on the grounds of personal bias by submitting a written statement to the Title IX Coordinator or his/her designee, setting forth the basis for the challenge. The designee may not be the same individual responsible for investigating or adjudicating the conduct allegation. The written challenge should be submitted within a reasonable time after the individual reasonably should have known of the existence of the bias. The University designee will determine whether to sustain or deny the challenge, and if sustained, the replacement to be appointed.

In furtherance of the University's commitment for non-students, the Office of Social Equity is responsible for managing proceedings for those cases in which an employee is the respondent.

In determining whether the alleged conduct constitutes sexual harassment or assault, the full context in which the alleged incident occurred must be considered. The guidelines concerning filing a complaint and the ensuing procedures can be located at: [Filing a Social Equity Complaint](#).

There are a number of sanctions that can be made on the part of the University in these proceedings ranging from probation to expulsion for the University. Those sanctions can be found through the office of Human Resources, the Office of Student Conduct and the Office of Social Equity.

Title IX of the Educational Amendments Act of 1972 (amending the Higher Education Act of 1965) forbids sexual discrimination, specifically stating that "no person....shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance".

The following are examples of types of sex-based discrimination prohibited by Title IX:

1. Sexual misconduct including sexual harassment, sexual assault, rape, intimate partner violence, stalking, and/or bullying occurring in a way that impacts the student participation in their educational environment, regardless of the location;
2. Discriminatory decision-making by a supervisor of an employee based on the employee's sex.
3. Failure to provide equitable opportunity for participation in intercollegiate sports.

Pursuant to Title IX and its regulations Valdosta State University's Title IX Coordinator is the designated university official with primary responsibility for coordinating the university's compliance with the Title IX and other federal and state laws and regulations relating to sex-based discrimination.

Valdosta State University Title IX Coordinator:

Maggie J Viverette
Office of Social Equity
1208 N. Patterson Street
Valdosta, Georgia 31698
(229) 333 -5463
mviveret@valdosta.edu

Additionally the Title IX Coordinator, is authorized to have additional deputy coordinators, Valdosta State University has designated administrators and deputy coordinators based on the various areas of the university covered under the Title IX:

Employees: Mr. Ernest Smith, Classification & Compensation Analyst-Human Resources

Athletics: Ms. Jennifer Grubbs, Senior Woman Administrator/Associate Head Coach

Additional information regarding Valdosta State University Title IX Compliance can be found by visiting [Title IX Policy](#).

Sex Offender Registration-Campus Sex Crimes Prevention Act

The Campus Sex Crimes Prevention Act (CSCPA) of 2000 is a federal law that provides for the tracking of convicted sex offenders enrolled at, or employed by, institutions of higher education. The CSCPA is an amendment to the Jacob Wetterling Crimes against Children and Sexually Violent Offender Act. The federal law requires state law enforcement agencies (Lowndes County Sheriff's Office), to provide Valdosta State University with a Sex Offender Registry which we receive monthly. There is a link to this registry on the University Police web site and the Georgia Bureau of Investigation web side found at:

[Georgia Bureau of Investigation Sex Offender Registry](#).

The CSCPA further amends the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) to clarify that nothing in the Act can prohibit an educational institution from disclosing information provided to the institution concerning registered sex offenders.

Megan's Law

Members of the general public may request community notification flyers for information concerning sexually violent predators in a particular community by contacting the Lowndes County Sheriff's Department at 120 Prison Farm Road Valdosta, Ga., 229-671-2900..

Missing Student Notification Policy

The Clery Act requires institutions that maintain on campus housing facilities to establish a missing student notification policy and related procedures (20 USC 1092 (j) Section 488 of the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008).

When it is determined that a residential student is missing from the University, staff at Valdosta State University, in collaboration with local law enforcement, will be guided by this Missing Student Notification Policy and related procedures.

Provisions

In accordance with general institutional emergency notification procedures, when a Valdosta State University student is thought to be missing from the campus, staff in the Valdosta State University administration should be immediately notified. Specifically, staff in the Office of Housing, Vice President for Student Affairs, University Police, and the Dean of Students Office, should be contacted so that they can coordinate efforts to locate the student. The Dean of Students Office has the authority and the responsibility for coordinating the efforts made by Valdosta State University to assist the student and the student's family.

The appropriate Student Affairs representative, or other individual learning that a student is missing, will file a formal missing student report with the Valdosta State University Police or to the local law enforcement agency that has jurisdiction in the geographical areas around the specific campus location. It will be made clear to all students annually, that each residential student of the University has the option to designate an individual to be contacted by Valdosta State University administration no later than 24 hours after the time that Valdosta State University determines the student is missing. Valdosta State University provides each student with the means and opportunity to register their confidential Missing Student contact information. This information is only accessible to Valdosta State University employees who are authorized campus officials and this information will not be disclosed to others with the exception of law enforcement personnel in the furtherance of a missing student investigation.

In accordance with the Valdosta State University's Missing Student Policy, it should be noted that Valdosta State University notifies each student who is under 18 years of age (and not an emancipated individual), that Valdosta State University is required to contact the student's parents or guardian in addition to the person identified as the missing student contact person. This contact will be made no later than 24 hours after the time that the student is determined to be missing.

In accordance with Valdosta State University procedures, it should be noted that Valdosta State University will inform each residential student that Valdosta State University will notify the appropriate local law enforcement agency when a student has gone missing, unless the local law enforcement agency was the entity that made the determination that the student was missing. This notification will be made no later than 24 hours after the time that the student is determined missing.

If campus law enforcement personnel have been notified that a student has gone missing, and makes a determination that a student who is the subject of a missing person report has been missing for more than 24 hours, Valdosta State University staff will initiate emergency contact procedures as outlined in Valdosta State University's policy and protocol.

Valdosta State University's missing student investigative procedures include the following:

- Include communication procedures for official notification of appropriate individuals at Valdosta State University that a student has been missing for more than 24 hours

- Require an official Missing Person Report relating to a Valdosta State University residential student to be referred immediately to the University Police Department.
- If through the investigation of an official report, the University Police determine that a student has been missing for more than 24 hours they will notify the local police; contact those individuals provided by the student as their missing student contact person; and if a student is under 18 years of age and emancipated their custodial parent(s) or legal guardian(s) will be immediately contacted.

Daily Crime and Fire Log

University Police maintains a Daily Crime Log of all criminal offenses (including Arson/Fire) reported to the Police Department. The University Police publish the Crime Log Monday through Friday, during business hours. The log is available 24 hours a day to members of the public. This log identifies the type, location and time of each criminal incident which has been reported. Local newspaper, television and radio stations have access to this log and if they deem it newsworthy they may publish said information. An online copy of the Daily Crime Log is available [here](#).

Valdosta State University Policies Governing Alcohol and Other Drugs

Federal law requires Valdosta State University to notify all faculty, staff, and students annually of the following:

Valdosta State University prohibits the unlawful possession, use, manufacture or distribution of alcohol or controlled substances by students, faculty, staff, and guests in buildings, facilities, grounds or property controlled by the University or used as part of University activities. For students, this includes prohibiting the possession and consumption of any beverage containing alcohol in a residence hall room except by individuals who are twenty-one years or older. This also includes prohibiting the presences of students under the age of twenty-one in residence hall rooms where alcohol is present unless one of the roommates is 21 years of age or older. In addition, the smoking of any material is prohibited on the campus of Valdosta State University at all locations.

Alcohol Policy

Valdosta State University fully complies with the alcohol laws for the State of Georgia. All state laws apply to VSU students, faculty, staff and visitors while on the campus of VSU. The use of alcoholic beverages, subject to the laws of the State of Georgia may be permitted at Valdosta State University sponsored activities in areas designated and with prior approval.

The written VSU Alcohol specifically states:

1. The use, possession, or transportation of alcoholic beverages is prohibited by students under the age of 21.
2. If a student is under the influence of alcohol and under the age of 21, he/she will be cited for underage consumption of alcohol and referred to the appropriate authorities for disposition by the appropriate judicial process.
3. No student shall be in an intoxicated state manifested by boisterousness, rowdiness, obscene or indecent appearance, or by vulgar, profane, lewd, or unbecoming language.
4. The consumption of alcoholic beverages of possession of an open container of alcoholic beverages on University property is prohibited in public areas. (A public area is defined as any area outside of an

individual's living quarters). Students over age 21 who publicly consume alcohol or possess an open container of alcoholic beverage on University property are considered in violation of this policy.

5. No student shall furnish or cause to be furnished any alcoholic beverage to any person under the legal drinking age.
6. Serving alcohol to someone who is visibly intoxicated is prohibited.
7. Any VSU recognized student organization that sponsors, permits, or allows social event with alcohol, and fails to prevent the consumption of said alcohol by underage attendees via established University guidelines, will be cited for violation of Paragraph A, 1 & 5, Paragraphs L and R of the Student Code of conduct, and will be dealt with as an organization.
8. No alcohol may be purchased with student activity organization funds.

Specific Georgia laws concerning above noted prohibitions include:

- Possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages by persons under the age of 21 (OCGA 3-3-23)
 - Driving under the influence of alcohol (40-6-391)
 - Possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages in public locations on campus, including residence halls common spaces; Common spaces in residence halls refer to any public space that exists outside of a specific residential unit. Examples include, but are not limited to group study/lounge spaces, laundry rooms, elevator lobbies, computer rooms etc. Common spaces also include the public spaces located on the outside grounds of a residence hall
 - The sale, distribution, or furnishing of alcoholic beverages to persons under the age of 21 (OCGA 3-3-23)
 - The use of alcohol in an irresponsible manner (games, contests, forced, or ritualized consumption of alcohol, behaviors requiring the response of a University official or law enforcement officer, etc.)
 - Providing alcoholic beverages to a person who is intoxicated
 - Any activity or conduct involving the use of alcohol that is in violation of law.
 - Alcohol is not for sale on Valdosta State University property and all functions which serve alcohol require VSU Police Officers to be present
 - Any other abuse of alcohol or drugs is subject to enforcement by VSU Police through federal and state laws pertaining to such violations
 - Students 21 years of age and older living on campus are allowed to have alcohol in their residence hall room only for personal consumption.
 - Carrying a False I.D. is prohibited under OCGA 16-9-4
 - Open Container of Alcohol OCGA 40-6-253
 - Public Drunkenness OCGA 16-11-41
 - Refusal to take a Chemical Test or other Test as indicated within OCGA 40-6-391 WILL result in the suspension of a driver's license for one year upon first offense.
- Penalties for Alcohol possession and selling violations for Under 21 receive up to 6 months in confinement, \$300 fine, probations and/or Community Service. Providing alcohol to persons Under 21 can result in up to 12 months confinement, \$1000 fine and probation/and or Community Service.

The University Policy for Alcohol Events pertains to events limited to on-campus events and/or public venue events. General guidelines include:

- The department/organization (Event Sponsor) seeking to sponsor an event wherein alcohol will be served and consumed must assume direct responsibility for ensuring compliance with Valdosta State University's Alcohol Policy. The event Coordinator is responsible for purchasing alcohol in advance of the event from the campus food service provider or other provider. If the campus food supplier does not supply the

alcohol, the Event Coordinator will be responsible for the transportation of the alcohol to the event site. The event Coordinator shall be present throughout the event and shall be responsible for the removal of all unopened alcohol from the event site immediately following the event. All opened alcohol will be disposed of immediately following the event by the event caterer.

- Valdosta State University adheres to Georgia's liquor laws and alcohol will be permitted at Valdosta State University only in instances which comply with state and federal law, local ordinances and this policy.
 - Alcohol cannot be sold by the campus food service provider or Valdosta State University. Ticket sales for alcohol by the Event Sponsor is allowed upon coordination with the campus food service provider. The service of alcohol is prohibited absent approval of the University President.
 - No State funds may be used to purchase alcoholic beverages.
 - Alcoholic beverages may not be served at any event which is primarily a student event.
 - It is the sole responsibility of the Event Coordinator to obtain necessary signatures from the Director of Event Services, the Chief of Campus Police and the Event Caterer.
 - Event Caterer must have necessary alcohol licenses, supply a certified or licensed bartender and provide beverage set ups. Under no circumstance will self-service be allowed. Access to alcoholic beverages must be through a licensed certified bartender. Under no circumstance will server consume alcoholic beverages.
 - Guests are subject to be carded by Event Coordinator and/or bartenders.
 - Alcoholic beverages are not served to persons under the legal drinking age or to persons who appear intoxicated.
 - Non-alcoholic beverages must be available and featured as prominently as the alcoholic beverages.
 - A sufficient amount of food that is equal or greater in quantities to that of the alcohol served must be continuously available throughout the event.
 - Police officers must be present for any event at which minors and/or 50 guests or more will be in attendance.
 - All alcoholic beverages must remain inside the reserved or designated event space during the event.
 - On-campus event sites must be reserved through the Office of Event Services or through the Union Reservations Office with a VSU Event Contract.
 - The service of alcohol at an event will be limited to two (2) hours unless a special allowance is granted for extended service by the University President. Under no circumstances will alcohol service exceed 4 hours. Alcohol service will end forty-five (45) minutes before the scheduled end of the event, unless the event itself is only two hours or less in length.

*On-campus locations are not limited unless done so by the President of the University.

VSU Alcohol Policy can be found at:

The Office of Alcohol & Other Drugs Programs promotes healthy decisions and provides services to students concerned about their alcohol/other drug use and students needing to satisfy judicial or student conduct sanctions. This includes planning, implementing and evaluating prevention programming aimed at decreasing the negative impact that alcohol and other drugs have on our University community.

The Office is located in Powell Hall and can be reached at (229) 259-5111 or

<http://www.valdosta.edu/student/student-services/counseling-center/aode/>

Controlled Substances

Valdosta State University fully complies with the State of Georgia Controlled Substances Act and all other local, state and federal laws governing controlled substances. The University strictly prohibits the illegal use or possession of any controlled substance:

- The possession, use, manufacture, cultivation, distribution, sale, and/or misuse of any controlled or illegal substance, designer drug, or synthetic cannabinoid. Common names: Spice, K2, Demon, wicked, Black Magic, Voodoo Spice, and Ninja Aroma. Individuals found responsible for manufacturing, possessing, importing/exporting or distributing these substances will face criminal and civil penalties. University students engaging in these activities will also be held responsible under the University's illegal substances policies. (OCGA 16-13-32.5)
- The possession and/or use of any drug paraphernalia, i.e. bowls, hookah pipes, bong, "homemade" smoking devices, any other smoking device or smoking paraphernalia (OCGA 16-13-32.3);
- Any activity or conduct involving drugs that is in violation of local, state, or federal law. (Violation of Georgia Controlled Substances Act)
- Possession of Marijuana (OCGA 16-13-30)

Georgia's 9-1-1 Medical Amnesty Law provides that any person who in good faith seeks medical assistance for a person experiencing or believed to be experiencing a drug overdose shall not be arrested, charged, or prosecuted for a drug violation if the evidence for the arrest, charge, or prosecution of such drug violation resulted solely from seeking such medical assistance. Any person who is experiencing a drug overdose and, in good faith, seeks medical assistance for himself or herself or is the subject of such a request shall not be arrested, charged, or prosecuted for a drug violation if the evidence for the arrest, charge, or prosecution of such drug violation resulted solely from seeking such medical assistance. Any such person shall also not be subject to, if related to the seeking of such medical assistance: (1) Penalties for a violation of a permanent or temporary protective order or restraining order; or (2) Sanctions for a violation of a condition of pretrial release, condition of probation, or condition of parole based on a drug violation.

Know the signs:

- Person is passed out or is difficult to awaken
- Person is cold, clammy, pale or bluish skin
- Person has slowed breathing
- Vomiting (asleep or awake).

Know how to help:

- Turn a vomiting person on his/her side to prevent choking
- Clear vomit from the mouth
- Keep the person awake
- NEVER leave the person unattended
- Call 911 or 259-5555 for medical assistance.

For more information on the risks and consequences of drug and alcohol abuse visit: www.drugabuse.gov.

Employees wishing information on drug or alcohol abuse education programs may contact Employee Development (229) 259-5105 or Alcohol and Other Drug Education (229) 259-5111.

Students wishing the same information may contact the Alcohol and Other Drug Department (229) 259-5111, Health Services (229) 333-5886, or the Counseling Center (229)333-5940. The Crime Prevention Unit for University also has material on these subjects.

ANNUAL DISCLOSURE OF CRIME STATISTICS

Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act (20 US 1092(f)) requires colleges and universities across the United States to disclose information about crime on and around their campuses. The University Police maintains a close relationship with all police departments where Valdosta State University owns or controls property to ensure that crimes reported directly to these departments which involve the University are brought to the attention of the University Police.

The University Police collects the crime statistics disclosed in the charts through a number of methods. Police communications officers and officers enter all reports of criminal incidents made directly to the department through an integrated computer aided dispatch system/records management system (ARMS). After an incident report has been reviewed and approved by a supervisor the report is entered into the system where the appropriate classification is entered into the correct crime category. The Department periodically examines the data to ensure that all reported crimes are recorded in accordance with the crime definitions outlined in the FBI Uniform Crime Reporting Handbook and the FBI National Incident-based Reporting System Handbook (sex offenses only). In addition to the crime data that the University Police maintains, the statistics below also include crimes that are reported to various campus security authorities, as defined in this report. The statistics reported here reflect the number of criminal incidents reported to the various authorities. The statistics reported for the sub categories on liquor laws, drug laws and weapons offenses represented the number of people arrested or referred to campus judicial authorities for respective violations, not the number of offenses documented.

Disclosure of Reportable Crimes

Primary Crimes:

Murder/Manslaughter – *defined as the willful killing of one human being by another.*

Manslaughter by Negligence– *is defined as the killing of another person through gross negligence.*

Sex offenses – Any sexual act directed against another person, without the consent of the victim, including instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent.

- A. Rape** — *The penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus with any body part or object, or oral penetration by a sex organ of another person, without the consent of the victim. This offense includes the rape of both males and females.*
- B. Fondling** — *The touching of the private body parts of another person for the purpose of sexual gratification, without the consent of the victim, including instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent because of his/her age or because of his/her temporary or permanent mental incapacity.*
- C. Incest** — *Non-forcible sexual intercourse between persons who are related to each other within the degrees wherein marriage is prohibited by law.*
- D. Statutory Rape** — *Non-forcible sexual intercourse with a person who is under the statutory age of consent.*

Robbery – *is defined as taking or attempting to take anything of value from the car, custody, or control of a person or persons by force or threat of force or violence and/or by putting the victim in fear.*

Aggravated Assault – *is defined as an unlawful attack by one person upon another for the purpose of inflicting severe or aggravated bodily injury. This type of assault usually is accompanied by the use of a weapon or by means likely to produce death or great bodily harm.*

Burglary – is the unlawful entry of a structure to commit a felony or a theft.

Motor Vehicle Theft – is the theft or attempted theft of a motor vehicle.

Arson – any willful or malicious burning or attempt to burn, with or without intent to defraud, a dwelling house, public building, motor vehicle or aircraft, personal property of another, etc.

Unfounded – This category pertains to cases which have been fully and completely investigated by sworn or commissioned law enforcement personnel who make a formal determination that the report is false or baseless.

Hate Crimes

Hate Crimes – includes all of the crimes listed above that manifest evidence that the victim was chosen based on one of the categories of prejudice listed below, plus the following crimes. Hate crimes are defined as criminal offenses that manifest evidence that the victim was intentionally selected because of the perpetrator's bias against the victim.

Larceny/Theft—includes, pocket picking, purse snatching, shoplifting, theft from building, theft from motor vehicle, theft of motor vehicle parts or accessories, and all other larceny.

Simple Assault—an unlawful physical attack by one person upon another where neither the offender displays a weapon, nor the victim suffers obvious severe or aggravated bodily injury involving apparent broken bones, loss of teeth, possible internal injury, severe laceration or loss of consciousness.

Intimidation—to unlawfully place another person in reasonable fear of bodily harm through the use of threatening words and/or other conduct but without displaying a weapon or subjecting the victim to actual physical attack.

Destruction/Damage/Vandalism or Property (except Arson)—to willfully or maliciously destroy, damage, deface or otherwise injure real or personal property without the consent of the owner or the person having custody or control of it.

Categories of Prejudice:

Race – A preformed negative attitude toward a group of persons who possess common physical characteristics genetically transmitted by descent and heredity which distinguish them as a distinct division of humankind.

Gender – A preformed negative opinion or attitude toward a person or group of persons based on their actual or perceived gender.

Religion – A preformed negative opinion or attitude toward a group of persons who share the same religious beliefs regarding the origin and purpose of the universe and the existence or nonexistence of a supreme being.

Sexual Orientation – A preformed negative opinion or attitude toward a group of persons based on their actual or perceived sexual orientation.

Ethnicity- *A preformed negative opinion or attitude toward a group of people whose members identify with each other, through a common heritage, often consisting of a common language, common culture (often including a shared religion) and/or ideology that stresses common ancestry.*

National origin – *A preformed negative opinion or attitude toward a group of persons based on their actual or perceived country of birth.*

Disability – *A preformed negative opinion or attitude toward a group of persons based on their physical or mental impairments/challenges, whether such disability is temporary or permanent, congenital or acquired by heredity, accident, injury, advanced age or illness.*

Gender Identity- *A preformed negative opinion or attitude toward a person or group of persons based on their actual or perceived gender identity.*

Dating Violence, Domestic Violence, and Stalking (VAWA)

Dating Violence – *Violence committed by a person who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim. The existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on the reporting party's statement and with consideration of the length of the relationship, the type of the relationship, and the frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship. It is not limited to sexual or physical abuse or the threat of such abuse.*

Domestic Violence – *A felony or misdemeanor crime of violence committed:*

- *by a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim;*
- *by a person with whom the victim shares a child in common;*
- *By a person who is cohabitating with or has cohabitated with the victim as a spouse or intimate partner;*
- *By a person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction in which the crime of violence occurred, or,*
- *By any other person against an adult or youth victim who is protected from that person's acts under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction in which the crime of violence occurred.*

Stalking – *Engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to:*

- *(i) Fear for the person's safety or the safety of others; or*
- *(ii) Suffer substantial emotional distress.*

Course of conduct means two or more acts, including, but not limited to, acts in which the stalker directly, indirectly, or through third parties, by any action, method, device, or means, follows, monitors, observes, surveils, threatens, or communicates to or about a person, or interferes with a person's property.

The following is a report of the actual crime statistics reported in accordance with the Uniform Crime Reporting procedures and the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act January 1, 2013 through December 31, 2015:

<u>Crime</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>On Campus Residential</u>	<u>On Campus</u>	<u>Non- Campus</u>	<u>Public Property</u>	<u>Unfounded</u>
Murder & Non-Negligent Manslaughter	2013	0	0	0	0	0
	2014	0	0	0	0	0
	2015	0	0	0	0	0
Manslaughter by Negligence	2013	0	0	0	0	0
	2014	0	0	0	0	0
	2015	0	0	0	0	0
Forcible Sex Offenses	2013	3	1	0	0	0
	2014	2	0	0	0	0
	2015	1	0	0	0	0
Non-Forcible Sex Offenses	2013	0	0	0	0	0
	2014	0	0	0	0	0
	2015	0	0	0	0	0
Rape	2014	2	1	0	0	0
	2015	0	0	1	0	0
Fondling	2014	0	1	0	0	0
	2015	2	0	0	0	0
Incest	2014	0	0	0	0	0
	2015	0	0	0	0	0
Statutory Rape	2014	0	0	0	0	0
	2015	0	0	0	0	0
Sexual Assaults Reported to CSAs- Anonymous Reporting***location on/off/unknown 2013/14	2013	20				0
	2014	21				0
	2015	2	2	3	0	0
Robbery	2013	5	2	0	0	0
	2014	1	0	0	0	0
	2015	4	1	0	0	0
Aggravated Assault	2013	2	1	0	0	0
	2014	0	0	0	0	0
	2015	0	0	0	0	0
Burglary	2013	17	10	0	0	0
	2014	9	5	1	0	0
	2015	12	6	0	0	0
Motor Vehicle Theft	2013	0	0	0	0	0
	2014	1	0	0	0	1

	2015	2	0	0	0	0
Arson	2013	0	0	0	0	0
	2014	0	0	0	0	0
	2015	0	0	0	0	0

Note:
In the
years
2013,
2014

& 2015 there were no hate crimes reported for Main Campus.

Campus Arrests:

Offense		On Campus	Residential Facility	Non-Campus Building Property	or	Public Property
Liquor Law Violations	2013	3	2	0		4
	2014	27	20	1		0
	2015	35	29	0		10
Drug Abuse Violations	2013	29	17	0		2
	2014	13	9	1		1
	2015	21	13	0		12
Illegal Weapons Possession	2013	0	0	0		0
	2014	2	0	1		0
	2015	1	0	0		0

Judicial Referrals:

Offense		On Campus	Residential Facility	Non-Campus Building Property	or	Public Property
Liquor Law Violations	2013	8	8	0		3
	2014	42	45	4		1
	2015	32	32	0		0
Drug Abuse Violations	2013	22	15	0		7
	2014	40	56	4		1
	2015	56	44	1		0
Illegal Weapons Possession	2013	0	0	0		0
	2014	6	45	3		0
	2015	3	3	0		0

VAWA Amendment New Offenses :

	2014	1	0	0	0
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Dating Violence	2015	5	1	0	0
Domestic Violence	2014	1	1	0	0
	2015	1	0	4*	0
Stalking	2014	2	0	0	0
	2015	4	0	1	0

*Includes 3 Dating Violence Incidents reported by Student Affairs.

The university requests the UCR Part 1 crime statistics from the law enforcement agencies that are responsible for property that coincides with the jurisdictional borders of the University. Below are the statistics that were provided by the City of Valdosta in response to that request:

Valdosta City Police

2015 Part 1 Crimes

Within 500 yards of VSU Campus Properties:

	2013	2014	2015
Homicide	6	2	0
Rape	29	21	7
Robbery	70	21	17
Aggravated Assault	89	18	21
Burglary	701	110	111
Motor Vehicle Theft	85	31	16
Arson	n/a	n/a	n/a

Lowndes County Sheriff's Office

Reported the following for areas within 500 yards of VSU Campus Properties:

2015:

Family Offenses	1
Narcotics Violations	26



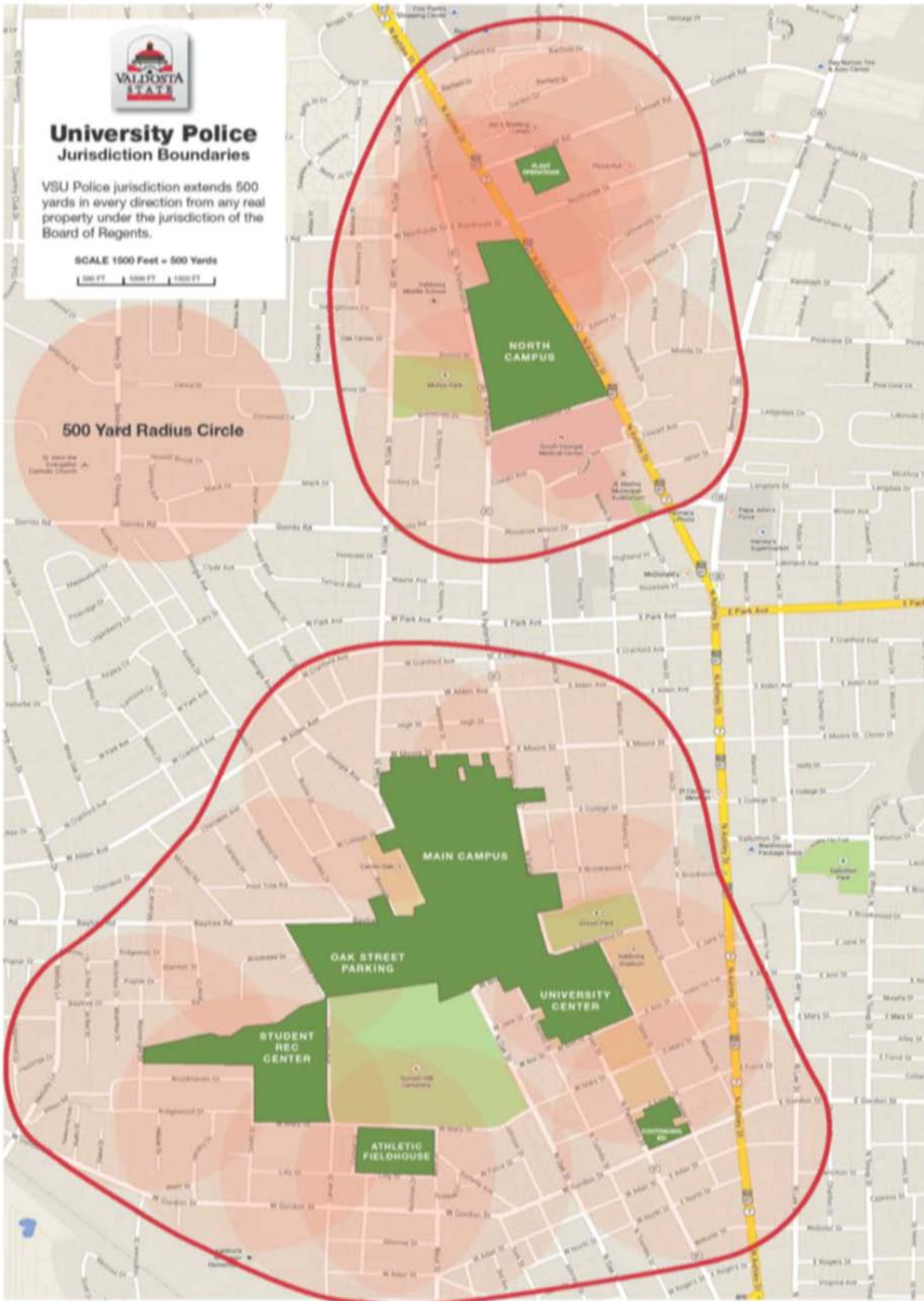
University Police Jurisdiction Boundaries

VSU Police jurisdiction extends 500 yards in every direction from any real property under the jurisdiction of the Board of Regents.

SCALE 1500 Feet = 500 Yards



500 Yard Radius Circle



ANNUAL CAMPUS FIRE SAFETY REPORT

The Higher Education Opportunity Act enacted on August 14, 2008, requires institutions that maintain on-campus student housing facilities to publish an annual fire safety report that contains information about campus fire safety practices and standards of the institution. This report details all information required by this act for Valdosta State University.

General Statement of College Owned/Controlled Student Housing

At Valdosta State University, fire safety is of paramount importance. The Environmental and Occupational Safety Department manages the campus fire safety program in coordination with other departments, such as University Police, Plant Operations, and Housing and Residence Life. Fire alarm systems report to Plant Operations and the University Police Communications Center and are monitored 24 hours per day, seven days per week. Any fire, smoke or suspicious odor condition should be immediately reported by calling 229-259-5555. Never hesitate to report these conditions, even if you are not sure there is a fire. If a fire condition existed but was extinguished, you must still notify University Police. If the emergency number 911 is called directly, make a follow-up call to University Police so they can meet and facilitate the Valdosta Fire Department response.

A fire log for residence hall facilities is maintained in the University Police Department located at 1410 N. Oak Street in the Oak Street Parking Deck. This log can be viewed during normal business hours, from 8:00 am – 5:30 pm Monday through Thursday and 8:00 am – 3:00 pm on Friday. The log records information concerning fires occurring inside a campus residence hall.

Definitions

The following terms are used within this report. Definitions have been obtained from the Higher Education Opportunity Act.

On-Campus Student Housing: A student housing facility that is owned or controlled by the institution, or is located on property that is owned or controlled by the institution, and is within a reasonable contiguous area that makes up the campus.

Fire: Any instance of open flame or other burning in a place not intended to contain the burning or in an uncontrolled manner.

Fire drill: Is a supervised practice of an evacuation of a building for a fire.

Fire-related injury: Any instance in which a person is injured as a result of a fire, including an injury sustained from a natural or accidental cause while involved in fire control, attempting rescue, or escaping from the dangers of the fire. The term person may include students, faculty, staff, visitors, firefighters, or any other individuals.

Fire-related death: Any instance in which a person is killed as a result of a fire; including death resulting from a natural or accidental cause while involved in fire control; attempting rescue; or escaping from the dangers of a fire; or deaths that occur within 1 year of injuries sustained as a result of the fire.

Fire safety system: Any mechanism or system related to the detection of a fire, the warning resulting from a fire, or the control of a fire including: sprinkler or other fire extinguishing systems, fire detection devices, standalone smoke alarms, devices that alert one to the presence of a fire (such as horns, bells, or strobe lights), smoke-control and reduction mechanisms, and fire doors and walls that reduce the spread of a fire.

Value of Property Damage: The estimated value of the loss of the structure and contents, in terms of the cost of replacement in like kind and quantity, including: contents damaged by fire, related damages caused by smoke, water, and overhaul. However it does not include indirect loss, such as business interruption.

Residence Hall Fire Drills

Fire drills are conducted in all on-campus residence halls. Each fire drill is a supervised practice of a mandatory evaluation of a building for a fire.

University Housing

Valdosta State University takes fire safety very seriously and continues to enhance its programs to the university community through education, engineering and enforcement. Education programs are presented throughout the year so the university community is aware of the rules and safe practices. Housing and Residence Life communicates information regarding fire safety systems, fire drills, evacuations, and other emergency procedures annually to all students during formal hall meetings after move-in.

Fire Safety Systems

Each unit is equipped with smoke and fire alarms for safety – to warn residents of smoke or fire. The alarm must be unobstructed at all times for safety purposes. If the smoke detector is so sensitive that it frequently alarms or malfunctions in other ways, contact your RA or a Housing staff member for assistance so that it can be inspected and repaired if needed. Never tape over, cover, or disconnect the smoke alarm or hang anything from a sprinkler head. Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action.

Your smoke detector is wired to the electrical system. Be sure that the red signal light is blinking upon self-inspection. This lets you know the alarm is working properly and is active. Fire protection systems are tested annually under the supervision of Plant Operations.

Improvements, upgrades or repairs to fire safety systems are made when tests or evaluations indicate a problem exists. Fire extinguishers are checked monthly and inspected annually by a contractor.

When a fire alarm is activated, the alarm simultaneously sounds at the location of origin and at the University Police Dispatch office, which is staffed 24/7. Officers respond immediately on such an alarm to determine the cause and notify the fire department.

Building Evacuation and Training Procedure

An evacuation of a building is used to move persons out of a building by a pre-designated route (if usable), to avoid a potentially threatening situation. An evacuation renders the entire building unusable until further notice. Evacuate the building every time a fire alarm sounds.

Generally University Police will announce building evacuation instructions.

Any Valdosta State University staff or faculty member may issue an evacuation notification for a classroom or office area. Before a classroom or office can properly evacuate, a safe designated location (assembly area) must be communicated to all students, faculty, and staff.

Prior to emergencies, occupants should identify the location of the nearest exits and fire alarm pull stations so they are able to initiate an alarm if necessary. To activate the alarm, the handle is pulled until you hear the alarm sound. It may be necessary to break a pane of glass to reach the handle.

Students with disabilities receive individual training with Housing staff within their first day of arrival to ensure they are familiar with evacuation routes and assistance they can expect in the event of an emergency within their personal space.

Mandatory, supervised fire drills, both announced and unannounced, are conducted for each residence hall at the beginning of fall and spring semesters by campus safety officers. Whether an alarm is planned or actual, occupants must exit through the nearest exterior door and walk quickly away from the building. Because a fire can happen at any time, drills are conducted at various times, night and day. Housing staff members using master keys will enter all units to ensure all residents have evacuated the premises. Failure to evacuate a building during any fire alarm (planned or actual) will result in judicial action and/or possible arrest. Tampering with any of the fire systems (pull stations, smoke detectors, extinguishers, etc.) will result in judicial action and possible removal from the residence hall and the University.

WHAT TO DO IN CASE OF A FIRE OR BUILDING EVACUATION:

1. Remain calm during any emergency.
2. Locate the nearest fire alarm box and activate the alarm if you discover fire.
3. Immediately contact University Police at 229-259-5555 to report information about the location, type, and extent of the fire or other emergency.
4. Direct persons to go immediately, in a calm and orderly manner, to the assembly area.
5. Consider persons with disabilities that may need assistance evacuating.
6. Individuals with disabilities should exit to the next building or outside by horizontal exit (when available) or otherwise to an enclosed stairway landing (considered an area of refuge). University Police or other emergency personnel will conduct the rescue.
7. Do not take personal items or return to your area for personal belongings.
8. The last person should close doors behind them while exiting to prevent spread of smoke and fire.
9. You may walk briskly, but do not run.
10. Do not go to restrooms.
11. Use stairway or horizontal exit to evacuate.
12. DO NOT USE ELEVATORS!
13. If smoke is present, stay low. The best quality air is near the floor.
14. From inside a room, feel the door or knob with the back of your hand. If hot, do not open.
15. Exit the building and go to your designated assembly area.
16. Provide emergency responders with any information you may have about the fire alarm condition, injured persons, or those needing assistance. Report any missing person to University Police along with the location where last seen.

17. Do not return to the building from your assembly area until told do so by University Police.

If Trapped:

1. Wedge wet towels or cloth materials along the bottom of the door to keep out smoke.
2. Try to close as many doors between you and the fire as possible.
3. Use the telephone to notify University Police (229-259-5555) of your problem and location.
4. Be prepared to signal your location through the window.
5. Do not open or break windows unless necessary to alert emergency personnel to your location or to escape.

Assembly Areas

Assembly areas for each building must be a minimum of 100 feet from the building (200 feet is preferred) and must not obstruct emergency access to buildings. Work or class groups should remain together to allow for head counts.

Campus Evacuation

Students who do not have the means to evacuate or who cannot safely evacuate will be directed to community shelters. If a total campus evacuation is needed, assistance will be provided under the Memorandums of Understanding with Lowndes County and the City of Valdosta.

Evacuees from Other Locations

Evacuees from other locations may be provided with shelter at the President’s discretion.

Fire or Explosion

If you discover Fire or Smoke remember: R.A.C.E.

R Remove/Rescue anyone from immediate danger.

A Activate the nearest fire alarm pull station.

C Close all doors to confine smoke and fire.

E Extinguish/Evacuate.

If the fire is small and you have been trained in fire extinguisher use, you can attempt to extinguish a fire. Never allow the fire to come between you and the exit. Otherwise follow your Evacuation Plan and proceed to the nearest exit and then to the assembly area for the building.

If You Catch Fire, Do Not Run!

Stop where you are, **drop** to the ground **and roll** over and over to smother flames.

Evacuation Procedure for Persons with Disabilities

Persons with disabilities who may have difficulty evacuating are individually responsible for informing their supervisors, Housing staff as applicable, and University Police (229-333-7816) of their name, location and the nature of their disability. This information will be given to emergency responders during an emergency situation. The rescue of disabled persons who are unable to evacuate themselves will be an initial priority for responding fire units.

Co-workers may assist in evacuating disabled persons only if this places them in no personal danger but should always ask someone with a disability how they can help before attempting any rescue technique. They should also ask the individual if there are any special considerations or items that need to stay with the person for their health and safety. Mobility-impaired persons in wheelchairs on non-ground-level floors should proceed to the nearest enclosed stairwell and wait for responders to arrive. Someone should stay with the disabled person if it does not place them in additional danger, and someone should meet responding firefighters to report the location of persons still in the building. Visually impaired persons should have a sighted individual guide them to safety. Hearing-impaired persons should be informed of the nature of the emergency by co-workers, other students, faculty, or staff. It should not be assumed that they know what is happening by watching others.

Fire Safety Violations and Prohibitions

Fire safety violations will result in fines, sanctions and possible revocation of the privilege of living in campus housing. Repeat or egregious offenses will result in heavier fines or sanctions and possible suspension or expulsion from the University.

Covering or tampering with smoke detectors and/or sprinkler heads creates life safety hazards and is strictly prohibited.

Residents may not have or use candles, incense, Sterno, potpourri burners, hookahs or other items that function by burning. Candles may not be present in the room, even for decorative purposes. No flammable liquids such as lighter fluid, kerosene, gasoline, etc., may be stored in rooms.

Flammable items such as sheets, cloth, fish net, etc., may not be hung or draped from the walls or ceiling. Light fixtures may not be covered with flammable items such as cloth, paper or cellophane.

No live Christmas trees or live greenery may be used in any building. All decorating materials used on floors where students live must be fireproof.

Residents and their guests and visitors shall not tamper with the fire alarm system, fire extinguishers, fire hoses, fire doors, residence hall room door closures, red phones, smoke detectors or other fire equipment.

Residents and their guests and visitors must evacuate the building immediately when a fire alarm sounds. Residents should always take a fire alarm seriously, never assuming that an alarm merely signifies a drill.

Stairway and hallway fire doors shall be kept closed at all times unless the door uses a hold-open device tied into the fire alarm system that automatically disengages when the alarm is activated. Mandated by the state fire marshal, these closed doors can contain a fire long enough to allow the occupants to escape.

Residents may not leave items in the hallways.

Residents shall not use the elevator in the event of a fire or fire drill.

Residents may not leave an outside door propped open and unattended at any time; this endangers the safety and security of every resident of the building. Under no circumstances may fireplaces be used.

Cooking, Appliances, and Kitchens

Residents should make sure they are aware of all guidelines and restrictions as outlined in the University Housing community guides, which can be found on the Housing website: [Housing Policies](#).

All residents are urged to exercise extreme caution when cooking and should never leave anything cooking unattended.

Approved Appliances and other items for Traditional University Housing and Suites:

- Coffee pot with automatic shut-off
- Holiday decorations (Only 2 strands of lights may be strung together)
- Hot pot
- Iron with automatic shut-off
- Power strip – one per resident (Not allowed in the bathrooms or kitchens)
- Toasters

Non-Approved Appliances and Other Items for Housing Suites

- Air conditioning units
- Live (cut) trees (holiday decorations)
- Candles/candle wax burners/open flames
- NuWave ovens
- Charcoal, gas, or open flame grills
- Parachutes
- Deep fryers (gas or electric)
- Personal freezers
- Electric frying pans
- Electrical equipment with exposed wiring
- Personal washer/dryer
- George Foreman-type grills/appliances
- Plug-in air fresheners
- Halogen lamps
- Portable space heaters
- Hookahs
- Potpourri burners
- Incense
- Rope lighting
- Large Flags/Banners
- Slow cookers

- Lava lamps Toaster ovens

Approved Appliances and other items for University Housing Apartment

- Coffee pot with automatic shut-off
- Electric griddle
- George Foreman- type grills/appliances
- Holiday decorations (Only 2 strands of lights may be strung together)
- Hot pot
- Iron with automatic shut-off
- Panini press
- Power strip – one per resident – bedroom only (not allowed in the bathrooms or kitchens)
- Power strip – one per living room (not allowed in the bathrooms or kitchens)
- Quesadilla maker
- Rice cooker
- Toasters/toaster ovens
- Waffle Iron

Non-Approved Appliances and other items for University Housing Apartments

- Air conditioning units
- Candles/candle wax burners
- Charcoal, gas, or open flame grills
- Deep fryers (gas or electric)
- Electric frying pans
- Electrical equipment with exposed wiring
- Halogen lamps
- Hookahs
- Incense
- Large flags/banners
- Lava lamps
- Live (cut) trees (holiday decorations)

Violation of this policy will result in sanctions as well as possible criminal charges. The violator will then have 2 days to remove the unapproved appliance or item and provide Housing with verification of compliance.

Tobacco and Smoke Free Campus

Effective October 1, 2014, the use of all forms of tobacco products on property owned, leased, rented, in the possession of, or in any way used by the USG or its affiliates is expressly prohibited. "Tobacco Products" are defined as cigarettes, cigars, pipes, all forms of smokeless tobacco, clove cigarettes, and any other smoking devices that use tobacco such as hookahs or simulate the use of tobacco such as electronic cigarettes.

Fire Safety Education and Training Programs

All residence life staff receive fire safety training and are responsible for providing fire safety guidance to students. Prior to the first fire drill of the year, Housing staff members conduct a mandatory hall meeting for

students during which evacuation procedures and fire safety rules are reviewed with new and returning residents. Fire safety education/training including fire drills, fire extinguisher use, and general fire safety are available through Environmental & Occupational Safety (229-293-6171).

Incident Report

All fire alarms, fires, fire drills and related incidents are documented on Incident Reports. Copies are maintained in our fire safety log book for easy public access and inspection in the University Police Department office located at 1410 N. Oak Street inside the Oak Street Parking Deck.

General Information

Emergency lighting systems are placed throughout hallways and stairwells of all residence halls and are tested quarterly.

Exterior lighting checks are conducted nightly and exterior doors are checked nightly to ensure they are not propped open. There are emergency phones located around the residence halls.

Each residence hall has a contact point for all emergency responders to report to when alarms are activated. The senior staff member in the residence hall serves as the point person during all emergencies.

Fire extinguishers are located in each building and inside units that have a kitchen. All fire extinguishers are inspected annually. Occupants should become familiar with locations and how they work. Before use, occupants should check the fire extinguisher to assure it is properly charged (arrow in the green area). To utilize the fire extinguisher for emergency reasons, use the following guidelines:

- P** Pull the pin.
- A** Aim the extinguisher nozzle at the base of the flames.
- S** Squeeze the trigger while holding the extinguisher upright.
- S** Sweep the extinguisher from side to side, covering the fire with extinguishing agent.

Extinguishers must be replaced after use, even if not completely empty. Work orders for replacement or other fire safety issues can be submitted using the “Work Order” link on the Housing website or by calling Plant Operations at 229-333-5875. For after-hours non-emergency service, call University Police at 229-333-7816 (Emergencies should be reported to University Police at 229-259-5555).

Fire Safety Inspections and Improvements

Fire protection systems are tested annually under the supervision of Plant Operations. Improvements, upgrades or repairs to fire safety systems are made when tests or evaluations indicate a problem exists. Notify Environmental and Occupational Safety whenever you notice damage or a possible problem with fire protection equipment. Each month, Environmental and Occupational Safety staff performs monthly general building fire safety inspections. In addition, Residence Life staff performs resident room inspections twice per semester and once over the summer. Any fire safety violations will be cited and referred for immediate correction. Violators may be judicially referred.

Future plans for fire safety improvements include:

1. Increase the number of training sessions offered for Resident Directors, Community Leaders and student residents.
2. Recognize staff and students who display heroism and exceptional response efforts when responding to emergency situations.
3. Provide education for students and Housing staff regarding violations noted during inspections or fire drills. It is important for staff and students to not only know what needs correction, but to understand why the violation is a problem.

Emergency Quick Reference Guides

Printed copies of the University's Emergency Quick Reference Guide are available in the office of Environmental & Occupational Safety during normal business hours of Monday – Thursday from 8:00 am – 5:30 pm and Friday from 8:00 am – 3:00 pm. The guide is also available online at [Emergency Quick Reference Guide](#).

Annual Fire Safety Report

Fire Alarm System Overview

Main Campus Residential Facilities:

Bldg. #	Name	Fire Control System	Sprinkler System Wet/Dry	Smoke Detector	Fire Extinguisher
3	Brown Hall	Yes	None	Yes	Yes
4	Patterson Hall	Yes	Wet	Yes	Yes
5	Lowndes Hall	Yes	Both	Yes	Yes
7	Converse Hall	Yes	None	Yes	Yes
9	Reade Hall	Yes	Wet	Yes	Yes
11	Georgia Hall	Yes	Both	Yes	Yes
12	Langdale Hall	Yes	None	Yes	Yes
15	Hopper Hall	Yes	Wet	Yes	Yes
22	Centennial East	Yes	Wet	Yes	Yes
23	Centennial West	Yes	Wet	Yes	Yes

Fire Statistics 2013

Valdosta State Residential Facilities	Total Fires In each Building	Date	Time	Cause Of Fire	No. of Injuries that required treatment at a medical facility	No. of Deaths Related to Fire	Value of Property Damage Caused by Fire	Fire Drills
Georgia Hall	0				0	0	0	2
Reade Hall	0				0	0	0	2
Langdale Hall	0				0	0	0	2
Hopper Hall	0				0	0	0	2
Converse Hall	0				0	0	0	2
Brown Hall	0				0	0	0	2
Patterson Hall	0				0	0	0	2
Centennial Hall	0				0	0	0	2
Lowndes Hall	0				0	0	0	2

Valdosta State Residential Facilities	Total Fires In each Building	Date	Time	Cause Of Fire	No. of Injuries that required treatment at a medical facility	No. of Deaths Related to Fire	Value of Property Damage Caused by Fire	Fire Drills
Georgia Hall	0				0	0	0	2
Reade Hall	0				0	0	0	2
Langdale Hall	0				0	0	0	2
	0				0	0	0	2

Hopper Hall								
Converse Hall	0				0	0	0	2
Brown Hall	0				0	0	0	2
Patterson Hall	0				0	0	0	2
Centennial Hall	0				0	0	0	2
Lowndes Hall	0				0	0	0	2

Fire Statistics 2015

Valdosta State Residential Facilities	Total Fires In each Building	Date	Time	Cause Of Fire	No. of Injuries that required treatment at a medical facility	No. of Deaths Related to Fire	Value of Property Damage Caused by Fire	Fire Drills
Georgia Hall	0				0	0	0	2
Reade Hall	0				0	0	0	2
Langdale Hall	0				0	0	0	2
Hopper Hall	0				0	0	0	2
Converse Hall	0				0	0	0	2
Brown Hall	0				0	0	0	2
Patterson Hall	0				0	0	0	2
Centennial Hall	0				0	0	0	2
Lowndes Hall	0				0	0	0	2

**Hard copies of the Valdosta State University Safety Security and Fire Report may
Be obtained through the University Police Department at 1410 North Oak Street, 229-333-7816**