

The Role of Sexual Violence Support Person on Ontario Campuses

Each university and college in Ontario has a sexual violence support person. They may have different job titles ie, Sexual Violence Response advisor, coordinator, consultant.

The role of this person is to coordinate responses for the campus community to all forms of sexual violence. This includes support to survivors by being the confidential point of contact for students and staff who disclose sexual violence, provide information about reporting options, support and assistance in connecting to resources and in developing safety plans, advocacy with various areas in the institution that are sources for logistical support and institutional accommodations to students and assistance with navigating judicial and medical systems. Some institutions refer to these responsibilities as case management.

In addition to coordinating sexual violence education on campus, the advisor for sexual violence response on campus can provide specific and immediate support to those who have received disclosures: providing additional information, debriefing with the responder, and receiving the information for reporting purposes.

When survivors of sexual violence choose to disclose, the first person they tell will likely be someone they already trust. On campus this can be a classmate, staff or faculty member. Most institution procedures require that the responder contact the Sexual Violence Support person as soon as possible to make sure that all information and non-judgmental support has been relayed to the survivor, to initiate ongoing emotional and logistical support and follow-up, and advocacy within and on behalf of the institution (see logistical support and institutional accommodations).

The nature of each response can have a significant effect on the victim's well-being and decisions about next steps. The advisor for sexual violence response takes the lead on enhancing and monitoring this.