



PROCEDURE

Procedure Name	GENDER BASED AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE SUPPORT AND DISCLOSURE <i>Revised</i>		
Procedure Number	SD 4.1	Approval Date	December 3, 2025
Parent Policy	SD 4.0 Gender Based and Sexual Violence Prevention and Response		
Procedure Authority	Manager, Student Conduct, and Director, Human Resources		
Executive Sponsor	Vice-President, Academic and Provost		
Approved By	Vice-President, Academic and Provost		

1. PURPOSE

Medicine Hat College (MHC) is committed to addressing and preventing gender based and sexual violence and creating a safe and positive space where members of the MHC community are able to work, learn, live, and express themselves.

2. SCOPE

This procedure sets out MHC's responsibility to receive disclosures of gender based and sexual violence and to respond with support to survivors and others impacted.

3. DEFINITIONS

- **Academic and Workplace Accommodations:** for the purpose of this procedure, academic and workplace accommodations is an umbrella term for accommodations to learning or working environments, tasks, or procedures in relation to one's experience of gender based or sexual violence.
- **Accommodation:** a change to a rule, approach, or environment to meet the needs of an individual and allow them to engage in a process. Typically, accommodations are provided in relation to protected grounds identified under human rights legislation, but in cases of gender based and sexual violence accommodation may be in relation to the impact of violence and trauma.
- **Disclosure:** when an individual shares information about an experience of gender based or sexual violence to someone who did not previously know.
- **Gender Based Violence:** any violence, physical or psychological, that is committed, threatened, or attempted against another individual without the individual's consent by targeting gender, gender identity, or gender expression, including but not limited to sexist, homophobic, and/or transphobic comments, jokes, and images.
- **MHC Community:** MHC students, employees, volunteers, visitors, contractors, tenants, and members of the Board of Governors, when in MHC learning, working, social, or residence environments.
- **MHC Learning Environment:** the physical and virtual space where learning takes place including, but not limited, to classrooms, hallways, common areas, labs, digital learning resources such as Blackboard, work-integrated learning locations including practicum and clinical locations, all social media platforms, and other spaces on campus.
- **MHC Residence Environment:** the physical and virtual space associated exclusively with college operated residential facilities. This includes, but is not limited to, residence buildings,

shared living spaces, hallways, residence-specific digital platforms, and any organized activities or gatherings that occur within or are organized by the MHC Student Residence Office. This definition does not extend to non-MHC affiliated off-campus housing.

- **MHC Social Environment:** the physical and virtual space where members of the MHC community gather and interact for social and/or recreational reasons. This includes but is not limited to on-campus common areas, recreational facilities, hallways, all social media platforms, and any form of gathering with an identifiable and substantial connection to MHC.
- **MHC Working Environment:** the physical and virtual space where an employee performs work duties and interacts with others which includes, but is not limited to offices, hallways, common areas, classrooms/labs/shops, digital communication platforms such as Microsoft Teams, work-integrated learning locations, all social media platforms, and other spaces on campus.
- **Process Accommodations:** accommodations available during a gender based or sexual violence disclosure or complaint, including, but not limited to:
 - access to assistive technologies,
 - incorporation of cultural components or processes (e.g. the circle process or allowing the interviewee to use a talking piece or religious artifact), and
 - use of multiple means of communication including verbal, written, images, etc.
- **Sexual Assault:** any sexual contact without consent, which can include but is not limited to oral contact, groping or fondling, vaginal or anal penetration, and oral to genitalia contact. The behaviour need not be intentional to be considered sexual assault.
- **Sexual Harassment:** one or more unwanted or demeaning remarks, behaviours, or communications of a sexual nature and/or based on sex, gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation, where the individual responsible for the remarks, behaviours, or communications knows or ought reasonably to know that these are unwanted or demeaning. This can include but is not limited to requests or demands of a sexual nature, stalking, indecent exposure, voyeurism, touching of non-sexual body parts, creating, acquiring, or distributing sexual images or videos.
- **Sexual Violence:** an umbrella term that includes sexual harassment and sexual assault.
- **Student:** for the purposes of this procedure, the following individuals are considered to be students:
 - applicants to MHC programs,
 - individuals currently enrolled in MHC programs or courses,
 - individuals who have been enrolled in the past, but not currently active, and are making a disclosure under this procedure related to a previous experience, and
 - alumni making a disclosure under this procedure related to a previous experience.
- **Survivor:** there are many terms that may be used in relation to a person who has experienced gender based or sexual violence. Individuals might be familiar with the term victim or prefer the term complainant as a neutral term. Some who have experienced gender based or sexual violence may choose to identify as a survivor, as an indication of having overcome the experience rather than being victimized by it. MHC uses the term survivor throughout this procedure where it applies to those who have experienced gender based or sexual violence. It is the prerogative of the person who has experienced these circumstances to determine how they wish to identify. While survivor and complainant have the same meaning in the execution

of this policy, for the purposes of internal investigations, the survivor will be referred to as the complainant. Use of the term survivor does not indicate an assumption of guilt of an individual.

- **Third-Party Advocate:** a person appointed by a survivor to make a disclosure on their behalf. The third-party advocate is not required to provide identifying information regarding the individuals involved. The third-party advocate can request information on support available and complaint options to provide back to the survivor.

4. IMMINENT RISK

Members of the MHC community who reasonably believe that violence is in progress or may occur imminently in a MHC learning, working, social, or residence environment or on MHC property should immediately contact 911 and Campus Security.

5. PRIVACY RIGHTS AND CONFIDENTIALITY

- 5.1 The College is committed to protecting the privacy of everyone involved in a disclosure of gender-based or sexual violence. Every effort will be made to maintain the confidentiality of all parties, except where information must be shared to ensure safety, uphold procedural fairness, or comply with legal obligations.
- 5.2 If information must be disclosed, it will be done with care and sensitivity, and only the information that is strictly necessary may be disclosed.
- 5.3 Individuals who wish to make a disclosure without identifying themselves to MHC can do so through a third-party advocate or by calling the MHC Confidential Gender Based and Sexual Violence Disclosure Line at 403.502.8447.
- 5.4 Individuals considering making an anonymous disclosure should be aware that if inadequate information is provided the disclosure may not lead to an investigation if it cannot be carried out fairly and effectively.

6. DISCLOSURE

- 6.1 Disclosing an experience of gender-based or sexual violence can be an emotional and personal decision. The college's priority is to ensure that anyone making a disclosure has access to support, accommodations, and resources so they can continue to study or work in a safe and respectful environment.

The college recognizes that choosing to share an experience of gender-based or sexual violence can be very difficult. Disclosures can be made to any MHC employee, and a formal complaint is not required in order to access support.

However, if a disclosure includes information that identifies a college community member (student or employee) as someone who may have caused harm or describes a situation that may pose a safety risk in an MHC environment, the college has a legal and ethical responsibility to review and respond to that information and may proceed to a formal investigation.

- 6.2 If an individual wishes to make a disclosure and is unsure about what to share, they can speak confidentially with a support resource to discuss their options and what may happen if certain details are shared. A list of these support services can be found on the MHC website.
- 6.3 If requested, the MHC employee will refer the survivor or third-party advocate to MHC's Student Counselling and/or Human Resources. These departments have training to best provide information and support, will be available to discuss all relevant options with the survivor or third-party advocate, and will respond confidentially except as required by law.

- 6.4 The priority in responding to a disclosure is providing support and ensuring an appropriate process for those affected.
- 6.5 Survivors will not face sanctions or ramifications for substance use revealed as part of a disclosure.
- 6.6 While MHC can provide support options for all disclosures, regardless of location or situation, formal complaints can only be investigated if the incident(s) occurred in an MHC learning, working, social, or residence environment.
- 6.7 Employees that have received a disclosure that identifies a threat to safety must engage the applicable departments (Campus Security, Human Resources, Health and Safety). Law enforcement will be engaged if required.
- 6.8 A survivor may wish to file a report with the law enforcement agency having jurisdiction for an investigation under the Criminal Code of Canada. If they are also opting to file a formal complaint with MHC, these can be filed simultaneously.
- 6.9 While criminal investigations are taking place into incidents in which MHC is unable to investigate, accommodations may be provided to survivors where possible.

7. PREVENTION, EDUCATION AND REPORTING

- 7.1 Ongoing gender based and sexual violence training and education will take place to promote safe and secure work, learning, social, and residence environments at MHC. Additional resources are available on the MHC website.

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Nancy Brown
Vice-President, Academic and Provost
Date: December 3, 2025

Additional Information	Location
SD 4.2 GBSV Complaint Procedure	MHC Website & SharePoint Policy Page