



PROCEDURE

Procedure Name	GENDER BASED AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE COMPLAINTS			<i>New</i>
Procedure Number	SD 4.2	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 community are able to work, learn, live, and express themselves.

2. SCOPE

This procedure addresses formal gender based and sexual violence complaints that occur in MHC learning, working, social, residence environments, or in other situations with an identifiable and substantial connection to MHC.

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.
- **Complainant:** a person who comes forward to the college with a formal gender based or sexual violence complaint under this procedure.
- **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.
- **Harm-Reduction:** a recognition that the processes used to address gender based and sexual violence can cause additional harm in themselves and a set of practices that, wherever possible, seek to limit and reduce the negative consequences of gender based and sexual violence and related processes on the involved parties.
- **Interim Measure:** a temporary measure that is intended to reduce the risk of harm to the MHC community while an investigation process is underway.

- **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.
- **Respondent:** the person alleged to have violated policy.
- **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 in order 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 complaint under this procedure related to a previous experience, and
- alumni making a complaint under this procedure related to a previous experience.
- **Trauma-Informed Practices:** trauma-informed refers to acknowledging the harm that all parties involved in gender based or sexual violence may have endured and awareness that trauma impacts an individual's emotional, cognitive, physical, and sexual well-being. Trauma-informed practices are approaches based in harm-reduction, avoiding re-traumatization, power consciousness, and providing dignity. This also includes providing support and training for those involved in the investigation process to reduce the impacts of trauma exposure.

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, or social 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 formal complaint 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 The priority in responding to a complaint will be ensuring a fair and appropriate process for those affected.

5.4 Complainants will not face sanctions or ramifications for substance use revealed as part of a complaint.

6. COMPLAINT PATHWAYS

6.1 Students should submit complaints in writing to the Student Conduct Office.

If the respondent is an employee, the complaint will be forwarded to Human Resources.

6.2 Employees should submit complaints in writing to Human Resources.

If the respondent is a student, the complaint will be forwarded to the Student Conduct Office.

6.3 If the individual submitting the complaint is neither an employee nor student, the complaint should be made in writing to Student Conduct Office.

If the respondent is an employee, the complaint will be forwarded to Human Resources.

6.4 If the complaint is not regarding an employee, student, or does not have a legitimate business connection with MHC it will be referred to appropriate external resources, including but not limited to law enforcement agencies.

6.5 MHC will assist with any subsequent investigations by law enforcement agencies upon their request.

7. INVESTIGATION AND SANCTION PROCESS

7.1 MHC will uphold the principles of procedural fairness in dealing with all complaints. Due to the serious nature of gender based and sexual violence complaints, MHC will ensure complaints are addressed thoroughly and in as timely a manner as reasonably possible. Respondents in a formal investigation process will be given reasonable notice, with details of the complaint, and will be provided with an opportunity to answer the complaint made against them.

7.2 Procedures for addressing complaints are provided through various MHC policies, including the following:

7.2.1 When the respondent is an MHC student

The investigation, resolution and disciplinary procedures, and will be conducted under MHC's Student Non-Academic Misconduct policies and procedures, as applicable.

If the respondent is a student who is employed by MHC, the Student Conduct Office and Human Resources will make a decision together which is the most appropriate process for the circumstance.

7.2.2 When the respondent is an MHC employee

The investigation, resolution, and disciplinary procedures, will be conducted under MHC's Respectful Work and Learning Environment and Code of Conduct policies and procedures, as applicable.

7.2.3 When the respondent is not a student or employee

The complaint will be referred to the applicable MHC department. Where contractual agreements are in place permitting attendance on MHC property, learning environments, social environments, or working environments, MHC maintains the right to modify or void that contract.

7.3 In all cases, MHC reserves the right to engage a third-party investigator.

7.4 All parties involved in a gender based and sexual violence complaint have the right to consult a union or association representative.

7.5 In all cases, respondents and complainants involved in a gender based and sexual violence complaint have the right to seek accommodations during the process. MHC will implement interim measures as applicable.

7.6 A complainant may also wish to file a report with the law enforcement agency having jurisdiction for an investigation under the Criminal Code of Canada simultaneous to pursuing a complaint through MHC.

7.7 Where criminal or civil proceedings are commenced in respect to the allegations of gender based or sexual violence, MHC may engage in its own investigation using the processes identified in 7.2 and will make its own determination in accordance with relevant policies and procedures.

7.8 MHC will not require a complainant to meet with the respondent.

7.9 A complainant may be asked to respond to information provided by a respondent as part of the complaint process.

7.10 Complainants will be apprised of institutional accountability and changes made institutionally in response to their complaint when applicable.

7.11 Support Persons

7.11.1 In support of MHC's commitment to trauma-informed practices, complainants and respondents involved in a gender based and sexual violence complaint have the right

to have an approved support person of their choosing to attend meetings and interviews.

Support persons must be approved in writing by the Student Conduct Office, Human Resources, or external investigators as applicable 24 hours prior to attending a meeting or interview.

7.11.2 This person's role is to support the complainant or respondent, not to represent them or speak for them, during the investigation process.

7.11.3 The right to a chosen support person is in addition to the allowable attendees in any policy under which gender based and sexual violence investigations are conducted.

7.12 Complaints may be withdrawn at any time; however, the college may be legally required to proceed with an investigation. The complainant still has the right to access supports.

8. PROTECTION FROM REPRISALS, RETALIATION, OR THREATS

8.1 It is a violation of MHC policy and procedures for anyone to retaliate, engage in reprisals, or threaten to retaliate against a complainant or other individual for:

- pursuing their rights under the policy and this procedure, or for having pursued other legal remedies, including under the Alberta Human Rights Act, the Criminal Code of Canada, or civil litigation,
- participating in an investigation under this or any other MHC policy or procedure, or
- associating with an individual who has pursued rights under this or any other MHC policy or procedure. Anyone engaged in such conduct may be subject to sanctions or discipline pursuant to the applicable policy or procedures.

8.2 Anyone engaged in such conduct may be subject to sanctions or discipline pursuant to the applicable policy or procedures.

9. APPEAL

9.1 Appeals will be in accordance with the relevant investigative process.

10. PREVENTION, EDUCATION AND REPORTING

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

10.2 Anyone designated to receive a gender based and sexual violence complaint or carry out an investigation must be trained in trauma-informed sexual violence investigation practices.

11. RECORDKEEPING

11.1 Gender based and sexual violence complaint records will be held separately from other files (e.g. employee records, student records, vendor records).

11.2 Student records related to gender based and sexual violence complaints will be held in a secure location under the custody of Student Conduct Office for the length of time prescribed by the records management policy.

11.3 Employee records related to gender based and sexual violence complaints will be held by Human Resources in a secure location for the length of time prescribed by the records management policy.

- 11.4 All records related to gender based and sexual violence complaints that involve individuals that are not students or employees of MHC will be held in a secure location under the custody of Human Resources for the length of time prescribed by the records management policy.

ORIGINAL COPY SIGNED

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

Additional Information	Location
SD 4.1 GBSV Disclosures and Support Procedure	MHC Website & SharePoint Policy Page
RWLE Policy and Procedures	MHC Website & SharePoint Policy Page
Workplace Relationships Policy	MHC Website & SharePoint Policy Page
Occupational Health & Safety Policy	MHC Website & SharePoint Policy Page
Code of Conduct Policy	MHC Website & SharePoint Policy Page
SNAM Policy and Procedures	MHC Website & SharePoint Policy Page