Interpersonal Violence Peer Support: What to Expect

Peer Support Volunteer Role
The Peer Supporter is a private resource for students who are impacted by interpersonal violence, a Title IX incident, or for those who want more information about resources and services at the University. The Peer Supporter is not mandated to report information regarding Title IX-related incident to the Title IX Coordinator, or other Title IX reporting entities at the university. Title IX includes sexual harassment, sexual violence, intimate partner violence, stalking, and gender-based discrimination. The Peer Supporter can provide assistance including, but not limited to:

- Offer a safe setting to discuss questions, concerns, and experiences regarding a incident of interpersonal violence
- Provide information about students rights and options regarding Title IX reporting and investigation process, as well as assistance in reporting to Title IX, if the student would like to report
- Discuss and provide referrals for campus and community resources
- Offer to walk students to on-campus services
- Engage in respectful, active listening and emotional support
- Provide space to students for empowerment and independent decision-making
- Report consultations to supervisor

Student Rights
This is a safe space for students to discuss any concerns or questions they may have regarding an incident of interpersonal violence. Students have the right to:

- Disclose as much or as little information as they feel comfortable
- Determine next steps, referrals, or outcomes of the meeting within the confines of IVPS policies
- End the meeting at any time

Student Privacy and Documentation
Information shared with the Peer Supporter is protected under FERPA as an educational record and cannot be shared without the student’s written consent. When providing resources, referrals or support services (i.e. class absence notifications), information will be shared only as necessary and only with people on a need-to-know basis to provide services. While the Peer Supporter is not a mandatory reporter to Title IX, by law they must report non-identifiable demographic information to the University for CLERY reporting purposes.

The Peer Supporter may seek supervision in order to provide support and comprehensive services to students. This would not initiate a Title IX referral.

Advocacy meeting records will contain documentation relevant to the student’s care with IVPS. It will be retained for at least 7 years after the student’s last contact for services. A meeting with a Peer Supporter is not a part of the student’s academic record.

Peer Supporters are under the supervision of the Advocate & Peer Advocacy Coordinator in Student Emergency Services. Information shared during peer support appointments will be debriefed with the supervisor to ensure best practices and comprehensive support.
Limits of Privacy
In most cases, a student’s written and signed authorization is required before information concerning their care will be disclosed to anyone, including parents, roommates, faculty, and partners. However, in certain situations, the Peer Supporter may be required by the University and/or by law to reveal information obtained during a meeting without the student’s permission. Please note the following exceptions:

- If the Peer Supporter has cause to believe that a child, elderly person, or disabled person has been or may be abused or neglected, the volunteer is required to make a report to the appropriate state agency.
- If the Peer Supporter believes there is a reasonable fear of imminent harm to the student or the campus community, they may take action to ensure safety.
- The Peer Supporter is not protected under Texas law as confidential. If a student's record is requested under certain legal circumstances (e.g. subpoena or court of law) or through an open records request, Student Emergency Services will be required to disclose the information.

_I understand the above rights and responsibilities of the Peer Supporter and myself. By signing below, I am giving consent to document information for record keeping and CLERY reporting._

Student Signature: ____________________________ Date: ________________

Student Name: ________________________________

FERPA: Family Education Rights & Privacy (FERPA) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student educational records and gives students the right to access and correct their records. Students also have control over their educational records. Other than directory information, information contained in the educational records cannot be shared without the student’s written consent.

For information on CLERY reporting, please visit [https://compliance.utexas.edu/clery](https://compliance.utexas.edu/clery)
For information on relevant Title IX policy and practices, please visit [http://titleix.utexas.edu/relevant-policies/](http://titleix.utexas.edu/relevant-policies/)
For information on FERPA, please visit: [https://registrar.utexas.edu/students/records/ferpa](https://registrar.utexas.edu/students/records/ferpa)