

2026

ANNUAL SECURITY REPORT

BELLINGHAM TECHNICAL COLLEGE



BELLINGHAM TECHNICAL COLLEGE
3028 Lindbergh Avenue, Bellingham, WA 98225

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Introduction

We are pleased you have chosen Bellingham Technical College as a place to work, study, and learn. The College Administration wants to assure you that as part of the BTC community your safety and security are of primary concern. BTC employees are committed to making our campus a safe, nurturing learning environment. Our goal is to provide an environment that enhances and supports the educational mission of BTC.

Federal law requires that the College inform the campus community about the crime risks faced on the campus. This report is written in compliance with the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act of 1998 and provides information about safety procedures and policies at BTC. The information in this report is reviewed and updated on an annual basis and disseminated to all students and employees at BTC.

At Bellingham Technical College, your safety and security are our priority.

—Bellingham Technical College Administrative Team

Purpose & Preparation

The purpose of the Annual Security Report is to make transparent crime statistics on Bellingham Technical College's campus, non-campus locations, and public space surrounding campus. This report has been prepared as policy statement disclosure and crime statistics reporting for the calendar years 2023, 2024, and 2025.

This report is prepared annually by the Safety Director and Director of Compliance and is reviewed by the Vice President of Administrative Services and the Vice President of Student Services.

In addition to reporting crime statistics, the Annual Security Report is also intended to provide an overview of BTC policy relevant to campus safety. Policies and procedures are routinely updated, so the policy statements within this report reflect those in effect at the time of publication.

Campus Safety Overview

BTC Administrators are committed to working with members of the college community to resolve all criminal matters in a timely fashion. BTC does not have a campus police or security department but maintains a close working relationship with the Bellingham Police Department and the Whatcom County Sheriff's Office.

BTC Administrators and their representatives have the authority to ask persons for identification and to determine whether individuals have lawful business at BTC. They also have the authority to issue parking tickets, which are billed to financial accounts of students and employees.

BTC Administrators and their representatives do not possess arrest power and do not carry firearms. Criminal incidents are referred to the local police who have jurisdiction on the campus. All crime victims and witnesses are strongly encouraged to immediately report any crime to campus administrators and the police.

Law Enforcement Assistance

Bellingham Technical College campus is within the jurisdictional boundaries of the Bellingham Police Department. Little Squalicum Park, which shares a border with BTC campus, is within the jurisdiction of the Whatcom County Sheriff's Department. Requests for law enforcement assistance are directed to the What-Comm 911 dispatch and delegated to the proper agency.

Access to Campus Facilities

During business hours, the College is open to students, parents, employees, contractors, guests, and invitees. The College is monitored by a security and camera system. During non-business hours, access to all college facilities is secured and controlled by Facilities staff.

Some facilities, such as the Campus Store and Library, may have individual hours that may vary at different times of the year. In those cases, the facilities will be secured according to schedules developed by the department responsible for the facility. Emergencies may necessitate changes or alterations to posted schedules.

Unauthorized access to buildings, rooms or facilities and/or disorderly, disruptive, or criminal behavior on campus or in any college-controlled facility may, at a minimum, result in the person being removed from the campus. Failure to leave when lawfully requested may result in charges of criminal trespass. If a person served with a prior trespass notice reappears on campus, or if a person is found in a posted facility with no legitimate purpose, they are subject to immediate arrest by local law enforcement.

Emergency Contact Information

• Emergency (Police/Fire/EMT)	911 (9.911 on campus)
• Daytime On-Campus Emergency Contact	360.305.1006
• After Hours On-Campus Emergency Contact	360.305.1004
• Vice President of Administrative Services	360.752.8313
• Counseling Office	360.752.8354
• Vice President of Student Services	360.752.8440
• Vice President of Instruction	360.752.8433
• Human Resources/Equal Employment Opportunity Officer	360.752.8354
• Director of Compliance & Title IX Coordinator	360.752.8305

- **General Information** **360.752.7000**

Crisis Intervention Contact Information

- **National Suicide & Crisis Lifeline** **Call or Text 988**
- **Youth Crisis Line – Teen Link** **866.833.6546**
- **Local Crisis Care Line – Mobile Crisis Outreach Team** **800.584.3578**
- **Crisis Text Line** **Text CAMPUS to 741741**
- **Whatcom Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault Services** **360.617.5714**
- **Washington Department of Children, Youth & Families** **866.363.4267**
- **Bellingham Office Dept. of Social & Health Services** **877.501.2233**
- **Substance Abuse and Addiction 24-Hour Help Line** **866.789.1511**
- **National Sexual Assault Violence Hotline** **800.656.4673**
- **National Domestic Violence Hotline** **800.799.7233**
- **StrongHearts Native Helpline** **844.762.8483**

Annual Crime Statistics

By October 1st of each year, institutions of higher education must publish and distribute their Annual Campus Security Report (ASR) to current and prospective students and employees. The federal statute, known as the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act (the Clery Act), requires all colleges and universities that participate in federal financial aid programs to keep and disclose information about crime on and near their respective campuses. The report is required to provide crime statistics for the prior three calendar years, policy statements regarding various safety and security measures, crime prevention programs, and procedures to be followed in the investigation and prosecution of alleged sex offenses.

To comply with crime reporting for the Clery Act, Bellingham Technical College is required to:

- **Collect, classify and count crime incident reports and related law enforcement crime statistics.**
- **Submit crime statistics to the U.S. Department of Education.** Each year in the fall we participate in a web-based data collection to disclose crime statistics by type, location, and year.
- **Publish an Annual Campus Security Report (ASR) containing safety and security related policy statements and crime statistics and distribute it to students and employees.** Colleges must also inform prospective students and employees about the availability of the report. In this report, you will see data for calendar years 2023, 2024 and 2025.
- **Issue timely warnings and emergency notifications to provide the campus**

community with information necessary to make informed decisions about their health and safety.

- **Provide educational programs and campaigns to promote the awareness and prevention of dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking.**
- **Disclose procedures for institutional disciplinary action in cases of dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking.**

There are additional requirements for institutions that maintain student housing facilities. Currently, Bellingham Technical College has no residential housing.

Furthermore, BTC has no officially recognized student organizations with non-campus locations that would require monitoring and reporting of criminal activity.

Violence Against Women Act

On March 7th, 2013, the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013 (VAWA) (Pub. Law 113-14) was signed into law. VAWA includes amendments to the Clery Act, among other changes. These changes require institutions to disclose statistics, policies and prevention programs related to dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking.

Clery Reporting Geography & Map

Clery statistics are categorized separately as offenses that occur in the following three location types:

On Campus: This includes any buildings and facilities owned or controlled by Bellingham Technical College, which are within the same reasonably contiguous geographic area and used to meet or support the institution's educational purpose:

- **Main Campus: 3028 Lindbergh Ave. Bellingham, WA 98225**
- **Overflow Parking: 660 Marine Dr. Bellingham, WA 98225**



Figure 1 Artistic rendering of an aerial map of the Bellingham Technical College main campus

Non-Campus: This area includes buildings and facilities that are near campus or are either owned or controlled by the College:

- **Perry Center:** 1600 C St. Bellingham, WA 98225
- **Technology Development Center:** 1000 F St. Bellingham, WA 98225
- **Everett Community College, Liberty Hall:** 930 N. Broadway Everett, WA 98201

Public Property within Campus Bounds: This area can be described as public streets that run through or form the border of main campus and its roadways. BTC does not have public streets running through the campus but does have public streets that border the campus.

Public Property Immediately Adjacent to Campus: Little Squalicum Park is in this category as it is a public space adjacent to BTC's main campus. Maritime Heritage Park is a public space adjacent to BTC's Perry Center location. The reasonably contiguous Clery reporting area extends one mile into each park, or to the park boundary, whichever is less.

Note: In 2025, BTC made the decision to include the reasonably contiguous area of Maritime Heritage Park as part of its Clery Geography. Crime statistics in Table 3 below reflect this change starting with 2024 data.

Bellingham Technical College Crime Statistics

The crime statistics listed here were collected from the following sources: law enforcement agencies with jurisdiction over BTC's on-campus, non-campus, and public property locations; the Office of the Vice President of Student Services;

Incident Report Database (internal); Human Resources Department; and Everett Community College Campus Safety & Security Department. Requests for data made to external agencies and internal departments are made in writing on an annual basis.

Table 1. 2023-2025 Crime Statistics: On Campus Property

OFFENSE	2023	2024	2025
Murder/Nonnegligent Manslaughter	0	0	0
Negligent Manslaughter	0	0	0
Sex Offenses	0	0	0
Robbery	0	0	0
Aggravated Assault	0	0	1
Burglary	2	2	0
Motor Vehicle Theft	0	0	0
Arson	0	0	0
Arrests: Liquor Law Violations	0	0	0
Referrals: Liquor Law Violations	0	0	1
Arrests: Drug Law	0	0	0
Referrals: Drug Law Violations	0	0	2
Arrests: Weapons Violations	0	0	0
Referrals: Weapons Violations	1	0	0
Hate Crimes	0	2	0
Domestic Violence	0	0	0
Dating Violence	0	0	0
Stalking	1	1	1

Table 2. 2023-2025 Crime Statistics: Non-Campus Property

OFFENSE	2023	2024	2025
Murder/Nonnegligent Manslaughter	0	0	0
Negligent Manslaughter	0	0	0
Sex Offenses	0	0	0
Robbery	0	0	0
Aggravated Assault	0	0	0
Burglary	0	0	0
Motor Vehicle Theft	0	0	1
Arson	0	0	0
Arrests: Liquor Law Violations	0	0	0
Referrals: Liquor Law Violations	0	1	0
Arrests: Drug Law	0	0	0
Referrals: Drug Law Violations	0	1	0
Arrests: Weapons Violations	1	0	0
Referrals: Weapons Violations	0	0	0
Hate Crimes	0	0	0
Domestic Violence	0	0	0
Dating Violence	0	0	0
Stalking	0	0	0

Table 3. 2023-2025 Crime Statistics: Public Property

OFFENSE	2023	2024	2025
Murder/Nonnegligent Manslaughter	0	0	0
Negligent Manslaughter	0	0	0
Sex Offenses, Forcible	0	0	0
Sex Offenses, Nonforcible	0	0	0
Robbery	0	3	2
Aggravated Assault	0	1	2
Burglary	0	0	0
Motor Vehicle Theft	0	0	0
Arson	0	0	0
Arrests: Liquor Law Violations	0	6	7
Referrals: Liquor Law Violations	0	0	0
Arrests: Drug Law	0	4	3
Referrals: Drug Law Violations	0	0	0
Arrests: Weapons Violations	0	1	0
Referrals: Weapons Violations	0	0	0
Hate Crimes	0	0	0
Domestic Violence	0	0	0
Dating Violence	0	0	0
Stalking	0	0	0

Note: In 2025, BTC made the decision to begin the collection of statistics one mile into Maritime Heritage Park as part of its Clery Geography. Crime statistics in Table 3 above reflect this change starting with 2024 data.

Reported Hate Crimes

A hate or bias related crime is not a separate, distinct crime, but is the commission of a criminal offense against a person or property that is motivated by the offender's bias(es). Bias is a preformed negative opinion or attitude toward a group of people based on their actual or perceived race, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, ethnicity, national origin, or disability.

BTC is required to report statistics for hate (bias) related crimes by the type of bias as defined below for the following crime classifications: murder/nonnegligent manslaughter, manslaughter by negligence, sex offenses (forcible and non-forcible), robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, motor vehicle theft, arson, larceny-theft, intimidation, simple assault, and destruction, damage, or vandalism of property (see Crime Definitions on page 43).

If a hate crime occurs where there is an incident involving intimidation, vandalism, larceny, simple assault or other bodily injury, the law requires that the statistic be reported as a hate crime even though there is no requirement to report the first crime classification in any other area of the Clery compliance document.

For example, if a subject assaults a victim on campus, it is a crime, but not necessarily Clery-reportable. If the facts of the case indicate, however, that the offender was motivated to commit the offense because of their bias against the victim's race, sexual orientation, etc., then the assault is then also classified as a hate/bias crime and must be reported in the Annual Security Report.

There were no reported hate crimes for the years 2023 or 2025. In 2024, BTC had two on-campus vandalism of property hate crimes, one characterized by racial bias and one characterized by gender bias.

Hazing

Pursuant to the Stop Campus Hazing Act (SCHA) amendments to the Clery Act (2024), incidents of hazing that meet the federal statutory definition reported to campus security authorities (CSAs) that occur within BTC's Clery Act geography are included within the Annual Security Report effective October 1, 2026 (which reflects the 2025 calendar year statistics). Investigations that do not result in a finding of formal violations of the student conduct code or state or federal law shall not be included in the report. The report shall not include any personal or identifying information of individual student members and shall be subject to the requirements of the federal Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, 20 U.S.C. Sec. 1232g.

There were no hazing incidents at BTC during the year 2025.

BTC quarterly hazing transparency reports can be found on BTC's [Policies and Compliance webpage](#).

Campus Security Authorities

Campus Security Authorities (CSAs) are individuals on campus whom the College has identified as having “a significant responsibility for student and campus activities,” and who are therefore required to report crimes they become aware of (34 CFR 668.46(a)(iv)). The purpose of identifying CSAs is to ensure BTC collects complete and accurate statistics about Clery-reportable crimes and issues required safety notifications. CSAs also facilitate complete and appropriate response to reported crimes by the College.

While the College encourages the reporting of criminal activity directly to law enforcement, members of the campus community may also report a concern to a CSA, who is then responsible for documenting and reporting Clery-reportable crimes. CSAs are not responsible for the investigation of a reported crime.

If an individual reporting an incident needs assistance, a CSA will explain how to get help. It is not a CSA’s responsibility to try to convince the victim of a crime to contact law enforcement if they choose not to do so; the decision to act on this option is the victim’s. However, CSAs have discretion to call 911 during an emergency, such as a physical assault.

CSA crime reports have an important role in ensuring that BTC effectively responds and complies with the law. CSA crime reports are used by the College to fulfill its responsibility to annually disclose accurate crime statistics, and to issue or facilitate the issuance of timely warnings or emergency notifications for crimes that pose a serious or continuing threat to the campus community.

Campus Security Authorities (CSAs) for BTC include but are not limited to:

- Vice President of Student Services
- Vice President of Administrative Services
- Vice President of Instruction
- Director of Human Resources
- Safety Director
- Director of Compliance & Title IX Coordinator
- Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- Student Conduct Officer
- Instructional Deans
- Fisheries & Aquatic Sciences Program Instructor (non-campus location)
- Radiologic Technology Program Instructor (non-campus location)
- Engineering Program Instructor (non-campus location)

How to Report Emergencies or Crimes

The Bellingham Police Department is the College’s primary partner in safety and

security issues as the College does not have a security department. In the event of a threatening situation, call 911. Be prepared to give your exact location and the location of the threatening situation. Once you have called 911, call Campus Safety (360-305-1006) or notify your instructor, supervisor, or any administrator.

Accurate and prompt reporting of all crimes, suspected crime, and unusual and/or suspicious activity is vital to the safety of the campus community. When the victim of a crime elects not to, or is unable to, make such a report, students and staff should complete an incident report online regarding any serious incident or injury that occurs on campus. The report provides a basis for timely warnings or emergency notifications when a crime may present a serious or continuing threat to other members of the campus community, and accurate incident reporting assists the College in providing a full disclosure in the annual Crime Statistics Report.

If you observe anything that seems suspicious or out of the ordinary but not immediately threatening, call Campus Safety at 360-305-1006 or notify your instructor, supervisor, or any administrator and complete a [BTC online incident report](#).

Various campus departments cooperatively address safety issues and manage situations that threaten and disrupt the learning environment. The offices of Instruction, Administrative Services, Human Resources, and Student Services work with the Safety Director, Campus Assessment, Response, and Evaluation (CARE) Team, and the Emergency Response Team. All departments, teams and individuals listed above are all responsible for issuing timely warnings and emergency notifications, and for annual crime statistics disclosures.

Voluntary Confidential Reporting

If you are a witness to, or victim of, a crime, or if you need to communicate with college officials about incidents or behaviors that affect the safety and security of BTC and would like your identity kept confidential, BTC has developed an online reporting tool called the Incident Reporting Form. Issues relating to personal safety, theft, and substance abuse are serious issues that, if not reported, may lead to more serious safety concerns. The Incident Reporting Form is a secure way to report these and other safety issues or suspicious behavior anonymously. Once submitted, only appropriate campus personnel will have access to the report, and investigations will be handled accordingly.

The form is located on BTC's website under [Safety Information](#). BTC counseling services are also available to assist with student emergency/crisis issues and can offer confidential reporting opportunities. Counselors are located in the College Services building and can be reached via email at counseling@btc.edu or by phone at 360.752.8700.

Please Note: Professional Counselors at BTC, acting in their role as mental health professionals, are not Campus Security Authorities and are not required to report crimes for inclusion in the annual Clery Report. However, BTC encourages its counselors, if and when they deem it appropriate, to inform the person they are counseling of any procedures to report crimes on a voluntary, confidential basis for inclusion in the annual disclosure of crime statistics.

Campus Assessment, Response, and Evaluation (CARE) Team

The Bellingham Technical College CARE team is a multidisciplinary team whose purpose is to support students and employees via an established protocol designed to help detect early indicators of a potential for disruptive conduct, self-harm, and risk of violence to others. CARE assesses and reviews student behavioral incidents that may involve student code violations, mental health, safety issues, or illegal acts that have occurred on campus. On occasion, off-campus incidents may be reviewed if the parties involved are students of Bellingham Technical College.

Behaviors of concern might be observed in several settings: in the classroom, at a service location, in an on-campus job, or during participation at an extracurricular activity. Reports for behaviors of concern can be made on the BTC website [Campus Safety page](#). By promptly reporting behaviors that are concerning, the CARE Team will be able to reach out to students to intervene, provide support, take disciplinary action, or connect them with resources to assist them.

Moderate to severe incidents in progress should be immediately reported to BTC Campus Safety at 360-305-1006 or Bellingham Police Department at 911.

Emergency Response, Evacuation & Notification Methods

Emergencies or disasters can happen at any time and usually occur with little or no warning. When an emergency occurs at BTC, our safety and speedy recovery depend on existing levels of preparedness and coordinated response from students, faculty, and staff. The most important emergency procedures to become aware of and prepared for include: fire, explosion, earthquake, a winter storm, power outage, evacuation for various reasons, a suspicious person or object, an intruder alert, an active shooter, or a hazardous material incident. While some emergency responses are similar, some may be very different.

Students, staff, and faculty must familiarize themselves with BTC's Emergency Reference Guide that details the College's emergency response and evacuation procedures. Emergency Reference Guides are posted in common areas on campus, classrooms, offices, and can be found on [BTC's Emergency Readiness webpage](#).

BTC also conducts emergency response and evacuation drills on an annual basis. BTC's academic year runs on a quarterly schedule from mid-September to mid-June. The regular emergency drill schedule is as follows: earthquake drills and fire drills are generally held during Fall Quarter (between September–December), and

lock down drills are generally held during Winter Quarter (January–March).

BTC maintains a close working relationship with local emergency management officials and invites the Bellingham Police and Fire Department to participate in campus-wide drills and exercises.

Facilities and College Administration will monitor inclement weather conditions and will inform students and employees when emergency procedures are required.

Emergency Notifications

The Clery Act requires that BTC immediately inform the campus community, or affected segment(s), about any significant or dangerous situation that poses an immediate threat to health and safety. Emergency notifications allow individuals to take precautions to protect themselves and make informed decisions about their personal safety.

In the event a situation arises, either on- or off-campus, that is determined to be a threat to health or safety, an emergency notification will be issued. In consultation with the Public Information Officer (PIO) and Safety Director, the Vice President of Administrative Services (VPAS) or designee will draft and issue the emergency notification to all impacted segments of campus.

All emergency notifications will include the following components, as required by the Clery Act:

- 1) Information about the nature of the emergency and what changes one needs to make immediately as a result;
- 2) Evacuation procedures, if necessary; and
- 3) Assurance that an all-clear will be sent when the emergency is over.

Emergency notifications will be issued via measures appropriate to the circumstances of the emergency, such as: BTC Alert text messages and/or email alerts, BTC social media, desktop alerts, fire alarms, and/or public announcement system. Depending on the circumstances of the threat, the PIO or designee may also post a notice on the [college website](#) or post a copy of the notification in each campus facility.

Students, employees, and members of the general public are encouraged to sign up for BTC Alerts on the [BTC Campus Safety webpage](#).

Timely Warnings

In the event that a crime occurs within BTC's Clery geography that is reported to a Campus Security Authority (CSA) and presents a serious or ongoing threat to the campus community, a campus-wide Timely Warning Notice will be issued to all

faculty, employees, and students. Timely warnings are issued as soon as pertinent information is available and without unnecessary delay.

The VPAS or their designee and the PIO will develop timely warnings. All timely warnings will include the following components, as required by the Clery Act:

1. A summary of the incident that poses a serious or ongoing threat, including factors influencing safety risk (e.g. indicators of threat, suspect at large, egregious behavior) or description of a pattern (e.g. multiple incidents of a similar nature occurring);
2. Prevention information related to the specific nature of the incident, including tips for bystanders to use to intervene; and
3. Reminders on how to report any suspicious activity that might be related to the incident.

Timely warnings are customized to the specific nature of the incident constituting a serious or ongoing threat, and elements are drafted with the recognition of public-facing timely warning implications, including news reporting and community member interaction. Descriptions of incidents in timely warnings shall not include personally identifiable information about the victim(s).

Prior to the dissemination of a timely warning, the VPAS and PIO or designee will verify they have clear, confirmed details of the incident. The VPAS and PIO or designee will ensure that relevant law enforcement agencies are informed that information they provide may be included in a timely warning and of the College's obligation to issue a timely warning.

Timely warnings will be issued via BTC Alert text messages and email alerts to all BTC students and employees. Depending on the circumstances of the threat, the VPAS or designee may also post a notice on the [college website](#) or post a copy of the notification in each campus facility.

Students, employees, and members of the general public are encouraged to sign up for BTC Alerts on the [BTC Campus Safety webpage](#).

Personal Security & Crime Prevention

Personal security is a shared responsibility. During orientation sessions, students are encouraged to be aware of their responsibility for their own safety and security and the security of others. BTC student handbooks cover the keys to security awareness, emergency procedures, and crime reporting information. Information about campus emergency response is also included in the standard instructional syllabus template and program-specific student handbooks.

All members of the campus community are urged to follow standard crime prevention practices such as:

- Be alert for suspicious persons in and around campus buildings and parking lots.
- Do not leave valuables such as purses, wallets, and bags in unattended spaces.
- Avoid walking alone at night. Choose a route that avoids dark, vacant areas.
- Wear clothing and shoes that allow you to move quickly.
- Walk with a purpose. Project an assertive image.
- Be conscious of your surroundings. Anticipate potentially dangerous situations.
- Have your car key ready before getting to the car so that you are not delayed by fumbling for it.
- When parking at night on the street or in the parking lot, park in well-lighted areas that are well traveled.
- Never leave valuables visible in your car.
- Look into the car before you get in to be sure no one is hiding inside. When you get into your car, lock all doors and roll up the windows.
- Drive on well-traveled streets and never pick up hitchhikers.
- If you are being followed, drive to a police station, fire station, or open business to seek help. If you fear getting out of your car, sound your horn to get attention.
- If your car breaks down, raise the hood, then get back in your car and lock the doors. If someone does stop to help, do not get out; instead ask that a call for help be made.
- If you sense a potential threat, consider your options, then act:
 - Try to get away from the danger.
 - Scream, create a commotion.
 - Run toward well-lighted public areas.
 - Go into open buildings where other people are present.
 - Call the police immediately. Describe what happened and where, the suspect, and their direction and method of travel.

For more information, visit: www.ncpc.org.

Bellingham Technical College has a long history of being a safe and welcoming campus. We are very aware that a truly safe campus can be achieved only through the cooperation of everyone. By increasing awareness and reporting suspicious activity, together we can help reduce crime on campus.

Crime Prevention & Security Awareness Programming

BTC is dedicated to promoting and maintaining safety for students, faculty, and staff. Currently, BTC does not offer programming designed to inform students and employees about crime prevention or security awareness.

Student Conduct & Discipline

Admission to Bellingham Technical College carries with it the expectation that students will conduct themselves as responsible members of the college community. This includes the expectation that students will obey the law; comply with the rules and regulations of the College; maintain high standards of integrity and honesty; respect the rights, privileges, and property of other members of the college community; and will not interfere with college operations (WAC 495B-121). The College will deal with sanctions for violations of college rules or conduct that interferes with the operation of college affairs, and the College may impose sanctions independently of any action taken by civil or criminal authorities. In the case of minors, misconduct may be referred to parents or legal guardians.

Student activity or behavior which violates any provision of the Student Conduct Code is not acceptable; yet, an individual who enrolls at the College can rightfully expect that the instructors and administrators will exercise with restraint the power of the College to regulate student behavior, and that rules and regulations will be adopted only when the education process clearly and directly requires such legislation. However, restrictive rules and regulations will not be made without showing relevance to those conditions toward which they apply. The enforcement of these rules and regulations shall be fair and shall be pursued in accordance with regulations governing student conduct. Sanctions, up to and including expulsion from the College, may be imposed for failure to satisfy the expectations stated above. These sanctions will determine whether, and under what conditions, the violator may continue at the College.

Disciplinary Sanctions

In keeping with the educational purposes of the College, disciplinary sanctions, other than those requiring expulsion, are intended to be remedial rather than punitive. All student disciplinary actions will be initiated by the Student Conduct Officer. If that officer is the subject of the complaint initiated by the Respondent, the President shall, upon request and when feasible, designate another person to fulfill any such disciplinary responsibilities relative to the Complainant.

In addition to initiating discipline proceedings for violations of the Student Conduct Code, the College may refer any violations of federal, state or local laws to civil and criminal authorities for disposition. The College shall proceed with student disciplinary proceedings regardless of whether the underlying conduct is subject to civil or criminal prosecution.

The College will, upon written request, disclose to the alleged victim of a crime of violence or a non-forcible sex offense (incest or statutory rape) the report on the results of any disciplinary proceeding conducted by the institution against a student who is the alleged perpetrator of such crime or offense. If the alleged victim is deceased as a result of such crime or offense, the next of kin of such victim shall be treated as the alleged victim for purposes of this paragraph.

Weapons on Campus

Carrying, exhibiting, displaying, or drawing any weapon, as defined in the BTC Campus Conduct Code, is prohibited on or in college-owned or college-operated facilities and premises and/or during college-sponsored events.

Any individual discovered in possession of a weapon as defined in the Student Conduct Code on BTC property is subject to being escorted off campus by BTC Security authorities, BTC disciplinary action, and/or arrest in accordance with state and federal laws.

Controlled Substances

Bellingham Technical College (BTC) campus is committed to providing a drug-free, healthful, safe, and secure workplace and environment, and has implemented a drug and alcohol abuse, prevention, and assistance program (DAAPP, [2025 Biennial Review](#)). The BTC DAAPP team reviews the consistency and efficacy of drug and alcohol abuse prevention programming biennially.

The College annually notifies employees and students that the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol on college property, or as any part of college activity, is prohibited (WAC 495B-121-265). Alcoholic beverages may be served at scheduled events at BTC provided all Washington laws and BTC administrative procedures, guidelines, and regulations are met.

Although possession and use of marijuana is legal in the state of Washington, federal laws bind BTC, which makes possession and use of marijuana illegal. Possession, use, and being under the influence of marijuana are prohibited on BTC campus or at any BTC function and will be grounds for disciplinary action.

There are numerous local, state, and federal statutes related to the manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, and use of controlled substances. Such laws are strictly enforced by the City of Bellingham Police Department and BTC Administrative Services. Legal sanctions may be imposed for both felony and misdemeanor convictions and range from loss of financial aid to fines to multi-year prison terms. More severe penalties are provided for persons convicted of providing controlled substances to minors and for repeat offenses.

The following nonexclusive list of health risks have been identified as associated with the use and abuse of illicit drugs and alcohol: memory loss; depression; fetal alcohol syndrome; problem pregnancy; sclerosis; circulatory problems; insomnia; heart failure; respiratory arrest; cardiac arrest; seizures; coma; anxiety; paranoia; irritability; fatigue; mental illness; and death.

BTC recognizes alcohol and drug dependency to be an illness and major health problem and has developed a program to prevent the illicit use of drugs and the abuse of alcohol by students and employees. The program provides services

related to drug use and abuse, including dissemination of information materials, educational programs, counseling services, referrals, and college disciplinary actions.

Hazing

Hazing by a student or a student group is prohibited within the Bellingham Technical College (BTC) community, pursuant to WAC 495B-121-265(13), WAC 495B-121-286, and H.R. 5646 Stop Campus Hazing Act.

In compliance with RCW 28B.10.901-907, BTC has implemented procedures and programs, including offering students and employees hazing prevention training and programming, implementation of a mandatory reporting procedure, creation of a hazing prevention committee, and publication of a quarterly hazing report.

In compliance with the Stop Campus Hazing Act, qualifying hazing incidents are documented in the Annual Security Report and quarterly Hazing Transparency Reports.

Mandatory Reporting of Hazing

RCW 29B.10.907 requires the following mandatory reporting:

1. If, as a result of observations or information received in the course of employment or volunteer service, any employee, including a student employee, or volunteer at BTC has reasonable cause to believe that hazing has occurred, the employee or volunteer shall report the incident, or cause a report to be made, to the Student Conduct Officer using the Incident Reporting form. The employee or volunteer shall make the report at the first opportunity to do so.
2. “Reasonable cause” means a person who witnesses hazing or receives a credible written or oral report alleging hazing or potential or planned hazing activity.
3. A person who witnesses hazing or has reasonable cause to believe hazing has occurred or will occur and makes a report in good faith may not be sanctioned or punished for the violation of hazing unless the person is directly engaged in the planning, directing, or act of hazing reported.
4. Nothing in this section shall preclude a person from independently reporting hazing or suspected hazing activity to law enforcement.
5. As used in this section, “employee” means a person who is receiving wages from BTC and is in a position with direct ongoing contact with students in a supervisory role or position of authority. “Employee” does not include a person employed as medical staff or with an affiliated organization, entity, or extensions of BTC, unless the employee has a supervisory role or position

of authority over students. “Employee” does not include confidential employees.

Hazing Investigations

Investigation of allegations of hazing will be conducted pursuant to WAC 495B-121-280. A Student Conduct Officer, or designee, may review and investigate any complaint or allegation of hazing by a student group. A student group will be notified through its named officer(s) and address on file with the College. A student group may designate one representative who may speak on behalf of a student group during any investigation and/or disciplinary proceeding.

Investigations will be completed in a timely manner and the results of the investigation shall be referred to the Student Conduct Officer or designee for disciplinary action. If a Student Conduct Officer or designee determines that a complaint appears to state a violation of the student conduct code, the Student Conduct Officer or designee will consider whether the matter might be resolved through agreement with the Respondent or through alternative dispute resolution proceedings involving the parties. If the Student Conduct Officer or designee has determined that a complaint has merit and if the matter is not resolved through agreement or informal dispute resolution, the Student Conduct Officer or designee may initiate disciplinary action against the student group.

Sanctions for violations of BTC’s anti-hazing policies are outlined in WAC 495B-121-286.

Prevention & Awareness Programs

Pursuant to RCW 28B.10.904 and RCW 28B.10.907, all “employees,” including student employees, must receive hazing prevention training, either electronically or in person, on the signs and dangers of hazing, as well as BTC’s prohibition against hazing. Pursuant to H.R. 5646 the Stop Campus Hazing Act (SCHA), the training must also include information on how to report hazing, the process for investigating reports, and information on applicable state, local, and tribal laws. The prevention education shall be provided to employees at the beginning of each academic year and for new employees at the beginning of each academic term.

BTC must provide students with educational programming on hazing that includes information on hazing awareness, prevention strategies intended to stop hazing before it occurs, intervention, and BTC’s policies prohibiting hazing. Pursuant to the SCHA, the student training must also include information on how to report hazing, the process for investigating reports, and information on applicable state, local, and tribal laws. This programming may be provided either in person or electronically. Information about BTC’s hazing prevention programming for students will also be posted on BTC’s website within the Quarterly Hazing Report for the public, including parents, legal guardians, and volunteers to view.

Applicable State Law

Washington state law RCW 28B.10.901 provides that hazing is a criminal offense, typically punishable as a gross misdemeanor under RCW 9A.20.021. However, any violation of Washington state hazing law that causes substantial bodily harm, as defined in RCW 9A.04.110, to another person is a class C felony.

Furthermore, Washington state law provides that any student group that knowingly permits hazing is strictly liable for harm caused to persons or property resulting from hazing. If the organization or association is a corporation, whether for profit or nonprofit, the individual directors of the corporation may be held individually liable for damages.

Registered Sex Offenders

In accordance with the Campus Sex Crimes Prevention Act of 2000 and the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006 (42 U.S.C. 16921), BTC provides a link to the Sex and Kidnapping Offender Registry on BTC's website. This act requires institutions of higher education to issue a statement advising the campus community where law enforcement information provided by a state concerning registered sex and kidnapping offenders may be obtained. It also requires sex and kidnapping offenders already required to register in a state to provide notice of each institution of higher education in that state at which the person is employed, carries a vocation, or is a student.

Sex and kidnapping offenders are required to notify the Vice President of Student Services of their intent to enroll at BTC. A list of those individuals who have complied with this requirement is kept by the Vice President of Student Services.

When a registered Level I or II sex offender is enrolled at BTC, administrators, counselors, advisors, instructors in courses where the students are enrolled, and affected employees (e.g., in the Library, Tutoring Center) are informed through campus email. Students in a Level II sex offender's classes are also notified. When a Level III sex offender is enrolled, the entire campus may be informed through postings across campus, including in all classrooms where the student is attending. In addition, counselors may visit each class in which a Level III sex offender is enrolled, to address any concerns.

The Whatcom County Sheriff's Office advises the following: Experts believe sex and kidnapping offenders are less likely to re-offend if they live and work in an environment free of harassment. Any actions taken against the individuals named in the notification, including vandalism of property, verbal or written threats of harm, or physical violence against this person, their family, or employer, will result in arrest and prosecution of criminal acts.

It is against the law (RCW 9A.44.130) to use this information in any way to

threaten, intimidate, or harass registered offenders.

Notifications are intended as information items only, and there is no additional action required nor is this intended to create excessive anxiety among students and employees. For more information, please contact the office of the Vice President of Student Services at 360.752.8443.

Sexual Harassment: Policy & Prevention

Policy Statement

BTC prohibits sexual assault, sexual harassment, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, or other forms of sexual misconduct as defined by Title IX, the Clery Act, and VAWA.

Primary Prevention Programming

BTC attempts to foster a safe learning and working environment for all members of the campus community. BTC strives to make the campus a safe and responsible place by educating the campus community about preventing, reporting, and seeking victim resources concerning sexual violence, dating violence, domestic violence, and instances of stalking.

In compliance with the requirements outlined in the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act and Title IX, BTC's primary prevention program offered to all incoming students is Vector Solutions' "Sexual Assault Prevention for Community College" training. All college employees are also required to complete annual sexual misconduct prevention training. These training programs include safe and positive options for bystander intervention, information on prevention and risk reduction, and college policies and procedures in the event a sex offense occurs.

Safe and Positive Options for Bystander Intervention

A bystander is someone other than the victim who is present when an act of dating violence, domestic violence, stalking or sexual assault is occurring or when a situation is occurring in which a reasonable person feels as though some protective action is required to prevent sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence or stalking. Bystanders, if active, can prevent harm or intervene before a situation gets worse.

Examples of active bystander intervention include: not leaving an overly intoxicated person in a bar/party alone; walking a classmate to their car after class; calling police when a potentially violent situation is unfolding; not leaving an unconscious person alone; or intervening when someone is being belittled, degraded or emotionally abused (walking victim away from abuser, contacting others for help, like Counseling Center or Campus Safety).

Risk Reduction

Risk reduction strategies decrease the likelihood that you or your friends will be assaulted or will assault someone. Below are some tips to consider:

- Know your sexual intentions and limits. You have the right to say “NO” to any unwanted sexual contact. If you are uncertain of what you want, ask your partner to respect your feelings.
- Listen to your gut feelings. If you feel uncomfortable or think you might be at risk, leave the situation immediately and go to a safe place.
- Don’t be afraid to “make waves” if you feel threatened. If you feel you are being pressured or coerced into sexual activity, don’t hesitate to state your feelings and leave the situation.
- Get involved if you believe that someone is at risk. If you see someone in trouble or someone pressuring another person, don’t be afraid to intervene.

Remember that sexual assault is a crime. It is never acceptable to force sexual activity, no matter what the circumstances.

Adapted from [Lee College](#).

Response to Sexual Harassment & VAWA Offenses

If you or someone you know is the victim of sexual assault, sexual harassment, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking, BTC recommends that the victim reports it immediately to the police (911). Victims may, however, choose not to notify authorities.

Preservation Of Evidence

If you have been sexually assaulted or physically harmed, consider seeing a healthcare provider to treat any injuries and discuss collection of forensic evidence by completing a Sexual Assault Forensics Exam (SAFE kit). It is important to consider preserving evidence that may assist in proving that the alleged criminal offense occurred or that may be helpful in obtaining a protection order.

A SAFE kit can be obtained by visiting any local hospital’s emergency department within 84 hours of the assault. Choosing to get a SAFE kit does not obligate you to make a police report. Any evidence collected will be held for up to six months, giving you time to decide whether you would like to file a police report in the future. It is important that survivors of sexual assault considering a SAFE kit not bathe, douche, smoke, drink, change clothing, or clean the bed/linen/area where they were assaulted until completion of the SAFE kit so that proof of criminal activity may be preserved.

If survivors decline forensic evidence collection, emergency rooms and health care providers can still treat injuries and take steps to address concerns of pregnancy and/or sexually transmitted disease. Seeking healthcare treatment does not obligate you to report your experience to the police.

Victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, stalking, and dating violence are encouraged to also preserve other forms of evidence by saving text messages, instant messages, social networking pages, other communications, and keeping pictures, logs, or other copies of documents, if they have any, that would be useful to college hearing boards/investigators or police.

BTC Counseling Services

The well-being of the survivor is the primary concern of the College. BTC Counselors can confidentially assist victims with the decision to notify the appropriate law enforcement authorities or community service providers when a crime occurs.

College Services Building, Room 106; Phone: 360.752.8700;

www.btc.edu/Counseling

Hours: Mon–Friday 8 am–5 pm (Closed weekends & holidays)

The BTC Counselors empower our diverse student population to achieve student success through educational and counseling services that promote personal and social growth, wellness and career exploration.

The Outreach, Advising, and Counseling Office offers a variety of services for students, including admissions, career and academic advising, and short-term personal counseling.

The BTC Counseling office also offers disability and multicultural student support services, and access to community and online resources. Our Counseling Services are designed to enhance students' ability to fully benefit from the College environment and academic experience. All appointments are free.

Community Resources

Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Services (DVSAS) of Whatcom County is a local, confidential service provider who can support survivors of dating or domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking. Their 24-hour helpline is 1-877-715-1563.

DVSAS Advocates can confidentially assist victims with the decision to notify appropriate law enforcement when a crime occurs.

Additional Sexual Violence Resources

- **Police (Emergency)** 911 or 9.911 on campus
- **Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Services** 877.715.1563 (toll free) or 360.715.1563
- **National Domestic Violence Hotline** 800.799.SAFE (7233) or 800.787.3224 (TTY)
- **RAINN National Sexual Assault Hotline** 800.656.HOPE (4673)
- **LoveIsRespect.org** 866.331.9474 or Text LOVEIS to 22522

Orders Of Protection

If a survivor meets with any staff member and indicates that they have a Protection Order or No Contact Order issued by a criminal, civil, or tribal court against another person for sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking, or that they are trying to obtain one, they will be directed to meet with the Safety Director (360-305-1006) as soon as possible. BTC does not issue Protection Orders or No Contact Orders, but the institution is responsible for honoring such requests and complying with these orders. The Safety Director can discuss options with the survivor and direct the survivor on steps of how to obtain a Protection Order or No Contact Order. If the survivor has obtained a Protection Order or No Contact Order, the Safety Director will enact procedures to help ensure the Protection Order or No Contact order is met while the survivor is on campus.

BTC Sexual Harassment Response Procedures

After attending to the survivor's physical safety and wellbeing, a BTC Campus Security Authority should also be notified as soon as practical of any incident of sexual assault, sexual misconduct, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking that occurs on campus. Reporting incidents of sexual assault and VAWA offenses will enable College officials to respond in compliance with College policy and federal and state law.

BTC will protect the confidentiality of victims and other involved parties by adhering to Clery Act reporting and disclosure requirements without the inclusion of personally identifying information about the victim.

Upon receiving a report of an incident of sexual, assault, dating or domestic violence, and/or stalking that occurs on or off campus, the BTC Title IX Coordinator (or designee) will provide written notice to the student or employee with the following: procedures for institutional disciplinary action; the student's or employee's rights and options; and written information about existing counseling, health, and mental health services, victim advocacy, legal assistance, visa and immigration assistance; student financial aid, and other available services for involved parties within the institution and in the community. Any student or employee may request information about available services from the Title IX Coordinator at any time by contacting title9@btc.edu or 360-752-8305.

Supportive Measures

In cases of sexual harassment, dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking, the Title IX Coordinator will individually consult with both the Complainant (alleged survivor) and Respondent (alleged perpetrator) to offer supportive measures to maintain equal access to their educational program and/or activity.

Supportive measures are available to a Complainant regardless of whether they choose to report the crime to local law enforcement and regardless of whether they file a formal complaint with BTC.

An example of a supportive measure may include a request to change academic and working schedules on campus after an incident takes place, if such changes are reasonably available. Other supportive measures may include academic accommodations or protective measures. Requests for supportive measures should be directed to Title IX Coordinator at title9@btc.edu or 360-752-8305. By law, BTC is obligated to comply with reasonable requests for supportive measures.

Although BTC will attempt to maintain the confidentiality of any supportive measures provided to involved parties, it cannot guarantee confidentiality in the event that maintaining it would impair the ability of the institution to provide such supportive measures. Such decisions about sharing personally identifying information will be made in consultation between the party and Title IX Coordinator.

Retaliation Is Prohibited

BTC prohibits retaliation by the College or any official of the College against any individual for exercising their rights or responsibilities under any provision of Title IX, the Clery Act, or the Campus SaVE Act.

Disciplinary Procedures

Sexual harassment is in violation of the BTC Student Conduct Code, BTC Policy, as well as a violation of State and Federal laws. In addition to possible civil and criminal charges, any student who is found guilty of sexual harassment based on a preponderance of the evidence and following appropriate BTC proceedings, will be subject to disciplinary procedures (see Student Conduct Code section above). Suspension or dismissal from the College is the maximum disciplinary sanction BTC may impose on students. In the case of an allegation of sexual harassment on the part of a college employee, the disciplinary review may result in counseling, suspension and/or termination of employment.

BTC utilizes procedures that provide prompt, fair, and impartial investigation and resolution in cases involving domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, sexual harassment, and stalking. These procedures are carried out by officials who receive annual training on issues related to dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and how to conduct an investigation and hearing process in an unbiased manner that protects the safety of all parties and promotes accountability. Both parties will be offered the option to be accompanied by an advisor to any interviews or meetings involving the investigation and, if requested, may be assigned an advisor to help understand related procedures.

See Discrimination and Harassment Grievance Procedures section below for additional information.

Confidentiality & Right to Privacy

Bellingham Technical College will seek to protect the privacy of the Complainant to the full extent possible, consistent with the legal obligation to investigate, take appropriate remedial and/or disciplinary action, and comply with the federal and state law, as well as Bellingham Technical College policies and procedures.

Although Bellingham Technical College will attempt to honor Complainants' requests for confidentiality, it cannot guarantee complete confidentiality. Determinations regarding how to handle requests for confidentiality will be made by the Title IX Coordinator and EEO/AA Officer.

Confidentiality Requests and Sexual Violence Complaints

The Title IX Coordinator or EEO/AA Officer will inform and obtain consent from the Complainant before commencing an investigation into a sexual violence complaint. If a Complainant asks that their name not be revealed to the Respondent or that the College not investigate the allegation, the Title IX Coordinator or EEO/AA Officer will inform the Complainant that maintaining confidentiality may limit the College's ability to fully respond to the allegations and that retaliation by the Respondent and/or others is prohibited. If the Complainant still insists that their name not be disclosed or that the College not investigate, the Title IX Coordinator or EEO/AA Officer will determine whether the College can honor the request and at the same time maintain a safe and nondiscriminatory environment for all members of the college community, including the Complainant. Factors weighed during this determination may include, but are not limited to:

- The seriousness of the alleged sexual harassment;
- The age of the Complainant;
- Whether the sexual harassment was perpetrated with a weapon;
- Whether the Respondent has a history of committing acts of sexual harassment or violence or has been the subject of other sexual harassment or violence complaints or findings;
- Whether the Respondent threatened to commit additional acts of sexual harassment or violence against the Complainant or others; and
- Whether relevant evidence about the alleged incident can be obtained through other means (e.g., security cameras, other witnesses, physical evidence).

If the College is unable to honor a Complainant's request for confidentiality, the Title IX Coordinator or EEO/AA Officer will notify the Complainant of the decision

and ensure that the Complainant's identity is disclosed only to the extent reasonably necessary to effectively conduct and complete the investigation in compliance with college procedure.

If the College decides not to conduct an investigation or take disciplinary action because of a request for confidentiality, the Title IX Coordinator or EEO/AA Officer will evaluate whether other measures are available to address the circumstances giving rise to the complaint and prevent their recurrence and implement such measures, if reasonably feasible.

Discrimination and Harassment Grievance Procedures

Bellingham Technical College recognizes its responsibility for investigation, resolution, implementation of corrective measures, and monitoring the educational environment and workplace to stop, remediate, and prevent discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, perceived or actual physical or mental disability, pregnancy, genetic information, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, creed, religion, honorably discharged veteran or military status, or use of a trained guide dog or service animal, as required by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, Sections 504 and 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act and ADA Amendment Act, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act and Washington State's Law Against Discrimination, Chapter 49.60 RCW and their implementing regulations.

To this end, Bellingham Technical College has enacted policies prohibiting discrimination against and harassment of members of these protected classes. Any individual found to be in violation of these policies will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the College or from employment.

The 2020 Department of Education federal regulations under Title IX, effective 8/14/2020, define sexual harassment and other sexual misconduct more narrowly than the Bellingham Technical College policy and require specific procedures for investigating and adjudicating allegations that meet the federal definitions and other criteria, such as where alleged conduct occurred. BTC will continue to address all complaints of sexual misconduct and will assess complaints to determine if BTC policy or federal rules apply.

The following procedures outline BTC's Title IX Investigation Procedures, which are restricted to allegations of "sexual harassment," as that term is defined in 34 C.F.R. §106.30. Nothing in this procedure limits or otherwise restricts the College's ability to investigate and pursue discipline based on alleged violations of other federal, state, and local laws, their implementing regulations, and other college policies prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sex through processes set forth in the

College's student conduct code, employment contracts, employee handbooks, and collective bargaining agreements.

BTC has adopted a Title IX Investigation and Resolution procedure for purposes of receiving and investigating allegations of sexual harassment arising within the College's educational programs and activities or workplace. Any individual found responsible for engaging in sexual harassment in violation of BTC policy may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the College's educational programs and activities and/or termination of employment.

The Title IX Coordinator shall be responsible for overseeing all investigations pertaining to students and all Title IX investigations. The EEO/AA Officer shall be responsible for overseeing all other investigations pertaining to employees, applicants, visitors, or others. Investigations may be conducted by trained investigators or an impartial contracted third party.

Filing a Complaint

The College encourages the timely reporting of any incidents of discrimination or harassment. Complaints may be submitted in writing or verbally.

Any employee, applicant, student or visitor to the College may file a complaint with the Title IX Coordinator, EEO/AA Officer, or designee:

Title IX Coordinator: Abby Buchanan, Director of Compliance

- Office: Campus Center, CC222
- Telephone: 360.752.8305
- Email: abuchanan@btc.edu / title9@btc.edu

Deputy Title IX Coordinator: Michele Waltz, Vice President of Student Services

- Office: College Services Building, CS201
- Telephone: 360.752.8440
- Email: mwaltz@btc.edu / title9@btc.edu

Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action (EEO/AA) Officer:

Allison Mack, Director of Human Resources

- Office: College Services Building, CS121
- Telephone: 360.752.8549
- Email: amack@btc.edu / hr@btc.edu

If the complaint is against the Coordinator/Officer, the Complainant should report the matter to the President's Office for referral to an alternate designee.

For Complainants who wish to submit a written complaint, they are encouraged to utilize the [BTC online incident report](#). Hardcopies of the complaint form are available at the following locations on campus:

- **Office of the Vice President of Student Services:** College Services Building

Rm. 201, 360.752.8440

- **Human Resources Office:** College Services Building Rm. 124, 360.752.8354

Any person submitting a discrimination complaint shall be provided with a written copy of the College's anti-discrimination policies and procedures.

Complaint Resolution

The Title IX resolution processes are initiated when the Title IX Coordinator's Office receives a written complaint alleging that a Respondent(s) sexually harassed a Complainant and requesting that the College initiate an investigation (a Formal Complaint). A Formal Complaint must be either submitted by the Complainant or signed by the Title IX Coordinator on behalf of the Complainant. Formal complaints submitted to the Title IX Coordinator may be resolved through either informal or formal resolution processes. The College will not proceed with either resolution process without a Formal Complaint.

For purposes of this Title IX Investigation Procedure, the Complainant must be participating in or attempting to participate in a college education program or activity at the time the Formal Complaint is filed.

1. Informal Resolution:

Informal resolution is a voluntary, structured process that allows parties to seek resolution without a formal hearing or determination of responsibility. Under appropriate circumstances and if the Complainant and Respondent agree, they may voluntarily pursue informal resolution. Informal resolution is not appropriate when the allegations involve sexual harassment of a minor, a significant threat to the health, safety or welfare of a member of the college community, or in cases where an employee is alleged to have sexually harassed a student. The Title IX Coordinator is responsible for determining the appropriateness of informal resolution.

If an informal resolution is appropriate, the Complainant and Respondent may explore remedies or resolution through:

- Guided conversations or communications conducted by the Title IX Coordinator, Human Resources Director or a mutually agreed upon third party;
- Structured resolution process conducted by a trained mediator; or
- Voluntarily agreed on alterations to either or both parties' work or class schedules.

The informal resolution process is voluntary. Parties may voluntarily agree to pursue informal resolution at any point after a formal complaint is filed. Similarly, either the Complainant or Respondent may withdraw from the informal resolution process at any time, at which point the formal resolution process will commence. The Complainant has the option to withdraw the formal complaint in writing if they do not wish to proceed with the formal

grievance process.

If the parties agree to an informal resolution process, the College will commence the process within 30 calendar days after the parties agree to this option and conclude within 120 calendar days of beginning that process, subject to reasonable delays and extensions for good cause shown. The parties are not required to have an Advisor during informal resolution, but they have the right to have an Advisor present for all meetings.

When the informal resolution process results in a voluntary resolution between the Complainant and Respondent, the facilitator will work with both parties to prepare a written agreement documenting the terms. The Title IX Coordinator or designee shall be responsible for review and approval of any draft agreement in adherence with BTC policies, legality, practicability, and ability to monitor for enforcement. After review, the final decision to sign the approved agreement is with the parties. Once approved and signed by both parties, the College will record the terms of the resolution and provide written notice to both parties that the case has been closed. The Title IX Coordinator or designee will be responsible for implementing agreed sanctions and remedies, and for monitoring the parties' adherence to the written agreement. Violations of the written agreement by either party may result in further sanctions.

Even if an informal resolution results in an agreement, BTC may take additional or further disciplinary action for employees, up to and including termination, if appropriate.

2. **Formal Resolution**

Formal resolution means that the Complainant's allegations of sexual harassment will be subjected to a formal investigation by an impartial and unbiased Investigator. The Investigator will issue a report of the investigation findings. Upon completion of the investigation, the Investigator will submit the final investigation report to the appropriate disciplinary authority, who will use it to determine whether the complaint falls within Title IX jurisdiction and thus warrants a live hearing including cross-examination.

Emergency Removal

If a student Respondent poses an immediate threat to the health and safety of the college community or an immediate threat of significant disruption to college operations, the College's Student Conduct Officer or designee may summarily suspend a Respondent pursuant to WAC 495B-121-335 pending final resolution of the allegations.

Nothing in this procedure prohibits the college from placing nonstudent employees on administrative leave pending final resolution of the allegations.

Investigation Notices

Upon receiving a formal complaint and determining that allegations satisfy Title IX jurisdiction, the College will provide the parties with the following notices containing the following information:

1. Notice of formal and informal resolution processes. A description of the College's grievance resolution procedures, including the informal resolution procedure.
2. The Investigator(s) will serve the Respondent and the Complainant with a Notice of Investigation in advance of the initial interview with the Respondent to allow the Respondent sufficient time to prepare a response to the allegations and to inform the Complainant that the College has commenced an investigation. The Notice of Investigation will:
 - a. Include the identities of the parties (if known), a description of the conduct allegedly constituting Title IX sexual harassment, and the time and location of the incident (if known).
 - b. Confirm that the Respondent is presumed not responsible for the alleged conduct and that the College will not make a final determination of responsibility until after the investigative and disciplinary processes have been completed.
 - c. Inform parties that they are both entitled to have an Advisor of their own choosing, who may be an attorney.
 - d. Inform parties that they have a right to review and inspect evidence.
 - e. Inform parties about Student Conduct Code provisions and employment policies that prohibit students and employees from knowingly submitting false information during the investigative and disciplinary processes.
3. Amended Notice of Investigation. If during the course of the investigation, the College decides to investigate allegations about the Complainant or Respondent that are not included in the Notice of Investigation, the College will issue an amended Notice of Investigation to both parties that includes this additional information.
4. Interview and meeting notices. Before any interview or meeting with a party about Title IX allegations, the College shall provide the party with a written notice identifying the date, time, location, participants, and purpose of the interview or meeting with sufficient time for the party to prepare for the interview or meeting.

Investigation Process: Dismissal

1. Mandatory Dismissal. The Title IX Coordinator will dismiss the Title IX allegations if, at any point during the course of a Title IX investigation, the investigation reveals that the misconduct alleged in the formal complaint:

- a. Does not meet the definition of sexual harassment under Title IX, even if proved; or
 - b. Did not occur in the context of a college education program or activity; or
 - c. Occurred outside the United States.
2. Discretionary Dismissal. Bellingham Technical College may dismiss a Title IX claim, in whole or in part, if:
 - a. The Complainant notifies the Title IX Coordinator in writing that they would like to withdraw the Formal Complaint in whole or in part; or
 - b. Respondent is no longer enrolled with or employed by the College; or
 - c. Specific circumstances prevent the College from gathering evidence sufficient to complete the investigation of the Title IX allegations in whole or in part.
3. The Title IX Coordinator will provide both parties written notice if the Title IX allegations are dismissed with an explanation for the dismissal.
4. Either party may appeal the dismissal of a Formal Complaint pursuant to either the appeal process set forth in procedure 502. Title IX Investigation and Resolution if the Respondent is an employee; or the appeal process in the Supplemental Title IX Student Conduct Procedure ([WAC 495B-121-391](#)) if the Respondent is a student.
5. Mandatory or discretionary dismissal of a Title IX claim does not preclude Bellingham Technical College from investigating and pursuing discipline based on allegations that a Respondent violated other federal or state laws and regulations, college conduct policies, and/or other codes and contractual provisions governing student and employee conduct.

Investigation Process: Consolidation of Formal Complaints

When multiple sexual harassment allegations by or against different parties arise out of the same facts or circumstances, the College may consolidate the investigation of Formal Complaints, provided consolidation can be accomplished in compliance with confidentiality protections imposed by the Family Educational Records and Privacy Act (FERPA). This includes instances in which Complainant and Respondent have lodged Formal Complaints against one another or when allegations of sexual assault are lodged by a single Complainant against multiple Respondents, or when multiple Complainants lodge sexual assault complaints against single or multiple Respondents.

Investigation Process: Required Procedures

During the investigation, the Investigator:

1. Will provide the parties with equal opportunity to present relevant statements, and other evidence in the form of fact or expert witnesses and inculpatory or exculpatory evidence.
2. Will not restrict the ability of either party to discuss the allegations under investigation or gather and present relevant evidence, except when a no contact order has been imposed based on an individualized and fact specific determination that a party poses a threat to the health, safety, or welfare of another party and/or witnesses or when contact with a party and/or witness is prohibited by court order. A college-imposed no contact shall be no broader than is necessary to protect the threatened party or witness and must provide the impacted party or their Advisor with alternative means of gathering and presenting relevant evidence from the protected witness and/or party.
3. Will allow each party to be accompanied by an Advisor of their choosing, who may be an attorney, to any investigative meeting or interview. Advisors' roles during the investigative meetings or interviews will be limited to providing support and advice to the party. Advisors will not represent or otherwise advocate on behalf of the parties during the investigation process.
 - a. An attorney serving as an Advisor must enter a Notice of Appearance with the Title IX Coordinator and the Investigator at least five (5) calendar days before the initial interview or meeting they plan to attend, so that the College can secure its own legal representation, if necessary.
4. The Investigator will create a draft investigation report that fairly summarizes the relevant evidence. To accompany the report, the Investigator will compile all the evidence gathered during the course of the investigation that is directly related to the allegations in the formal complaint. This includes inculpatory or exculpatory evidence, regardless of its source, (relevant evidence) as well as evidence upon which the Investigator does not intend to rely in the final investigation report (directly related evidence). The investigator will not include irrelevant evidence within the evidence file, including (i) information about prior sexual history of the Complainant, (ii) legally recognized and un-waived privilege, and (iii) un-waived records related to medical, psychiatric, and/or psychological treatment.
 - a. Questions or evidence about a Complainant's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior are not Relevant and must be excluded, unless such question or evidence:
 - i. Is asked or offered to prove someone other than the Respondent committed the alleged misconduct; or

- ii. Concerns specific incidents of prior sexual behavior between the Complainant and the Respondent, which are asked or offered on the issue of consent.
5. The Investigator will provide both parties and their respective Advisors with an equal opportunity to review the draft investigation report and to inspect and review the evidence file. After disclosure, each party will have ten (10) calendar days to submit a written response, which the Investigator will consider prior to completion of the final investigation report. The party's written response will be included within the final evidence file. If a party fails to submit a written response within ten (10) calendar days, the party will be deemed to have waived their right to submit comments and the Investigator will finalize the report without this information.
6. The Investigator will forward the Final Investigation Report and final evidence file to the Title IX Coordinator, who will distribute the investigation report and evidence file to the parties, their Advisors, and the disciplinary authority responsible for determining whether disciplinary action is warranted. The disciplinary authority will issue notices of any proposed action in accordance with the Student Conduct Code or applicable employee disciplinary procedures.

Title IX Hearing

Upon receiving the Title IX investigation report from the Title IX Coordinator, a Disciplinary Officer or assigned neutral decision maker will determine whether there are sufficient grounds to proceed under the BTC Title IX Hearing procedures. Those procedures apply only if the alleged misconduct:

1. Occurred in the United States; and
2. Occurred during a Bellingham Technical College educational program or activity; and
3. Meets the definition of Sexual Harassment, as defined as conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:
 - a. **Quid Pro Quo Harassment.** A college employee conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the College on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct.
 - b. **Hostile Environment.** Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the College's educational programs or activities, or employment.
 - c. **Sexual Assault.** Sexual assault includes the following conduct:

- i. **Nonconsensual Sexual Intercourse.** Any actual or attempted sexual intercourse (anal, oral, or vaginal), however slight, with any object or body part, by a person upon another person, that is without consent and/or by force. Sexual intercourse includes anal or vaginal penetration by a penis, tongue, finger, or object, or oral copulation by mouth to genital contact or genital to mouth contact.
- ii. **Nonconsensual Sexual Contact.** Any actual or attempted sexual touching, however slight, with any body part or object, by a person upon another person that is without consent and/or by force. Sexual touching includes any bodily contact with the breasts, groin, mouth, or other bodily orifice of another individual, or any other bodily contact in a sexual manner.
- iii. **Incest.** Sexual intercourse or sexual contact with a person known to be related to them, either legitimately or illegitimately, as an ancestor, descendant, brother, or sister of either wholly or half related. Descendants include stepchildren and adopted children under the age of eighteen (18).
- iv. **Statutory Rape.** Non-forcible sexual intercourse between a person who is eighteen (18) years of age or older and someone who is under the age of sixteen (16).
- v. **Domestic Violence.** Physical violence, bodily injury, assault, the infliction of fear of imminent physical harm, sexual assault, coercive control, damage or destruction or personal property, stalking, or any other conduct prohibited under RCW 10.99.020 committed 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, by a person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim under the domestic or family violence laws of the State of Washington, 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 State of Washington, RCW 26.50.010.
- vi. **Dating violence.** Physical violence, bodily injury, assault, the infliction of fear of imminent physical harm, sexual assault, or stalking committed by a person (i) who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or

intimate nature with the victim; and (ii) where the existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on a consideration of the following factors:

1. The length of the relationship;
 2. The type of relationship;
 3. The frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship.
- vii. Stalking. Engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to (i) fear for their safety or the safety of others, or (ii) suffer substantial emotional distress.

Qualifying Employee Title IX Disciplinary Hearings will be conducted following procedure 502.1. Qualifying student Title IX Disciplinary hearings will be conducted following Supplemental Title IX Student Conduct Procedure ([WAC 495B-121-366 through 495B-121-386](#)) if the Respondent is a student

Written Notice of Decision

The hearing panel and/or neutral Decision Maker will be responsible for drafting an Initial Order that:

1. **Identifies the allegations of sexual harassment;**
2. **Describes the procedural steps taken from receipt of the formal complaint through the determination, including any notifications to parties, interviews with witnesses and parties, site visits, methods used to gather evidence, and hearings held;**
3. **Makes findings of fact supporting the determination of responsibility;**
4. **Reaches conclusions as to whether the facts establish whether the Respondent is responsible for engaging in sexual harassment in violation of Title IX or any other college policy;**
5. **Contains a statement of, and rationale for, the Decision Maker's determination of responsibility for each allegation;**
6. **Describes any disciplinary sanction or conditions imposed against the Respondent, if any;**
7. **Describes to what extent, if any, Complainant is entitled to remedies designed to restore or preserve the Complainant's equal access to the Colleges' education programs or activities; and**
8. **Describes the process for appealing the Initial Order to the College President.**

The hearing panel and/or neutral Decision Maker will serve the Initial Order on the parties and their respective Advisors simultaneously.

Appeals

All parties, including the Disciplinary Officer in their capacity as a representative of the College, have the right to appeal the determination of responsibility and/or from a dismissal, in whole or in part, of a formal complaint during the investigative or hearing process. Appeals must be in writing and filed with the Appeal Officer within twenty-one (21) calendar days of service of the Initial Order or Notice of Dismissal. Appeals must identify the specific findings of fact and/or conclusions of law in the initial order or notice of dismissal being challenged and must contain arguments as to why the appeal should be granted. Failure to file a timely appeal constitutes a waiver of the right to appeal and the initial order or dismissal shall be deemed final.

Upon receiving a timely appeal, the Appeal Officer will serve a copy of the appeal on all non-appealing parties, who will have ten (10) calendar days from the date of service to submit written responses to the Appeal Officer addressing issues raised in the appeal. Failure to file a timely response constitutes a waiver of the right to participate in the appeal. Upon receipt of written responses, the Appeal Officer shall serve copies of the responses to the appealing party.

The appealing party shall have five (5) calendar days from the date of service to submit a written reply addressing issues raised in the responses to the Appeal Officer.

The Appeal Officer, based on their review of the parties' submissions and the hearing or investigative record, will determine whether the grounds for appeal have merit, provide the rationale for this conclusion, and state whether a dismissal is affirmed or denied, or if the disciplinary sanctions and conditions imposed in the Initial Order are affirmed, vacated, or amended, and, if amended, set forth the new disciplinary sanctions and conditions.

The Appeal Officer shall serve the Final Decision on the parties simultaneously.

All decisions reached through this process are final and may be judicially appealed pursuant to applicable provisions of RCW [34.05](#) including, but not limited to, the timelines set forth in RCW [34.05.542](#). No decisions or recommendations arising from this disciplinary procedure will be subject to grievance pursuant to any CBA.

Publication of Anti-Discrimination Policies & Procedures

The policies and procedures regarding complaints of discrimination and harassment shall be published and distributed annually and as determined by the President or designee. Any person who believes they have been subjected to discrimination in violation of college policy will be provided a copy of these policies and procedures.

Limits to Authority

Nothing in this chapter shall prevent the College President or designee from taking immediate disciplinary action in accordance with Bellingham Technical College policies and procedures and federal, state, and municipal rules and regulations.

Non-Retaliation, Intimidation & Coercion

Retaliation by, for or against any participant (including Complainant, Respondent, witness, Title IX Coordinator, EEO/AA Officer or Investigator) is expressly prohibited. Retaliatory action of any kind taken against individuals as a result of seeking redress under the applicable procedures or serving as a witness in a subsequent investigation or any resulting disciplinary proceedings is prohibited conduct and is subject to discipline. Any person who thinks they are the victim of retaliation should contact the Title IX Coordinator or EEO/AA Officer immediately.

Criminal Complaints

Discriminatory or harassing conduct may also be, or occur in conjunction with, criminal conduct. Criminal complaints may be filed with the following law enforcement authorities:

- **Bellingham Police Department** **911 (9.911 on campus) or 360.676.6911 (non-emergency)**
- **Whatcom County Sheriff's Office** **360.676.6911 (non-emergency)**
- **WA State Patrol Missing and Unidentified Persons Unit** **1-800-543-5678**

The College will proceed with an investigation of harassment and discrimination complaints regardless of whether the underlying conduct is subject to civil or criminal prosecution.

Other Discrimination Complaint Options

Discrimination complaints may also be filed with the following federal and state agencies:

- [Washington State Human Rights Commission](#)
- [US Dept. of Education Office for Civil Rights](#)
- [Equal Employment Opportunity Commission](#)

Crime Definitions

Criminal Offenses

The following definitions are provided by: U.S. Department of Justice – Federal Bureau of Investigation “Offense Definitions” as articulated in the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) manual, last updated 06/23/2025.

Criminal Homicide: Any offense that meets the definition of murder/nonnegligent manslaughter or manslaughter by negligence:

- **Murder/Nonnegligent Manslaughter:** The willful (nonnegligent) killing of one human being by another. Deaths caused by negligence, attempts to kill, assaults to kill, suicides, and accidental deaths are excluded. NOTE: Justifiable homicides are classified separately and are limited to (1) the killing of a felon by a law enforcement officer in the line of duty; or (2) the killing of a felon, during the commission of a felony, by a private citizen.
- **Manslaughter by Negligence:** The killing of another person through gross negligence. Deaths of persons due to their own negligence, accidental deaths not resulting from gross negligence, and traffic fatalities are not included in the category manslaughter by negligence.

Sexual Assault (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.

- **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 definition also includes instances in which the victim is incapable of giving consent because of temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity (including due to the influence of drugs or alcohol) or because of age. Physical resistance is not required on the part of the victim to demonstrate lack of consent.
- **Nonconsensual sexual contact (formerly fondling):** The intentional touching of the clothed or unclothed body parts without consent of the victim for the purpose of sexual degradation, sexual gratification, or sexual humiliation. The forced touching by the victim of the actor’s clothed or unclothed body parts, without consent of the victim for the purpose of sexual degradation, sexual gratification, or sexual humiliation. This offense includes instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent because of age or incapacity due to temporary or permanent mental or physical impairment or intoxication.
- **Incest:** Sexual intercourse between persons who are related to each other within the degrees wherein marriage is prohibited by law. Count one offense per victim.
- **Statutory Rape:** Nonforcible sexual intercourse with a person who is under the statutory age of consent. Count one offense per victim.

Robbery: The taking or attempting to take anything of value from the care, 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: 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. Simple assaults are excluded.

Burglary (breaking or entering): The unlawful entry of a structure to commit a felony or a theft. Attempted forcible entry is included.

Motor Vehicle Theft: The theft or attempted theft of a motor vehicle. A motor vehicle is self-propelled and runs on land surface and not on rails. Motorboats, construction equipment, airplanes, and farming equipment are specifically excluded from this category.

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.

Hate Crimes

The following definitions are provided by: Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) Division Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program. *Hate Crime Data Collection Guidelines and Training Manual*. March 1, 2022. Version 3.0.

Hate crimes include any of the above-mentioned offenses, and any incidents of:

Larceny-Theft (except motor vehicle theft): The unlawful taking, carrying, leading, or riding away of property from the possession, or constructive possession, of another.

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.

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.

Destruction/Damage/Vandalism of Property: To willfully or maliciously destroy, deface, or otherwise injure real or personal property without the consent of the owner or person having custody or control of it.

VAWA Offenses

The following definitions are provided by: Clery Center. "VAWA Amendments

Checklist” 2017 and NIBRS User Manual 2025.0.

Sexual Assault: An offense that meets the definition of rape, fondling, incest, or statutory rape as used in the FBI’s UCR program.

Sex Offenses: Any sexual act as directed against another person, without the consent of the victim, including instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent:

- **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 definition also includes instances in which the victim is incapable of giving consent because of temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity (including due to the influence of drugs or alcohol) or because of age. Physical resistance is not required on the part of the victim to demonstrate lack of consent.
- **Nonconsensual Sexual Contact (formerly fondling):** The intentional touching of the clothed or unclothed body parts without consent of the victim for the purpose sexual degradation, sexual gratification, or sexual humiliation. The forced touching by the victim of the actor’s clothed or unclothed body parts, without consent for the victim for the purpose of sexual degradation, sexual gratification, or sexual humiliation. This offense includes instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent due to temporary or permanent mental or physical impairment or intoxication for the purpose of sexual degradation, sexual gratification, or sexual humiliation.
- **Incest:** Sexual intercourse between two persons who are related to each other within degrees wherein marriage is prohibited by law.
- **Statutory Rape:** Sexual intercourse with a person who is under the statutory age of consent.

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

- By a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim;
- By 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;
- 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.

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 relationship, and the frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship.

- For the purpose of this definition, dating violence includes but is not limited to sexual or physical abuse or the threat of such abuse.
- Dating violence does not include acts covered under the definition of domestic violence.
- Any incident meeting this definition is considered a crime for the purposes of Clery Act reporting.

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

- Fear for the person's safety or the safety of others; or
- Suffer substantial emotional distress.

For the purpose of this definition:

- *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.
- *Reasonable person* means a reasonable person under similar circumstances and with similar identities to the victim.
- *Substantial emotional distress* means significant mental suffering or anguish that may, but does not necessarily, require medical or other professional treatment or counseling.

Arrests and Referrals for Disciplinary Action

The following definitions are provided by: U.S. Department of Justice – Federal Bureau of Investigation “Offense Definitions,” and *Uniform Crime Report: Crime in the United States, 2019*. Released Fall 2020.

Weapon Law Violations: The violation of laws or ordinances prohibiting the manufacture, sale, purchase, transportation, possession, concealment, or use of firearms, cutting instruments, explosives, incendiary devices, or other deadly weapons. Attempts are included.

Drug Abuse Violations: The violation of laws prohibiting the production, distribution, and/or use of certain controlled substances. The unlawful cultivation, manufacture, distribution, sale, purchase, use, possession, transportation, or importation of any controlled drug or narcotic substance. Arrests for violations of state and local laws, specifically those relating to the unlawful possession, sale, use, growing, manufacturing, and making of narcotic drugs. The following drug categories are specified: opium or cocaine and their derivatives (morphine, heroin, codeine); marijuana; synthetic narcotics – manufactured narcotics that can cause

true addiction (Demerol, methadone); and dangerous nonnarcotic drugs (barbiturates, Benzedrine).

Liquor Law Violations: The violation of state or local laws or ordinances prohibiting the manufacture, sale, purchase, transportation, possession, or use of alcoholic beverages, not including driving under the influence and drunkenness. Federal violations are excluded.

Additional Definitions

The following definitions are provided by: Clery Center. “VAWA Amendments Checklist.” 2017; *Chapter 495B-121 WAC*. “Student Conduct Code.” 18 June 2026; Bellingham Technical College. “Policy/Procedure 502.0: Discrimination and Harassment.” 3 April 2025; “Policy/Procedure 502.1: Title IX Investigation and Resolution.” 3 March 2026; and RCW *Chapter 9A.44.010*. “Definitions.” 2020.

Advisor: An individual chosen by a party or appointed by the College to (i) provide advice and support for a party throughout the Title IX resolution process, and (ii) conduct cross-examination on behalf of the party during any live hearing.

Age of Consent: Under Washington State law, a 16-year-old is legally capable of consenting to having sexual contact. There are some exceptions. A person could be guilty of indecent liberties if someone with supervisory authority causes another to have sexual contact. The third-degree child molestation law is a charge that applies for sexual contact with teens 14 up to age 16 – applying to perpetrators at least four years older than the victim.

Awareness Programs: Community-wide or audience specific programming, initiatives, and strategies that increase audience knowledge and share information and resources to prevent violence, promote safety, and reduce perpetration.

Bystander Intervention: Safe and positive options that may be carried out by an individual or individuals to prevent harm or intervene when there is a risk of dating violence, domestic violence, promote safety, and reduce perpetration.

Complainant: The following individuals who have been subjected to alleged conduct that would constitute discrimination or harassment: (a) A student or employee; or (b) A person other than a student or employee who was participating or attempting to participate in the College’s educational program or activity at the time of the alleged discrimination or harassment.

Complaint: A written or oral request that can be objectively understood as a request for the College to investigate and make a determination about alleged discrimination or harassment.

Consent: Knowing, voluntary, and clear permission by word or action, to engage in mutually agreed upon sexual activity. Each party has the responsibility to make certain that the other has consented before engaging in the activity. For consent to

be valid, there must be at the time of the act of sexual intercourse or sexual contact actual words or conduct indicating freely given agreement to have sexual intercourse or sexual contact.

A person cannot consent if they are unable to understand what is happening or are disoriented, helpless, asleep, or unconscious for any reason, including due to alcohol or other drugs. An individual who engages in sexual activity when the individual knows, or should know, that the other person is physically or mentally incapacitated has engaged in nonconsensual conduct.

Intoxication is not a defense against allegations that an individual has engaged in nonconsensual sexual conduct.

Discrimination: Unfavorable treatment of a person based on that person's membership or perceived membership in a protected class. Harassment is a form of discrimination.

Harassment: A form of discrimination consisting of physical, written, electronic, or verbal conduct that denigrates or shows hostility towards an individual because of their membership in a protected class or their perceived membership in a protected class. Harassment occurs when the conduct is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive that has the effect of altering the terms or conditions of employment or substantially limiting the ability of a student or an employee to participate in or benefit from the College's educational programs or activities.

Hazing: any intentional, knowing, or reckless act committed by a person (whether individually or in concert with other persons) against another person or persons regardless of the willingness of such other person or persons to participate, that:

- a) Is committed in the course of an initiation into, an affiliation with, or the maintenance of membership in, a student organization; and
- b) Causes or creates a risk, above the reasonable risk encountered in the course of participation in the institution of higher education or the organization (such as the physical preparation necessary for participation in an athletic team), of physical or psychological injury, including
 - i. Whipping, beating, striking, electronic shocking, placing of a harmful substance on someone's body, or similar activity;
 - ii. Causing, coercing, or otherwise inducing sleep deprivation, exposure to the elements, confinement in a small space, extreme calisthenics, or other similar activity;
 - iii. Causing, coercing, or otherwise inducing another person to consume food, liquid, alcohol, drugs, or other substances;
 - iv. Causing, coercing, or otherwise inducing another person to

perform sexual acts;

- v. Any activity that places another person in reasonable fear of bodily harm through the use of threatening words or conduct;
- vi. Any activity against another person that includes a criminal violation of local, State, Tribal, or Federal law; and
- vii. Any activity that induces, causes, or requires another person to perform a duty or task that involves a criminal violation of local, State, Tribal, or Federal law.

Ongoing Prevention and Awareness Campaigns: Programming, initiatives, and strategies that are sustained over time and focus on increasing understanding of topics relevant to and skills for addressing dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking, using a range of strategies with audiences throughout the institution.

Primary Prevention Programs: Programming, initiatives, and strategies informed by research or assessed for value, effectiveness, or outcome that are intended to stop dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking before they occur through the promotion of positive and healthy behaviors that foster healthy, mutually respectful relationships and sexuality, encourage safe bystander intervention, and seek to change behavior and social norms in health and safe directions.

Proceeding: All activity related to a non-criminal resolution of an institutional disciplinary complaint, including, but not limited to, fact finding investigations, formal or informal meetings, and hearings. Proceeding does not include communications and meetings between officials and victims concerning accommodations or protective measures to be provided to a victim.

Programs to Prevent Dating Violence, Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking: Comprehensive, intentional, and integrated programming, initiatives, strategies, and campaigns intended to end dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking that:

- Are culturally relevant, inclusive of diverse communities and identities, sustainable, responsive to community needs, and informed by research or assessed for value, effectiveness, or outcome; and
- Consider environmental risk and protective factors as they occur on the individual, relationship, institutional, community, and societal levels.

Programs to prevent dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking include both primary prevention and awareness programs directed at incoming students and new employees and ongoing prevention and awareness campaigns directed at students and employees.

Prompt, Fair, and Impartial Proceeding: A proceeding that is completed within reasonably prompt timeframes designated by an institution's policy, including a process that allows for the extension of timeframes for good cause and with written notice to the accuser and the accused of the delay and the reason for the delay;

Conducted in a manner that:

- Is consistent with the institution's policies and transparent to the accuser and accused;
- Includes timely notice of meetings at which the accuser or accused, or both, may be present; and
- Provides timely and equal access to the accuser, the accused, and appropriate officials to any information that will be used during informal and formal disciplinary meetings and hearings; and
- Conducted by officials who do not have a conflict of interest or bias for or against the accuser or the accused.

Protected Class: Persons who are protected under State or Federal civil rights laws.

Resolution: The means by which the complaint is finally addressed. This may be accomplished through informal or formal processes, including counseling, mediation, or the formal imposition of discipline sanction(s).

Respondent: An individual who has been alleged to have violated the College's policy prohibiting discrimination and harassment.

Result: Any initial, interim, and final decision by any official or entity authorized to resolve disciplinary matters within the institution. The result must include any sanctions imposed by the institution.

Risk Reduction: Options designed to decrease perpetration and bystander inaction, and to increase empowerment for victims in order to promote safety and to help individuals and communities address conditions that facilitate violence.

Sexual Harassment: A form of discrimination consisting of unwelcome, gender-based verbal, written, electronic, and/or physical conduct. Sexual harassment does not have to be of a sexual nature, however, and can include offensive remarks about a person's gender. There are three types of sexual harassment:

1. **Hostile Environment Sexual Harassment.** Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, or objectively offensive that it has the effect of altering the terms or conditions of employment or substantially limiting the ability of a student or an employee to participate in or benefit from the College's educational and/or social programs.
2. **Quid Pro Quo Harassment.** An individual in a position of real or

perceived authority conditions the receipt of a benefit upon granting of sexual favors.

3. **Sexual Violence**, which includes:

- a. **Nonconsensual Sexual Intercourse.** Any actual or attempted sexual intercourse (anal, oral, or vaginal), however slight, with any object or body part, by a person upon another person, that is without consent and/or by force. Sexual intercourse includes anal or vaginal penetration by a penis, tongue, finger, or object, or oral copulation by mouth to genital contact or genital to mouth contact.
- b. **Nonconsensual Sexual Contact:** The intentional touching of the clothed or unclothed body parts without consent of the victim for the purpose sexual degradation, sexual gratification, or sexual humiliation. The forced touching by the victim of the actor's clothed or unclothed body parts, without consent for the victim for the purpose of sexual degradation, sexual gratification, or sexual humiliation. This offense includes instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent due to temporary or permanent mental or physical impairment or intoxication for the purpose of sexual degradation, sexual gratification, or sexual humiliation.
- c. **Incest.** Sexual intercourse or sexual contact with a person known to be related to them, either legitimately or illegitimately, as an ancestor, descendant, brother, or sister of either wholly or half related. Descendant includes stepchildren and adopted children under the age of eighteen (18).
- d. **Statutory Rape.** Non-forcible sexual intercourse between a person who is eighteen (18) years of age or older and someone who is under the age of sixteen (16).
- e. **Domestic Violence.** Physical violence, bodily injury, assault, the infliction of fear of imminent physical harm, sexual assault, coercive control, damage or destruction of personal property, stalking, or any other conduct prohibited under RCW 10.99.020 committed 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, by a person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim under the domestic or family violence laws of the State of Washington, 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 State of Washington, RCW 26.50.010.
- f. **Dating violence.** Physical violence, bodily injury, assault, the

infliction of fear of imminent physical harm, sexual assault, or stalking committed by a person (i) who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim; and (ii) where the existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on a consideration of the following factors:

1. The length of the relationship;
2. The type of relationship;
3. The frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship.

- g. **Stalking.** Engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to (i) fear for their safety or the safety of others, or (ii) suffer substantial emotional distress.

Student Organization: An organization at an institution of higher education (such as a club, society, association, varsity or junior varsity athletic team, club sports team, fraternity, sorority, band, or student government) in which two or more of the members are students enrolled at the institution of higher education, whether or not the organization is established or recognized by the institution.

Unfounded Crimes: An institution may withhold, or subsequently remove, a reported crime from its crime statistics in the rare situations where sworn or commissioned law enforcement personnel have fully investigated the reported crime and, based on the results of this full investigation and evidence, have made a formal determination that the crime report is false or baseless and therefore “unfounded.” Only sworn or commissioned law enforcement personnel may “unfound” a crime report for purposes of reporting under this section. The recovery of stolen property, the low value of stolen property, the refusal of the victim to cooperate with the prosecution, and the failure to make an arrest do not “unfound” a crime report.

Notice of Non-Discrimination

Bellingham Technical College does not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, creed, color, sex, gender identity or expression, citizenship or immigration status, national origin, age, religion, disability, veteran or military status, sexual orientation, genetic information, the presence of any sensory, mental, or physical disability or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal by a person with a disability, pregnancy, marital status, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state, or local law in its programs, activities, and services.

The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies/Section 504: Director for Human Resources, Allison Mack: 360.752.8354, or hr@btc.edu.

For Title IX compliance, contact: Director of Compliance, Abby Buchanan:
360.752.8305, or title9@btc.edu.

Mailing address: 3028 Lindbergh Avenue, Bellingham, WA 98225.

BTC publications are available in alternate formats upon request by contacting the
Accessibility Resources office at 360.752.8576.