



ST. JOHN'S  
UNIVERSITY

# RESPECT

Respond and Partner to Engage  
our Community Team





## **RESPECT is the University's bias response team.**

It includes students, faculty, administrators, and staff who voluntarily serve to provide direct support to individuals impacted by prejudice-based aggression. This may involve providing assistance with reporting bias and connecting individuals to safety and support resources. When appropriate, it may also include facilitating restorative conversations and community building circles to promote healing and learning outcomes.

Visit [www.stjohns.edu/RESPECT](http://www.stjohns.edu/RESPECT) for a list of the current members of the RESPECT team.

Contact the team at [RESPECT@stjohns.edu](mailto:RESPECT@stjohns.edu).

## **What are acts of bias?**

The University's Policy 704 defines acts of bias; they are words or actions committed against or directed toward a person or to a person's property because of the person's actual or perceived race, color, ethnicity, national origin, gender, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, disability, religion, age, veteran status, or any other legally protected characteristic.

Examples include

- Degrading language
- Epithets
- Graffiti
- Harassment
- Hate symbols and images
- Name calling
- Offensive social media posts
- Slurs
- Threats
- Vandalism

## **How do I report bias?**

For nonemergency situations, any member of the University community can use the online reporting form available at [www.stjohns.edu/reportbias](http://www.stjohns.edu/reportbias). This form may be completed anonymously, but be sure to include as much information as possible so that the University can respond.

Bias reports can also be made to the Office of Human Resources, Equal Opportunity and Compliance, which is located in University Center, Suite C, and can be reached at 718-990-1865 (press 4).

In the event of an emergency, including but not limited to situations involving violence or threats of violence, please call the Department of Public Safety or 911.

## **What happens when I report bias?**

The Equal Opportunity and Compliance Department of the Office of Human Resources will reach out to the complainant (the person who filed the report) to discuss the incident and options for moving forward. This includes ensuring that the complainant has access to safety and support resources, and is informed of possible ways to resolve the complaint.

Any investigation stemming from a complaint serves a fact-finding purpose to determine whether or not the University's nondiscrimination policy, Policy 704, has been violated. Investigations may involve interviewing witnesses,

collecting evidence, and meeting with the respondent (the person against whom a complaint is filed). Throughout the investigative process, complainants, witnesses, and respondents are treated fairly and respectfully, and all have equal access to safety and support resources.

### **Will other people find out that I reported bias or participated in an investigation?**

Information shared by complainants, witnesses, and respondents during an investigation is kept private. Equal Opportunity and Compliance will only disclose such information to individuals who have a legitimate need to know (e.g., to facilitate a class or housing change).

### **Can I get in trouble for participating in an investigation?**

No. The University's policy prohibits retaliation against anyone involved in a University investigation. If you believe that you are being retaliated against due to your involvement in an investigation, you should notify Equal Opportunity and Compliance immediately.

### **What are the possible consequences of being found in violation of the nondiscrimination policy?**

If an investigation concludes that an individual has violated University policy, the corrective action steps that are taken will depend on whether the individual is a student, faculty member, or staff member/administrator.

**For students,** the matter is referred to the Office of Student Conduct for sanctioning.

**For faculty,** the applicable procedures in the Collective Bargaining Agreement are followed.

**For staff members and administrators,** the Office of Human Resources consults with the respondent's direct supervisor to determine appropriate action.

Even if an investigation did not substantiate a policy violation, if it was determined that inappropriate conduct occurred, such conduct will be addressed.

### **How will I know the outcome of the investigation?**

Federal and state law limit the information the University can share and with whom. However, complainants and respondents are always notified in writing as to whether an investigation substantiated or did not substantiate a violation of University policy.

### **What if I am not interested in pursuing an investigation?**

If you do not wish to pursue an investigation, you should still report bias incidents so that they are documented and the University can provide you with support. There are other ways the University can respond to bias incidents outside of an investigative process. One particular alternative is a restorative process.

### **What is a restorative process?**

This process uses principles of restorative justice and the restorative conference to resolve bias incidents. A restorative conference is a voluntary, facilitated meeting between a person who has been harmed by bias (harmed party) and the person who is responsible for the harm (responsible party). It is a collaborative decision-making process that focuses on repairing harm and rebuilding trust, rather than punishment. The harmed party is given the opportunity to name how they have been harmed and what they need. The responsible party is given the opportunity to understand how the harmed party has been impacted and come up with ways to repair the harm. Both the harmed party and the responsible party have to be willing to participate in a restorative process. Most importantly, the responsible party must take responsibility for the harm.



### Why should I participate in a restorative process?

If you have been harmed by a bias incident, you might consider a restorative process if you

- want a say in what happens
- want to know that the responsible party is sorry
- have questions only the responsible party can answer, and/or
- want something positive or educational to come from the bias incident (rather than a punitive outcome).

If you are a responsible party, you might consider a restorative process if you

- want to understand the impact of your actions, and/or
- want to repair the harm caused.

### What happens during the restorative process?

If the responsible party has taken responsibility for the biased behavior, and the harmed party and responsible party are both willing to participate in a restorative process, the Equal Opportunity and Compliance Department refers the case to RESPECT.

#### **Preconferences**

Two trained facilitators from RESPECT will work with the harmed party and responsible party. First, the facilitators will schedule separate preconferences with the harmed party and the responsible party. These are opportunities for the harmed party and the responsible party to meet the facilitators and have their questions answered.

During the preconference stage, the harmed party and the responsible party also identify anyone else who should be present at the restorative conference, which may include support people (e.g., friends, family, and advisors).

#### **Check-Ins**

The facilitators will speak to any additional parties who have been identified as being an important part of the restorative process. They inform these additional parties of the process and their roles in the restorative conference. The facilitators then check in with everyone involved, and if all are ready to proceed, they schedule the restorative conference.

### Restorative Conference

The restorative conference begins with the responsible party describing the incident, followed by the harmed party, and then the support people. Each participant has an opportunity to speak about how they have been affected by the incident.

All of the harms stemming from the incident are identified and documented in writing. The conversation then shifts to exploring how each of the harms on the list can be repaired. Each participant has an opportunity to come up with ideas for repairing the listed harms.

The proposed solutions are then refined into an agreement, in which the responsible party commits to complete various tasks by set deadlines in lieu of having to go through any disciplinary or conduct process. If the agreement is breached, then the responsible party is referred back to Equal Opportunity and Compliance to proceed with a disciplinary or conduct process.

Visit [www.stjohns.edu/respect](http://www.stjohns.edu/respect) to see a short video explaining the restorative process.

### How else can RESPECT help?

There may be instances where the entire University community is impacted by an event, or members of the community have been harmed by behavior that cannot be attributed to any specific individual(s). For example, unknown perpetrators deface several campus locations with offensive graffiti overnight, which numerous students and employees see the following morning.

In a situation like this, RESPECT will respond to such incidents by communicating to the entire community that the University does not condone acts of bias, discrimination, and harassment. RESPECT can also facilitate community building circles to create space for dialogue, reflection, and affirmation. Participants are provided an opportunity to be heard and have power restored by sharing their feelings about the incident, what is important to them, and ideas about how to resolve what happened. Throughout these circles, RESPECT facilitators are present to help identify the harms and key themes, and how to move forward together as a community.

### What other support is available if I have been impacted by bias?

See the next page for additional on- and off-campus resources.

# ON-CAMPUS AND OFF-CAMPUS RESOURCES

## REPORTING

### Office of Human Resources

Equal Opportunity and Compliance  
University Center, Suite C  
718-990-1865 (press 4)  
[www.stjohns.edu/reportbias](http://www.stjohns.edu/reportbias)

## SAFETY

### St. John's University Department of Public Safety

Queens Campus  
ROTC Building/McDonald Center, First Floor  
718-990-6281

Manhattan Campus  
Front Desk  
212-277-5155

Long Island Graduate Center, Hauppauge, NY  
631-218-7709

Staten Island Campus  
Spellman Hall, Room 116  
718-390-4487

### New York City Police Department (dial 911)

## SUPPORT

### RESPECT

Office of Equity and Inclusion  
[RESPECT@stjohns.edu](mailto:RESPECT@stjohns.edu)  
[www.stjohns.edu/RESPECT](http://www.stjohns.edu/RESPECT)

### Inclusivity Resource Center

Sun Yat Sen Memorial Hall  
718-990-2515  
[oma-irc@stjohns.edu](mailto:oma-irc@stjohns.edu)

## WELLNESS

### Center for Counseling and Consultation

Queens Campus  
Marillac Hall, Room 130  
718-990-6384

Staten Island Campus  
Spellman Hall, Room 101  
718-390-4451

## CAMPUS MINISTRY

Queens Campus  
718-990-6255  
[campusministry@stjohns.edu](mailto:campusministry@stjohns.edu)

Staten Island Campus  
718-390-4475  
[SI-CampusMinistry@stjohns.edu](mailto:SI-CampusMinistry@stjohns.edu)

## EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

For St. John's employees and their family members, the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) offers free, confidential services and resources. Call the 24-hour helpline at 800-833-8707 or visit [www.myccaonline.com](http://www.myccaonline.com) (company code "STJOHNS").



# BIAS REPORTING FLOWCHART



## REPORT BIAS

If you experience a bias incident, report it so that the University can provide you with support.

Office of Human Resources,  
Equal Opportunity and Compliance (EOC)  
718-990-1865 (press 4)  
[www.stjohns.edu/reportbias](http://www.stjohns.edu/reportbias)

## REVIEW OPTIONS

Meet with the EOC office to discuss the best way for you to move forward.

**Investigation**  
The EOC office investigates the incident to determine whether or not the alleged offender has violated University policy.

**RESPECT**  
The University's bias response team works with you and the alleged offender during a facilitated meeting to discuss the incident.

**Sanctioning**  
If the offender is a student, the EOC office refers the case to the Office of Student Conduct for sanctioning.

**Corrective Action**  
If the offender is an employee, the EOC office consults with the employee's supervisor for appropriate action.\*

**Restorative Conference**  
An opportunity for you to identify how you have been harmed and for the offender to take responsibility to repair the harm.

\*Collective bargaining agreement procedures apply for faculty.

## OUTCOMES

What can happen if the EOC office concludes the University's policy has been violated or the offender takes responsibility for his or her actions.

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