

# **VALDOSTA STATE UNIVERSITY**

## **ANNUAL SECURITY AND FIRE SAFETY REPORT**

**2023**

Dear Student, Faculty and Staff member:

Valdosta State University (VSU) is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for our students, faculty, staff, and visitors. One way in which we can achieve a safe and secure environment is through transparency. As such, the Department of Public Safety has prepared the Annual Security and Fire Safety Report.

This report will provide you with information on the safety and security of the VSU Campus. Inside you will find information on the Department of Public Safety, our policies and procedures for reporting crime, crime prevention programs, victim assistance services, fire safety, and other materials to assist you. This report is provided in compliance with the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Crime Statistics Act (Clery Act) and the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA).

Valdosta State takes campus safety very seriously and is committed to our efforts to maintain a safe, secure environment for our students, faculty, staff, and visitors. You are encouraged to read this report and use it to assist in providing for your continual safety. Your personal safety is a priority at VSU. Maintaining a safe campus requires a dedicated partnership between the members of the University community and the Department of Public Safety.

Safety is everyone's responsibility. We need your partnership and assistance to keep VSU a safe place to live, work, and learn.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'C. Alan Rowe', written in a cursive style.

C. Alan Rowe, M.S.  
Director of Public Safety  
Chief of University Police

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT**

Valdosta State University is an equal opportunity educational institution. It is not the intent of the institution to discriminate against any applicant for admission or any student or employee of the institution based on the sex, race, religion, color, national origin, disability, or sexual orientation of the individual. It is the intent of the institution to comply with the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and subsequent Executive Orders as well as Title IX, Equal Pay Act of 1963, Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974, Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

## REPORTING CRIMES AND OTHER EMERGENCIES

The University has a number of ways for campus community members and visitors to report crimes, serious incidents, and other emergencies to appropriate University officials. Regardless of how and where you decide to report these incidents, it is critical for the safety of the entire University community that you immediately report all incidents to the Valdosta State University Police (229-259-5555) to ensure an effective investigation and appropriate follow-up actions, including issuing Crime Alerts or emergency notifications.

### **Voluntary, Confidential Reporting**

When crimes are not reported, little can be done to help the victim or other members of the community who could also become victims. We encourage Valdosta State University community members to report crimes promptly and to participate in and support crime prevention efforts. The University community becomes safer when all community members participate in safety and security initiatives.

If you are the victim of a crime or want to report a crime you are aware of, but do not want to pursue action within the University or criminal justice systems, we ask that you consider filing an online Silent Witness report. This allows members of the campus to report incidents directly to the Police Department. It must be noted that without the name of the person reporting or a witness to corroborate a complaint, possible sanctions against the offender may be limited or non-existent. But using this form can allow for the information to be used in crime prevention efforts and does not prohibit including one's name or information that could lead to assisting the campus. The Silent Witness report form can be found and accessed at:

<https://www.valdosta.edu/administration/finance-admin/police/forms/anonymous-tip-reporting.php>

Under the State of Georgia Open Records Act, government documents and information, including original police reports, are subject to release and public inspection. In addition, reports of sexual harassment and acts of sexual violence require the notification of Valdosta State University's Title IX Coordinator under federal regulation.

If a reporting person would like the details of an incident to be kept confidential, they may speak with a licensed professional counselor or health service provider on campus. They may also contact off-campus resources such as licensed professional counselors, local rape crisis counselors, domestic violence resources, local and state assistance agencies or clergy/chaplains/pastoral counselors. Information shared with these on or off campus sources will maintain confidentiality except in extreme cases of immediate threat, danger, or abuse of a minor.

Counselors or Pastoral care providers are requested to advise anyone seeking their assistance of the anonymous reporting resources of the VSU Police Department and these may also submit anonymous, aggregate statistical information for inclusion in the Clery Act reports unless they believe it could be harmful to the specific client, patient, or parishioner.

Anyone may call the Valdosta State University Police at 229-259-5555 to report concerning information. Callers may remain anonymous.

## **Reporting to University Police**

We encourage all members of the University community to report all crimes and other emergencies to the Valdosta State University Police in a timely manner. Should victims of a crime elect to file a report, their identity can remain confidential. The University Police have a dispatch center that is available by phone at 229-259-5555 or in person twenty-four hours a day at the Oak Street Parking Deck, 2nd floor, 1410 North Oak Street, Valdosta, GA. Though there are many resources available, University Police should be notified of any crime, whether or not an investigation continues, to ensure the University can assess all security concerns and inform the community if there is a significant threat to the Valdosta State University community.

## **Emergency Phones**

The University has emergency phones in Oak Street and Sustella Parking Decks. Emergency phones provide direct communications to the University Police Dispatch Center. The caller can maintain contact with the dispatcher until the police arrive at their location. VSU Police personnel make routine checks to ensure the phones are operating properly.

## **Anonymous Reporting**

The University Police's Silent Witness reporting program can be found and accessed through the Department's website:

<https://www.valdosta.edu/administration/finance-admin/police/forms/anonymous-tip-reporting.php>

## **Reporting to Other Campus Security Authorities**

While Valdosta State University prefers that community members promptly report all crimes and other emergencies directly to the University Police at 229-259-5555 or to local police agencies through 911, we also recognize that some may prefer to report to other individuals or University offices. The Clery Act recognizes certain University officials and offices as "Campus Security Authorities (CSA)." The Act defines these individuals as being an "official of an institution who has significant responsibility for student and campus activities, including, but not limited to, student housing, student discipline and campus judicial proceedings. An official is defined as any person who has the authority and the duty to take action or respond to particular issues on behalf of the institution. Valdosta State University Police Department collects crime reports from identified campus security authorities, which typically include (but are not limited to) certain staff from the following units:

- Enrollment and Student Affairs
- Athletics
- Academic Affairs
- Office of the President
- Finance & Administration

However, we officially designate the following offices as places where campus community members should report crimes:

<b>Official</b>	<b>Campus Address</b>	<b>Telephone Number</b>
University Police Department	1410 North Oak Street 2 <sup>nd</sup> floor Deck	229-259-3333 229-333-7816
Vice President for Student Affairs	Student Union Suite 3106	229-333-5941

Chief Human Resources Officer	University Center Entrance 5	229-333-5709
Director of Student Conduct and Title IX	Student Health Center, Second Floor	229-333-5409
Chief Legal Affairs Officer	West Hall, Executive Suite	229-333-5351
Office of Housing & Residence Life	1226 Hopper Hall	229-333-5920

### **Pastoral and Professional Counselors**

According to the Clery Act, pastoral and professional counselors who are appropriately credentialed and hired by Valdosta State University to serve in a counseling role are not considered Campus Security Authorities when they are acting in the counseling role. As a matter of policy, the University encourages pastoral and professional counselors to notify those whom they are counseling of the voluntary, confidential reporting options available to them.

### **It's Up to Each of Us**

The University takes great pride in the community and offers students, faculty, and staff many advantages. This community is a great place to live, learn, work and study. However, this does not mean that the campus community is immune from all the other adverse circumstances that arise in other communities. With that in mind, Valdosta State University has taken progressive measures to create and maintain a reasonably safe environment on campus.

Though the University is progressive with its policies, programs, and education, it is up to each one of us to live with a sense of awareness and use reasonable judgment when living, working, and visiting on campus.

## **PREPARATION OF THE ANNUAL SECURITY REPORT AND DISCLOSURE OF CRIME STATISTICS AND RECORDS RETENTION**

The University Police prepares this report to comply with the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security and Crime Statistics Act using information maintained by University Police, information provided by other University offices such as Student Affairs, Residence Life, other Campus Security Authorities, and information provided by local law enforcement agencies surrounding the main campus. Each of these offices provide updated policy information and crime data for inclusion in this report.

The institution retains all Clery related records for 7 years including, but not limited to:

- Police Reports
- Campus Security Authority Reports
- Programming Offered
- Crime/Fire Log
- Timely Warnings and Emergency Notifications
- VAWA Offense case files
- Title IX Case Files

This report provides statistics for the previous three years concerning reported crimes that occurred on campus, in certain off-campus buildings or property owned, leased, or controlled by Valdosta State University. This report also includes institutional policies regarding sexual assault, alcohol, and other drugs.

The University distributes a notice of the availability of this Annual Security and Fire Safety report each year to every member of the University community. Anyone, including prospective students and employees, may obtain a paper copy of this report by contacting the University Police at 229-333-7816 or by visiting on-line at:

<http://www.valdosta.edu/administration/finance-admin/police/>.

## **ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY**

The University Police Department protects and serves the Valdosta State community 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. The Department is responsible for a number of campus safety and security programs including Emergency Management, community Safety and Security education, physical security, behavioral/physical threat assessment, special event management and security technology.

The mission of the Valdosta State University Police Department is to preserve a safe and secure campus environment where diverse social, cultural, and academic values are allowed to develop and prosper through a combination of reactive, proactive, and educational law enforcement services.

The Department is comprised of:

- 23 State Certified Police Officers
- 6 Communications Officers
- 1 Records/Evidence Custodian

The police officers at Valdosta State University Police Department:

- Have a minimum of a G.E.D. or High School Diploma and all are offered the opportunity to attend classes at the University. The department has many officers who have obtained their undergraduate and graduate degrees from Valdosta State University and others who are currently working on their degrees,
- Complete a mandatory State Police Certification course which is required by all police officers in the state of Georgia,
- Receive a minimum of 40 hours per year of in-service training certified by the Georgia Peace Officers Standards and Training Council to include the areas of firearms re-qualifications, de-escalation and use of force, bias-based enforcement, cultural awareness, hazardous materials, emergency first aid, CPR/AED, weapons, and tactics.
- University Police officers are authorized under Georgia O.C.G.A. 20-3-72 to make arrests on, and within 1500 feet of any property owned or controlled by the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia. Our officers have the same authority as municipal officers in Georgia being authorized to carry firearms and empowered to make arrests. All criminal incidents are investigated by the University Police on the Valdosta State University campus and if necessary mutual aid may be obtained from the local police agencies to include the Valdosta Police Department, Lowndes County Sheriff's Department, Remerton City Police, and the Georgia Bureau of Investigation. All crimes that occur on campus or University property shall be reported to the University Police department.



## **Working Relationship with Local, State, and Federal law Enforcement Agencies**

The University Police maintains a cooperative relationship with the Georgia Bureau of Investigation, the Valdosta Police Department, the Lowndes County Sheriff's Department, and surrounding police agencies. This includes inter-operative radio capability, training programs, special events coordination, and investigation of serious incidents.

The Valdosta State University Police department participates in a Mutual Aid Agreement that authorizes police officers and supervisors of the participating agencies to request mutual aid for incidents based upon a reasonable belief that such aid will enhance the public's and/or officer safety and efficiency. The agencies participating in the Agreement include the Valdosta City Police Department and the Lowndes County Sheriff's Department. The agreement also allows for joint training and cooperation on other matters, such as pre-planned large-scale special events, amongst the participating agencies.

## **Crimes Involving Student Organizations at Off-Campus Locations**

Valdosta State University relies on its close working relationships with local law enforcement agencies to receive information about incidents involving Valdosta State University students and recognized student organizations, on and off campus. In coordination with local law enforcement agencies, the University Police will actively investigate certain crimes occurring on or near campus. If the University Police learn of criminal activity involving students or student organizations, it will coordinate with the appropriate external law enforcement agency to forward information about the situation to the Office of Student Conduct and Title IX, as appropriate.

The University requires all recognized student organizations to abide by federal, state, and local laws, and University regulations. The University may become involved in the off campus conduct of recognized student organizations as provided for in the Student Code of Conduct located at:

<https://www.valdosta.edu/administration/student-affairs/student-conduct-office/student-handbook.php>

## **TIMELY WARNING REPORTS – CRIME ALERTS**

In an effort to provide timely notice to the campus community in the event of a Clery Act crime that may pose a serious or ongoing threat to members of the community, the University Police may issue crime alerts as soon as pertinent information is available. The Director of Public Safety, or designee, on a case by case may issue Crime Alerts for the following crimes: arson; aggravated assault; criminal homicide; robbery; burglary; sexual assaults; and hate crimes. University Police will post these warnings through a variety of ways, including but not limited to posters, e-mails, and media. These warnings will not contain information that could potentially disclose the identity of the victim. The University also has the ability to send text message alerts to those who register their cell phone and/or home numbers through the University's Banner system. Text messaging, Blazer Guardian application alerts, and network rolling computer banner may also be utilized for these alerts to the campus community.

The purpose of these Crime Alerts is to notify the campus community of the incident and to provide information that may enable community members to protect themselves from similar incidents. Such crimes include but are not limited to: 1) Clery Act crimes that are reported to any campus security authority or the local police; or 2) the University determines that the incident represents an on-going threat to the campus community.

Additionally, the Director of Public Safety or designee may, in some circumstances, issue Crime Alerts when there is a pattern of crimes against persons or property. At Valdosta State University, the Chief of University Police will make the determination, in consultation with other University offices, if a Crime Alert is required. For incidents involving off-campus crimes, the University may issue a Crime Alert if the crime occurred in a location used and frequented by the University population.

## **EMERGENCY RESPONSE AND EVACUATION PROCEDURES**

VSU maintains an Emergency Action Plan and a Confidential Emergency Operations Plan. The Confidential Emergency Operations Plan includes:

- declaration of a campus state of emergency,
- roles and responsibilities in the event of an emergency,
- drills and exercises, and
- mutual aid agreements.

The VSU Department of Public Safety is responsible for maintaining the plan, conducting at least one annual test of the confidential Emergency Operations Plan, and maintaining detailed documentation of each test. Annual emergency response and evacuation tests may be announced or unannounced. Evacuation training sessions are available throughout each year either scheduled or upon request. The University publicizes information about UNG's Emergency Action Plan (EAP) in conjunction with one annual test and on an ongoing basis throughout the year including through orientation sessions, social media posts, and tests of the emergency notification system.

### **Emergency Notification**

Valdosta State University will issue emergency notifications that ensure the campus community receives timely, accurate, and useful information in the event of a significant emergency or dangerous situation on campus or in the local area that poses an immediate threat to the health or safety of campus community members. Valdosta State University uses the emergency notification known as RAVE. RAVE is an emergency notification service available to students, staff, and anyone in the University community who wants to subscribe. RAVE can be used to send emergency messages within minutes of the occurrence of an incident. These messages may go out as text messages, emails, University computer workstation screen messages, RSS feeds (banner) across the home page on the University's network or via recorded messages.

### **Procedures Used to Notify the Campus Community**

In the event of a situation that poses an immediate threat to members of the campus community, the University has various systems in place for communicating information quickly. Some or all of these methods of communication may be activated in the event of emergency notification to all or a segment of the campus community. These methods of communication include the mass notification system, RAVE, the University's e-mail system, and verbal announcement within a building and public address system on police cars. The University will establish a telephone call-in center to communicate with the University community during an emergency situation. Once the Director of Public Safety, or designee, determines the need for an emergency alert, the Police Communications Center operator will be directed to facilitate its dissemination.

## **Confirming the existence of a Significant Emergency or Dangerous Situation and Initiating the Emergency Notification System**

The Department of Public Safety and/or other campus first responders may become aware of a critical incident or other emergency situation that potentially affects the health and/or safety of the campus community. Generally, campus first responders become aware of these situations when they are reported to the Police Dispatch Center or upon discovery during patrol or other assignments.

Once first responders confirm that there is, in fact, an emergency or dangerous situation that poses an immediate threat to the health or safety of some or all members of the campus community, first responders will notify supervisors in the University Police Department.

The University's primary authorized representative, the Director of Public Safety or designee, will immediately initiate all or some portions of the University's emergency notification system. If, in the professional judgment of first responders, issuing a notification potentially compromises efforts to assist a victim or to contain, respond to, or otherwise mitigate the emergency, the University may elect to delay issuing an emergency notification. As soon as the condition that may compromise efforts is no longer present, the University will issue the emergency notification to the campus community.

## **Determining the Appropriate Segment or Segments of the Campus Community to Receive an Emergency Notification**

University and/or local first responders on the scene of a critical incident or dangerous situation will assist the Director of Public Safety or designee preparing the emergency notification with determining what segment or segments of the University community should receive the notification. Generally, the entire campus community will receive emergency notification.

In addition to the emergency notification that may be used via the University mass notification system, the University will also post applicable messages about the dangerous condition on the University homepage to ensure the rest of the campus is aware of the situation and the steps they should take to maintain personal and campus safety. If the emergency affects a significant portion of the entire campus, University officials will distribute the notification to the entire campus community.

## **Determining the Contents of the Emergency Notification**

The Director of Public Safety or designee will, without delay, and taking into account the safety of the community, determine the content of the notification and initiate the notification system, unless issuing a notification will, in the professional judgement of responsible authorities, compromise efforts to assist a victim or to contain, respond to, or otherwise mitigate the emergency. The University has developed a variety of template messages addressing several different emergency situations. The individual authorizing the alert will select the most succinct message to convey the appropriate information to the community.

## **Procedures for Disseminating Emergency Information to the Greater Community**

In a situation where information needs to be disseminated outside of the campus, the Director of Public Safety, in consultation with the Office of Strategic Communications, will determine what information needs to be sent to other law enforcement agencies, radio, television and social media outlets. This function will be performed by the Director of Strategic Communications, in conjunction with the University Police.

## **Enrolling in the University's Emergency Notification System**

We encourage members of the campus community to enroll in the RAVE system by visiting <http://www.valdosta.edu/administration/finance-admin/police/alert/>. We encourage University community members to regularly update their information through the same site.

## SECURITY OF AND ACCESS TO UNIVERSITY FACILITIES

At Valdosta State University, administrative buildings are open from 8:00 a.m. until 5:30 p.m., Monday through Thursday, and 8:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. on Fridays. Academic buildings are scheduled to be open through a campus system based on the needs of the individual school. Access to individual classrooms and laboratories is limited to those enrolled in the courses meeting there and by the authority of the faculty person teaching the individual classes. Access to closed buildings after hours is limited by the faculty approval process.

VSU police officers are responsible for checking university buildings and other properties daily. Campus buildings are controlled by access card reader restricted access. Plant Operations schedules the opening and closing of buildings (via electronic locking systems) based on the needs of the faculty and special events. Many campus facilities, buildings and parking areas are under 24-hour video surveillance. Key issuance is based on employment status and the rules and regulations of the University Key Shop.

The main campus is not a gated community and during business hours many areas are open to the public. Cultural and athletic events are held in the University facilities which are open to the public along with other facilities such as the bookstore and library.

### **Special Considerations for Residence Hall Access**

At Valdosta State University, all residence halls operate under a computerized Access Control and Security Monitoring System. Identification cards are coded so that only students who are residents in a particular hall are authorized electronic access entry to that hall; the system denies entry to all unauthorized persons. When any exterior emergency exit door is left ajar, an audible alarm is activated. Residence hall staff is responsible for checking and securing doors, when needed. When a door is malfunctioning, personnel are summoned for immediate repair. Remember to lock your doors and windows. All residence hall and apartment exterior doors are equipped with locks and with crash bars to ensure a quick emergency exit.

Only residents and their invited guests are permitted in the living areas of the residence halls. It is the resident's responsibility to ensure that his/her guest is aware of the University and residence hall policies. Guests are not provided with room keys or door access cards. Guests must be escorted by a resident of the building at all times. All exterior doors are locked 24 hours a day. It is the responsibility of residents and staff members to challenge or report individuals who cannot be identified as residents or the guests of residents. When University Police receive a report of an unescorted person in a residence hall, a police officer is dispatched to identify that person.

Officers spend much of their time patrolling in and around the residence hall complexes. During the summer when groups who are not regularly associated with Valdosta State University are using the University residence halls for camps or other events, exterior doors are locked 24 hours a day. Each guest is issued an identification card that allows them access to gain entry into their assigned building. Housing and Residence Life has developed a program called HEART, Housing Engagement Action Response Team, which assist all residents with situations that may

arise. These could include student lockout services, emergency maintenance issues, or conflicts that could arise. The University Police and HEART personnel are tasked with making periodic checks of the interior residence hall areas as well.

### **Security Considerations for the Maintenance of Campus Facilities**

Valdosta State University is committed to campus safety and security. At the University, locks, landscaping, and outdoor lighting are designed for safety and security. Sidewalks are designed to provide well-traveled, lighted routes from parking areas to buildings and from building to building. Sidewalks and building entrances are illuminated to provide for safety and security. Regular checks of pathways, hallways, and stairwells are also conducted to identify safety or security concerns.

Environmental and Occupational Safety, in conjunction with representatives from the Police Department, Student Government Association, Plant Operations, and Faculty Senate conduct surveys of University property each year to evaluate campus lighting. We encourage community members to promptly report any security concerns, including concerns about locking mechanisms, lighting, or landscaping to the University Police.

## **CAMPUS SECURITY POLICIES, CRIME PREVENTION & SAFETY AWARENESS PROGRAMS**

In addition to the many programs offered by the University Police and other University offices, the University has established a number of policies and procedures related to ensuring a reasonably safe campus community. These policies include:

### **Student Conduct**

Valdosta State University is obligated to provide all students with the University regulations, policies, and procedures governing student conduct. Valdosta State University policies and procedures are included in the Student Code of Conduct for Students which is published on the Student Conduct Website at: <https://www.valdosta.edu/administration/student-affairs/student-conduct-office/student-handbook.php>

### **Behavioral Intervention Team**

In order to extend our efforts on emergency preparedness and prevention, Valdosta State University has established a Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT). The objective of the BIT is to put in place a structured process for evaluating potentially threatening situations that occur at the University. This multi-disciplinary team is comprised of members from around the University community (Residence Life, Dean of Students, Counseling Center, Academic Affairs, University Police, and Student Conduct) and focus on areas of student concern. If you would like further information about the BIT, please visit their website at:

<https://www.valdosta.edu/administration/student-affairs/bit.php>

### **Threat Assessment Team**

The Office of Human Resources established a Threat Assessment Team (TAT) to assist in addressing situations where faculty, staff or (non-VSU student) third-parties are displaying disruptive or threatening behaviors that potentially impede their own or others' ability to function successfully or safely. The Threat Assessment Team will recommend actions to the appropriate President/Provost/ or Vice President(s) in order to protect the student, employee, and campus community.

Specific TAT actions may include the following:

- Respond to circumstances of violence, threatening behavior, unwanted pursuit, or harassment.
- Investigate the situation and recommend appropriate actions/sanctions including suspension, termination of employment, filing of criminal charges, or ongoing monitoring for follow-up and observation of behavior patterns.
- Respond quickly to behavior indicating an employee or third party poses a risk to self or others.
- Identify resources for troubled personnel and make referrals to appropriate on-campus and off-campus agencies.
- Help secure therapeutic actions that are appropriate, such as treatment or counseling.



- Initiate action to place an employee in the custody of a mental health facility capable of supporting specific behaviors.
- Coordinate and assess information from faculty, administrators, and local authorities.
- Make recommendations to the President/Provost/ or Vice President(s) who may sign-off on action to be taken.
- Periodically assess outcomes of actions taken.
- Recommend the emergency removal of an individual who is considered an imminent threat to our campus.

## **Weapons Policy**

Valdosta State University complies with all local, state and federal laws applied to firearms and weapons on campus. The possession, carrying and use of weapons, ammunition, or explosives is prohibited on University owned or controlled property. Failure to comply with the University weapons policy may result in arrest, disciplinary action from the institution, or both. Georgia law (O.C.G.A. 16-11-127.1) also prohibits carrying weapons within a school safety zone, at school functions, or on a bus or other transportation furnished by a school. **(See Exemptions)**

Georgia law defines a weapon as meaning and including: any pistol, revolver, or any weapon designed or intended to propel a missile of any kind, or any dirk, bowie knife, switchblade knife, ballistic knife, or any other knife having a blade of two or more inches, straight-edge razor, razor blade, spring stick, knuckles, whether made from metal, thermoplastic, wood or other similar material, blackjack, any bat, club, or other bludgeon-type weapon, or any flailing instrument consisting of two or more rigid parts connected in such a manner as to allow them to swing freely, which may be known as nun chahka, nun chuck, nunchaku, shuriken, or fighting chain, or any disc, of whatever configuration, having at least two points or pointed blades which is designed to be thrown or propelled and which may be known as a throwing star or oriental dart, or any weapon of the like or kind.

### **Exemptions:**

**House Bill 280** was signed by Governor Deal and went into effect on July 1, 2017. It allows for anyone with a valid Georgia Weapons Carry License to carry a handgun in a concealed manner on property owned or leased by public colleges and universities, with some exceptions. Details pertaining to this bill and a video to explain the changes in the law can be located at the following website:

<http://www.valdosta.edu/administration/finance-admin/police/campuscarry/>

**House Bill 792** was signed by Governor Deal which added the following to O.C.G.A. 16-11-127.1, to become effective July 1, 2016. This bill permitted possession of certain electroshock devices:

“(19) Any person who is 18 years of age or older or currently enrolled in classes on the campus in question and carrying, possessing, or having under such person’s control an electroshock weapon while in or on any building or real property owned by or leased to such public technical school, vocational school, college or university or other public institution of

postsecondary education; provided, however, that, if such person makes use of such electroshock weapon, such use shall be in defense of self or others. The exemption under this paragraph shall apply only to such person in regard to such electroshock weapon. As used in this paragraph, the term “electroshock weapon” means any commercially available device that is powered by electrical charging units and designed exclusively to be capable of incapacitating a person by electrical charge, including, but not limited to, a stun gun or Taser as defined in subsection (a) of Code 26 Section 16-11-106.”

This applies to commercially available devices designed exclusively to incapacitate a person by electrical charge.

### **Crime Prevention and Safety Awareness Programs**

Valdosta State University Police Department maintains a strong working relationship with the community. This relationship includes offering a variety of safety and security programs, services and crime prevention programming to include sexual assault prevention. If you or your organization would like to request a specific program, please contact our Crime Prevention Officer, Sgt. Kevin Cox, at 229-333-7816. Please contact the Police Department, Student Affairs, Title IX Coordinator, Counseling Center, and the Student Conduct office for full information of the programs available.

## **VALDOSTA STATE UNIVERSITY'S RESPONSE TO SEXUAL AND GENDER VIOLENCE**

The institution expressly prohibits sexual misconduct, including dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking consistent with the requirements of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act, and University System of Georgia policy.

### **Personal Safety**

Theft, disorderly conduct, and alcohol related offenses are very common on university campuses. However, they do not stand alone. Despite law enforcement's efforts, serious crimes do occur on campuses. It is always important to report any suspicious activity to campus police and to remain alert to your surroundings, use well-lit areas to travel and utilize the buddy system or campus escort service when alone.

On the campus, and off campus, one needs to know their surroundings, they need to be aware of where they are and who is near them, they need to be alert and call for help if needed. Reporting suspicious people or activity is important on a campus and could help alert authorities to allow for intervention to prevent a crime.

The Violence Against Women Act Amendments to the Clery Act (VAWA) requires all colleges and universities to address sexual violence. Institutions of higher education must provide educational programming for all incoming students on the issues of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. To comply with this federal mandate, Valdosta State University has partnered with Vector Solutions, whose mission is to help students address critical skills such as alcohol abuse prevention and sexual violence awareness in institutions of higher education.

### **Defining Rape and Sexual Assault**

In Georgia, Rape is defined as when a person has carnal knowledge of a female forcibly and against her will, or the carnal knowledge of a female who is less than ten years of age. Carnal knowledge in rape occurs when there is any penetration of the female sex organ by the male sex organ. The fact that the person allegedly raped is the wife of the defendant shall not be a defense to a charge of rape. The statistics contained in this report reflect the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Uniform Crime Reporting definition, which defines rape as 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.

A sexual assault is any sexual act directed against another person, forcibly and/or against that person's will; or not forcibly or against the person's will where the victim is incapable of giving consent, as well as incest or statutory rape.

In Georgia, consent is not defined in reference to sexual activity. However, Valdosta State University defines consent as: Words or actions that show a knowing and voluntary willingness to engage in mutually agreed-upon sexual activity. Consent cannot be gained by force,

intimidation or coercion, by ignoring or acting in spite of objections of another, or by taking advantage of the incapacitation of another, where the respondent knows or reasonably should have known of such incapacitation. Consent is also absent when the activity in question exceeds the scope of consent previously given. Past consent does not imply present or future consent. Silence or an absence of resistance does not imply consent. Minors under the age of 16 cannot legally consent under Georgia law. Either party can withdraw consent at any time by using clear words or actions.

While these definitions are clear, victims often have difficulty reporting a sexual assault for numerous reasons such as knowing the perpetrator, fear of retaliation, fear of parents knowing about the incident, or fear of getting in trouble with law enforcement. Despite these concerns, it is vital to report such incidents in order to get help.

The following information provides steps to follow should a sexual assault occur:

- Get to a safe place as soon as possible.
- Try to preserve all physical evidence – The victim should not bathe, shower, brush teeth, douche, use the toilet, or change clothing until she/he has a medical exam. Contact a close friend or relative, if available, who can provide support and accompany the victim to the medical exam and/or police department. Advocates from the Haven can be available to the victim to provide support.
- Get medical attention as soon as possible – An exam may reveal the presence of physical injury of which the victim is unaware. Following a sexual assault, antibiotics are typically given at the time of the exam to help prevent the victim from acquiring certain sexually transmitted diseases. Emergency contraceptive pills are offered to all victims at the time of the exam (if the victim presents within 120 hours) to help prevent pregnancy from occurring as a result of the rape.
- If the victim reports memory loss, loss of consciousness or other circumstances suspicious for a drug-facilitated assault, a urine test may be done if the victim presents within 96 hours. Some of the commonly used “date rape” drugs, however, are only detectable in the urine for 6-8 hours after ingestion.
- Contact the police – Sexual assault is a crime; it is vital to report it.
- It is important to remember reporting the crime is not the same as prosecuting the crime. The decision to prosecute may be made at another time. The final decision to prosecute is determined by the District Attorney.
- Consider talking to a counselor – Seeing a counselor may be important in helping the victim understand his/her feelings and begin the process of recovery.

### **Our Commitment to Addressing Sexual Assault**

All forms of harassment including but not limited to, intimidation, coercion, threats, sexual or dating or domestic violence and any other forms of disorderly conduct e.g., bullying, sexual assault, stalking / cyber stalking, and acts of retaliation are strictly prohibited by the University and violate the Student Code of Conduct and may violate Federal and State Laws. Violations of this policy are subject to disciplinary sanctions through the Office of Student Conduct and Title IX. The Code of Conduct is located at:

<https://www.valdosta.edu/administration/student-affairs/student-conduct-office/student-handbook.php>

Please review the aforementioned web site to review procedures, policies and protocols for reporting and addressing allegations of student sexual misconduct. The University provides the following to all sexual assault victims:

- Courteous, professional assistance in taking assault reports and providing assistance to a victim/survivor with her/his safety and well-being in mind.
- Payment for a sexual assault examination either through the Haven Rape Crisis Center or SGMC.
- Counseling services are available for a victim at the time of reporting or anytime following an assault. They also can assist a student with student related matters such as working with Student Affairs or Housing.
- University Police is an active participant in the Lowndes County Sexual Assault Response Team (SART). The department follows a strict protocol in assisting a sexual assault victim, taking reports, notifying the Haven sexual assault advocate, transporting the victim for medical services (unless an ambulance is needed) through the Haven and follow-up services as needed.
- Student Affairs is available to assist a victim with services such as room reassignment, working with faculty to assist with the student's schedule or missed classes, and if necessary assistance with withdrawal from school.
- The Title IX Coordinator can assist a student with resources and filing complaints.

## **Reporting an Incident**

If a student, employee, or visitor has been the victim of an incident of sexual violence they should immediately report it to the Valdosta State University Police Department at 229-259-5555. The department is located in the Oak Street Parking Deck at 1410 North Oak Street, Valdosta, GA. In case of an emergency or ongoing threat, if possible, get to a safe location and report the incident by calling 911 local emergency police assistance or utilizing one of the campus emergency phones.

Students may also report to the Vice President of Student Affairs (229-333-5941), Director of Student Conduct and Title IX (229- 333-5409), or any of the named Campus Security Authorities on campus. Employees may also report to Human Resources (229-333-5709) or to local law enforcement by calling 911.

Valdosta State University officials will assist any victim in notifying law enforcement, including local police, if they elect to do so. Victims are also entitled not to report to law enforcement. Any student or employee who reports an incident of sexual violence, whether the offense occurred on or off campus, shall receive an explanation of their rights and options, both verbally and in writing.

A sexual assault is any sexual act directed against another person, forcibly and/or against that person's will; or not forcibly or against the person's will where the victim is incapable of giving consent, as well as incest or statutory rape.

## **VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN ACT (VAWA)**

On March 7, 2013, President Obama signed the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act, which amended sections of the Higher Education Act of 1965 and the Clery Act. The following definitions are provided to clarify VAWA related incidents:

### Domestic Violence:

Includes felony or misdemeanor crimes of violence committed by a current or former spouse of the victim, by a person with whom the victim shares a child in common, by a person cohabitating with or has cohabitated with the victim as a spouse, 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 jurisdiction. Georgia law defines domestic violence under the term "family violence." The term family violence means the occurrence of one or more of the following acts between past or present spouses, persons who are parents of the same child, parents and children, stepparents and stepchildren, foster parents and foster children, or other persons living or formerly living in the same household:

1. Any felony; or
2. Commission of the offenses of battery, simple battery, simple assault, assault, stalking, criminal damage to property, unlawful restraint, or criminal trespass.

Dating Violence: Means Violence committed by a person:

1. Who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim; and
2. Where the existence of such a relationship will be determined based on a consideration of the following factors:
  - a) The length of the relationship
  - b) The type of relationship
  - c) The frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship.

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

1. Fear for his or her safety or the safety of others; or
2. Suffer substantial emotional distress.

Georgia law further defines the offense of stalking as when a person follows, places under surveillance, or contacts another person at or about a place or places without the consent of the other person for the purpose of harassing and intimidating the other person. Under Georgia law, the term "contact" shall mean any communication including, without being limited to, communication in person, by telephone, by mail, by broadcast, by computer, by computer network, or by any other electronic device.

### **Additional Procedures Victims Should Follow**

If an incident of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence or stalking occurs it is important to preserve evidence to aid in the possibility of a successful criminal prosecution. Any

clothing that has been removed which could contain evidence (blood, hair, semen) should be placed into a paper bag and given to authorities. Evidence of violence, such as bruising or other visible injuries, following an incident of domestic or dating violence should be documented including through preservation of photographic evidence. Evidence of stalking includes any communications, such as written notes, voice mail or other electronic communications that should be saved and not altered in any way.

Time is of the essence in collecting and preserving evidence. This would also refer to giving statements and obtaining statements from potential witnesses.

### **On & Off Campus Resources**

Valdosta State University, the City of Valdosta and Lowndes County all offer other important resources to the survivors of sexual violence including medical treatment, counseling, and advocacy that they may wish to utilize. The VSU Counseling Center is available to assist any student or employee free of charge and will help them consider their options and navigate through any resources or recourse they may elect to pursue. A victim need not make a formal report to law enforcement or Valdosta State University to access these resources that include the following:

- Valdosta Police Department, 229-242-2606
- Remerton Police Department, 229-247-2320
- Lowndes County Sheriff, 229-671-2900
- Georgia State Patrol, 229-333-5215
- Greenleaf Counseling Center, 229-247-4357
- South Georgia Medical Center, 229-333-1000
- Haven Rape Crisis Center, 229-242-1544
- Georgia Network to End Sexual Assault, 866-354-3672
- Victim Witness Services, District Attorney's Office, 229-671-3250
- Georgia Office of Victim Assistance, 404-559-4949
- Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, 800-547-0060
- Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN) Hotline, 800-656-HOPE
- Georgia Victim Witness Helpline, 800-338-6745
- Georgia Legal Services, 800-498-9469
- Tapestri (a refugee and immigrant coalition against domestic violence), 404-299-2185
- National Domestic Violence Hotline, 800-799-SAFE (7233).

### **Accommodations**

Whether or not a student or employee reports to law enforcement or pursues any formal action, if they report an incident of sexual violence Valdosta State University is committed to providing them as safe a learning or working environment as possible. Upon request, Valdosta State University will make any reasonable available change to a victim's academic, living, transportation and/or working situation. Students, faculty, or staff may contact the Director of Student Conduct and Title IX at 229-333-5409.

If a victim reports to law enforcement, they may assist them in obtaining a Temporary

Restraining Order from a criminal court. Valdosta State University is committed to ensuring that any such order is fully upheld on all institutionally owned and controlled property. The University is also committed to protecting victims from any further harm, and the Director of Student Conduct and Title IX or their designee, may issue a temporary no-contact order pending the outcome of any conduct proceeding. Violations of a no-contact order should be reported immediately to the Office of Student Conduct and Title IX. The report will be handled by the Compliance Officer for Student Conduct and may result in disciplinary action. Additional violations will be reported to the Vice President of Enrollment and Student Affairs to determine if interim suspension or involving University Police might be the next, best course of action.

### **University Disciplinary Procedures in Sexual Assault Incidents**

If you have been sexually assaulted, you have options for addressing the incident. You may want to discuss the situation with a counselor that can be provided by the Valdosta State University Counseling Center or a private practitioner. The University Police are always available to assist a victim with obtaining any support that he or she may need.

The University's student conduct and Title IX processes are designed to provide a prompt, fair, and impartial resolution for both the complainant and respondent (no matter student or employee) from intake to appeal (where applicable). These processes ensure support for parties throughout.

The Office of Student Conduct and Title IX fully manages the resolution proceeding in which a student is an alleged perpetrator (and partners with the Office of Human Resources when the alleged perpetrator is an employee or visitor). There are four primary types of proceedings handled by the Office of Student Conduct and Title IX: student Title IX, student non-Title IX, employee Title IX, and employee non-Title IX. No matter the case, steps are taken to prevent bias. All involved in the proceedings are trained annually on both Title IX and sexual misconduct. These trainings include the intersection of Title IX, VAWA, and Clery. Those trained include Coordinators and individuals who serve as investigator, hearing panelist, hearing officer, decision maker, advisor and appellate officer.

At Valdosta State University each type of proceeding generally follows the same pattern. However, while informal resolution is an option for cases involving a student respondent, that option is not available where employees are involved. The University determines which proceeding is required based on the affiliation of the respondent, and the location of the alleged conduct.

The procedure can be found here at:

<https://www.valdosta.edu/administration/student-affairs/student-conduct-office/student-code-of-conduct/appendix-b-student-misconduct/disciplinary-hearing-procedures-for-student-misconduct.php>.

### **Section I. Student Sexual Misconduct Code**

In accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), the University System of Georgia (USG) and Valdosta State University (VSU) do not discriminate on the basis of sex in any of its education programs or activities or in employment. The USG and VSU are committed to ensuring a safe learning and working environment for all members of the campus



community. To that end, this policy prohibits sexual misconduct as defined herein.

In order to reduce incidents of sexual misconduct, USG institutions, including VSU, are required to provide prevention tools and to conduct ongoing awareness and prevention programming and training for the campus community. Such programs will promote positive and healthy behaviors and educate the campus community on consent, nonconsensual sexual misconduct, alcohol use, dating violence, domestic violence, stalking, bystander intervention, and reporting.

When sexual misconduct does occur, all members of the VSU community are strongly encouraged to report the incident promptly through the procedures outlined in this policy. The purpose of this policy is to ensure uniformity in reporting and addressing sexual misconduct.

### **Definitions and Prohibited Sexual Misconduct**

A. **Community:** Students, faculty, and staff, as well as contractors, vendors, visitors, and guests.

B. **Complainant:** An individual who is alleged to have experienced conduct that violates this Policy.

C. **Confidential Employee:** University employees who have been designated by the Title IX Coordinator to talk with an alleged victim or perpetrator in confidence. Confidential employees must only report that the incident occurred and provide date, time, location, and name of alleged respondent (if known) without revealing any information that would personally identify the alleged victim. This minimal reporting must be submitted in compliance with Title IX and the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act (Clery Act). Confidential Employees may be required to fully disclose details of an incident in or to ensure campus safety.

D. **Consent:** Words or actions that show a knowing and voluntary willingness to engage in mutually agreed-upon sexual activity. Consent cannot be gained by force, intimidation or coercion, by ignoring or acting in spite of objections of another, or by taking advantage of the incapacitation of another, where the respondent knows or reasonably should have known of such incapacitation. Consent is also absent when the activity in question exceeds the scope of consent previously given. Past consent does not imply present or future consent. Silence or an absence of resistance does not imply consent. Minors under the age of 16 cannot legally consent under Georgia law. Either party can withdraw consent at any time by using clear words or actions.

E. **Dating Violence:** Violence committed by a person who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the alleged victim. 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.

F. **Domestic Violence:** Violence committed by a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the alleged victim; by a person with whom the alleged 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; or, by a person similarly situated to a spouse of the alleged victim.

**G. Incapacitation:** The physical and/or mental inability to make informed, rational judgments, and can result from mental disability, sleep, involuntary physical restraint, or from intentional or unintentional taking of alcohol and/or other drugs. Whether someone is incapacitated is to be judged from the perspective of an objectively reasonable person.

**H. Nonconsensual Sexual Contact:** Any physical contact with another person of a sexual nature without the person's consent. It includes but is not limited to the touching of a person's intimate parts (for example, genitalia, groin, breasts, or buttocks); touching a person with one's own intimate parts; or forcing a person to touch his or her own or another person's intimate parts. This provision also includes "Fondling" as defined by the Clery Act.

**I. Privileged Employees:** Individuals employed by the institution to whom a complainant or alleged victim may talk in confidence, as provided by law. Disclosure to these employees will not automatically trigger an investigation against the complainant's or alleged victim's wishes. Privileged Employees include those providing counseling, advocacy, health, mental health, or sexual assault related services (e.g., sexual assault resource centers, campus health centers, pastoral counselors, and campus mental health centers) or as otherwise provided by law. Exceptions to confidentiality exist where the conduct involves suspected abuse of a minor (in Georgia, under the age of 18) or otherwise provided by law, such as imminent threat of serious harm.

**J. Respondent:** Individual who is alleged to have engaged in conduct that violates this policy.

**K. Responsible Employees:** Those employees who must promptly and fully report complaints of or information regarding sexual misconduct to the Title IX Coordinator. Responsible Employees include any administrator, supervisor, faculty member, or other person in a position of authority who is not a Confidential Employee or Privileged Employee. Student employees who serve in a supervisory, advisory, or managerial role are in a position of authority for purposes of this policy (e.g., teaching assistants, residential assistants, student managers, orientation leaders). Responsible Employees are not required to report information disclosed at public awareness events (e.g., "Take Back the Night," candlelight vigils, protests, "survivor speak-outs" or other public forums in which students may disclose incidents of prohibited conduct).

**L. Sexual Exploitation:** Sexual exploitation occurs when an individual takes nonconsensual or abusive sexual advantage of another for his or her own advantage or benefit, or to the benefit or advantage of anyone other than the one being exploited. Examples of sexual exploitation may include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Invasion of sexual privacy.
2. Prostituting another individual.
3. Nonconsensual photos, video or audio of sexual activity.
4. Nonconsensual distribution of photos, video or audio of sexual activity, even if the sexual activity was consensual.
5. Intentional observation of nonconsenting individuals who are partially undressed, naked, or engaged in sexual acts.
6. Knowingly transmitting an STD or HIV to another individual through sexual activity.
7. Intentionally and inappropriately exposing one's breasts, buttocks, groin, or genitals in

nonconsensual circumstances.

8. Sexually based bullying.

**M. Sexual Harassment:** Unwelcome verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct, based on sex or gender stereotypes, that is implicitly or explicitly a term or condition of employment or status in a course, program or activity; is a basis for employment or educational decisions; or is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive to interfere with one's work or educational performance creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or learning environment or limiting one's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity.

**N. Sexual Misconduct:** Includes, but is not limited to, such unwanted behavior as dating violence, domestic violence, nonconsensual sexual contact, sexual exploitation, sexual harassment, and stalking.

**O. Stalking:** Engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to fear for his or her safety or the safety of others, or to suffer substantial emotional distress. 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.

**P. Reporter:** An individual who reposts an allegation of conduct that may violate this Policy but who is not a party to the complaint.

**Q. Nonconsensual Sexual Penetration:** Any penetration of the vagina, anus, or mouth by a penis, object, tongue, finger, or other body part; or contact between the mouth of one person and the genitals or anus of another person. This provision also includes "Rape, Incest, and Statutory Rape" as defined by the Clery Act.

## **Section II. Reporting Sexual Misconduct**

A complainant of sexual misconduct may, but need not, file a criminal complaint with law enforcement officials, file a misconduct report with a Responsible Employee or the Title IX Coordinator, or both. A report may be filed anonymously, although anonymous reports may make it difficult for the university to address the complaint. Any individual who believes that he or she is a victim of sexual misconduct is encouraged to report allegations of sexual misconduct promptly.

All reports of sexual misconduct alleged to have been committed by a student must be handled consistently with requirements set forth in Appendix B. Section III. Process for Investigating and Resolving Report of Student Misconduct.

All reports of sexual misconduct alleged to have been committed by a non-student member of the VSU community will be addressed and or resolved through the VSU and Board of Regents' applicable policies for discipline of non-students.

## **A. Institutional Reports**

Complainants of sexual misconduct who wish to file a report with the University should notify a Responsible Employee or the Title IX Coordinator, Ms. Selenseia Holmes at (229) 333-5409 or email [saholmes@valdosta.edu](mailto:saholmes@valdosta.edu). Responsible Employees informed about sexual misconduct allegations should not attempt to resolve the situation, must notify and report all relevant information to the Title IX Coordinator as soon as practicable. Both Privileged and Confidential employees are not bound by this requirement but may, consistent with their ethical and legal obligations, be required to report limited information about incidents without revealing the identities of the individuals involved to the Title IX Coordinator. All members of the VSU community are encouraged to report incidents of sexual misconduct promptly.

VSU has Deputy Title IX Coordinators to whom reports may be made, as well. Complainants are encouraged to report their complaints in writing, though oral complaints will also be accepted, taken seriously, and investigated, to the extent possible. While complaints should be made as quickly as possible following an alleged incident of sexual misconduct, all reports will be accepted regardless of when reported.

The Title IX Coordinator shall refer to the System Director any allegation(s) of sexual misconduct that could, standing alone as reported, lead to the suspension or expulsion of the respondent(s). The System Director will work with the institution to determine whether any interim measure(s) are necessary and to assign an investigator who will work under the direction of the System Director or designee, if directed by System Director. If an allegation is not initially identified as one that would lead to the suspension or expulsion of the respondent(s), but facts arise during the course of the investigation that would require transfer to the System Director, the Title IX Coordinator shall transfer oversight to the System Director or designee. The System Director shall have the discretion to retain oversight or transfer oversight to the institution.

## **B. Law Enforcement Reports**

Because sexual misconduct may constitute criminal activity, a complainant also has the option, should he or she so choose, of filing a report with campus or local police, for his or her own protection and that of the surrounding community. The institution may assist the complainant in reporting the incident to law enforcement officials. Complainants considering filing a report of sexual misconduct with law enforcement should preserve any evidence of sexual misconduct, including, but not limited to, the following:

1. Clothing worn during the incident including undergarments;
2. Sheets, bedding, and condoms, if used;
3. Lists of witnesses with contact information;
4. Text messages, call history, social media posts;
5. Pictures of injuries;
6. Videos.

## **C. Anonymous Reports**

Reports of sexual misconduct can be reported anonymously to University Police (229) 333-7816, or the UPD website at:

<https://www.valdosta.edu/administration/finance-admin/police/forms/anonymous-tip-reporting.php>

Anonymous reports can also be made via the Student Conduct Incident Report Form located at <https://publicdocs.maxient.com/incidentreport.php?ValdostaStateUniv> or by contacting the Dean of Students Office at (229) 333-5941, or by contacting the Title IX Coordinator at (229) 333-5409, or [saholmes@valdosta.edu](mailto:saholmes@valdosta.edu).

#### **D. Retaliation**

Anyone who, in good faith, reports what he or she believes to be misconduct under this policy, or who participates or cooperates in, or is otherwise associated with any investigation, shall not be subjected to retaliation. Anyone who believes that he or she has been the target of retaliation for reporting, participating, cooperating in, or otherwise being associated with an investigation should immediately contact the VSU Title IX Coordinator. Any person found to have engaged in retaliation in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action.

#### **E. False Complaints**

Individuals are prohibited from intentionally giving false statements to a system or institution official. Any person found to have intentionally submitted false complaints, accusations, or statements, including during a hearing, in violation of this Policy shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action (up to and including suspension or expulsion) and adjudicated under the student conduct policy.

#### **F. Amnesty**

Individuals should be encouraged to come forward and to report sexual misconduct notwithstanding their choice to consume alcohol or to use drugs. Information reported by an individual during an investigation concerning use of drugs or alcohol will not be used against the particular individual in a disciplinary proceeding or voluntarily reported to law enforcement; however, individuals may be provided with resources on drug and alcohol counseling and/or education, as appropriate.

### **Section III. Addressing Reports of Sexual Misconduct**

#### **A. Supportive Measures**

These services are made available to the complainant and respondent before or after the filing of a complaint or where no complaint has been filed.

Once an individual makes a complaint, receives notice that a complaint has been made against him or her, or the Title IX Coordinator otherwise learns of a complaint of sexual misconduct, the complainant, respondent, and alleged victim (where applicable) will receive written information

about support services, such as counseling, advocacy, housing assistance, academic support, disability services, health and mental health services, and legal services that are available on campus. Students can receive confidential counseling services on-campus through the VSU Counseling Center at no charge. In addition, the VSU Counseling Center can provide direct referrals to community-based organizations that provide additional services and support. Information about support services will be provided regardless as to whether an individual elects to go forward with filing a formal complaint of sexual misconduct or with notifying law enforcement.

Information on support services will also be provided to students and employees regardless of where the alleged misconduct occurs.

### Interim Measures

Interim measures may be taken at any point after the institution becomes aware of an allegation of sexual misconduct and should be designed to protect the alleged victim and the community. Before an interim suspension is issued, the institution must make all reasonable efforts to give the respondent the opportunity to be heard consistent with the provisions in Appendix B, Section III.H. of the Student Code of Conduct.

### **B. Jurisdiction**

Valdosta State University will take necessary and appropriate action to protect the safety and well-being of its community. Accordingly, sexual misconduct allegedly committed by a student will be addressed when such misconduct occurs on University property or at University-sponsored or affiliated events, or off-campus when the misconduct otherwise violates the VSU Student Code of Conduct.

### **C. Advisors**

Both the alleged victim and respondent, as parties to the matter, shall have the opportunity to use an advisor (who may or may not be an attorney) of the party's choosing at the party's own expense for the expressed purpose of providing advice and counsel, pursuant to the provisions the Student Code of Conduct.

### **D. Informal Resolutions**

Allegations of sexual misconduct may be resolved informally, without a determination of misconduct, if **all** of the following are met:

- 1) When complainant(s) and respondent agree to an informal resolution.
- 2) When the initial allegation could not result in expulsion.
- 3) When the complainant(s) and respondent(s) agree to the terms of the informal resolution.
- 4) When the investigator concludes that informal resolution is in the best interest of the parties and the institution's community.

The alleged victim(s) and respondent(s) have the option to end informal resolution discussions

and request a formal process at any time before the terms of an informal resolution are reached. However, matters resolved informally shall not be appealable.

## **Section IV. Investigations of Institutional Reports of Student Sexual Misconduct**

### **A. Investigations**

All sexual misconduct investigations involving a student respondent, whether overseen by the institution's Title IX Coordinator or the System Director, shall follow the investigation process set forth in the Student Code of Conduct. Cases involving an employee respondent will be handled in conjunction with Human Resources.

When investigations are necessary, the Title IX Coordinator will assign an investigator. The parties will be provided with written notice of allegations and investigation (NOAI). The NOAI will contain ALL allegations, definitions of any alleged misconduct defined under Title IX and or VAWA, possible charges, possible sanctions, available support, any interim measures, the assigned investigator's name, and contact information for the Title IX Coordinator. The respondent has the opportunity to admit to or deny any allegations listed in the NOIA. The complainant may respond and submit any supplemental material they might have. Throughout the investigation process, both parties may present witnesses and other inculpatory or exculpatory evidence. Both parties in the matter have the right to have an advisor (who may or may not be an attorney) of their choosing present at all meetings, interviews and hearings. The advisor will provide counsel to their respective party throughout the sexual misconduct process, to include proving questions, suggestions, and guidance, but may not actively participate in the process, except in the case of Title IX matters, which allow for cross-examination. At no time will communication be between advisor and the University, but advisors can be copied on communications at the request of the party they are advising. Timely notice will be given to all parties before any meetings, allowing them the opportunity to inform their advisor. If requested, the University will provide a trained advisor. The University will not pay for legal counsel for any party, even if the other person has retained counsel at their own expense.

The trained investigator will conduct a thorough and impartial investigation, retaining all written notes and any collected evidence. The University utilizes Maxient in order to store all information involved in cases, for the required seven years of retention. Every effort will be made to complete the entire process, from intake to appeal, in 120 days. When delays are necessary, the reason for and the expected timeframe for such delays must be provided to all parties, in writing, by the investigator or Title IX Coordinator. At the conclusion of the investigation an initial report summarizing all gathered statements and relevant evidence will be provided to both the complainant and the respondent, and at their request, their advisors. Parties are allowed 10 days to review and respond to the initial report. If necessary, additional investigation will take place.

The final investigative report will be provided to the complainant, the respondent, and if requested, their advisor. Parties will also receive notice of a hearing (where applicable) 10 days prior to the scheduled hearing date.

### **B. Timeframe**

Efforts will be made to complete the investigation within a reasonable timeframe, which will be determined based upon the allegations, availability of witnesses and/or evidence in a particular case. When the timeframe will extend past the reasonable timeframe, the parties will be informed of the delay and the reason for the delay. The investigator shall keep the parties informed of the status of the investigation.

## **Section V. Disciplinary Hearings, Sanctions and Appeals for Student Sexual Misconduct**

All sexual misconduct hearings, sanctions, and appeals involving a student respondent, whether overseen by the institution's Title IX Coordinator or the System Director, shall follow the investigation process set forth in the Student Code of Conduct. All sexual misconduct adjudication involving an employee respondent will be addressed in conjunction with the Office of Human Resources and utilizing the institution's employment policies and procedures where appropriate.

### **Hearings**

Where a matter is not resolved through informal resolution, a hearing will be held. Sexual misconduct cases are heard by a trained panel of faculty and staff. No sexual misconduct cases are heard by students. In the case of an employee respondent, there may be a hearing panel or a single administrative decision maker.

In all cases (student respondent, employee respondent, Title IX, non-Title IX), notice of the date, time, location, and selected hearing panel members is provided to involved parties. Hearings will be conducted in person and/or via video conferencing technology. All hearings are recorded and maintained for seven years as required. Formal judicial rules of evidence do not apply to the resolution process.

Title IX proceedings allow for cross-examination during a hearing (for student and employee cases). Non-Title IX proceedings do not allow for cross-examination, but still allow parties to confront any witnesses as well as the other party.

In Title IX hearings the parties have the right to confront any witness as well as the other party, by having an advisor of their choice ask relevant questions directly to the witness or other party. The hearing officer is responsible for determining whether or not a question is relevant and must provide an explanation for their determination. In non-Title IX hearings, written questions should be submitted to the hearing officer, who will read relevant questions to the parties. Advisors may assist in drafting questions but will not be allowed to engage in direct cross-examination.

Closing statements may be allowed by the hearing officer prior to the hearing panel or single decision maker retiring for deliberations, which are not recorded. Final determination is made, and the parties are simultaneously provided with a written decision sent via Maxient within three days of said decision, to include the hearing outcome and any resulting disciplinary or administrative actions. The decision must include the allegations, procedural steps taken throughout the investigation and resolution process, findings of facts supporting the determination(s), determination(s) regarding responsibility, and the rationale for any disciplinary or administrative action.



## **Sanctions**

Sanctions for student respondents includes expulsion; suspension for an identified time frame or until satisfaction of certain conditions or both; temporary or permanent separation of the parties- changes in classes, reassignment of residence hall, no-contact orders, limiting geography of where parties can go on campus- with additional sanctions for violating no-contact orders; required participation in sensitivity training/awareness education programs; required participation in alcohol and other drug awareness and abuse prevention programs; counseling or mentoring; volunteering/community service; loss of institutional privileges; delays in obtaining administrative services and benefits from the university-hold transcripts, delay registration, graduation, diplomas-; additional academic requirements relating to scholarly work or research; financial restitution; or any other discretionary sanctions directly related to the violation or conduct.

Sanctions for employee respondents include verbal warnings; coaching; documentation of warning; unpaid suspension; demotion; and/or termination.

## **Appeals**

Either party may choose to submit an appeal. Appeals may be submitted on any of the following grounds: 1.) to consider new information sufficient to alter the decision, or other relevant facts not brought out in the original hearing, because such information was not known or could not have been known to the person appealing, during the time of the hearing; 2.) to allege a procedural error within the hearing process that may have substantially impacted the fairness of the hearing, including but not limited to whether any hearing questions were improperly excluded or whether the decision was tainted by a conflict of interest or bias by the Title IX Coordinator, conduct officer, investigator, decision maker, or; 3.) to allege that the finding was inconsistent with the weight of the information.

Appeals must be submitted in writing within five days of the date of the notification of the hearing outcome and findings, and it must set forth one or more of the bases outlined above. Cases involving a student respondent must submit their appeal to the Vice President of Enrollment and Student Affairs, and cases involving an employee respondent must submit their appeal to the Chief Human Resource Officer. If an appeal is submitted, the other party must receive notice of the appeal, including a copy of the submission. The party may submit, in writing and within five days from the date of notification, a response to the appeal submission. A decision on the appeal can only be rendered once the deadlines for both parties have passed.

The appellate officer will ensure the appeal is a review of the record only. No new meetings or evidence gathering is required. The appellate officer may affirm the original finding and sanction, affirm the original finding but issue a new sanction or greater or lesser severity, remand the case back to any lower decision maker to correct a procedural or factual defect, or reverse or dismiss the case if there was a procedural or factual defect that cannot be remedied by remand. The decision is then final at the University level, but parties have the opportunity to request a discretionary review by the Board of Regents, by submitting such request in writing, within five days of the appellate officer's decision.

## **Recusal/Challenge for Bias**

Any party may challenge the participation of any University official, employee, or student panel member in the disciplinary process on the grounds of personal bias by submitting a written statement to the Title IX Coordinator or his/her designee, setting forth the basis for the challenge. The designee may not be the same individual responsible for investigating or adjudicating the conduct allegation. The written challenge should be submitted within a reasonable time after the individual reasonably should have known of the existence of the bias. The University designee will determine whether to sustain or deny the challenge, and if sustained, the replacement to be appointed.

In furtherance of the University's commitment for non-students, the Office of Human Resources is responsible for managing proceedings for those cases in which an employee is the respondent.

In determining whether the alleged conduct constitutes sexual harassment or assault, the full context in which the alleged incident occurred must be considered. The guidelines concerning filing a complaint and the ensuing procedures can be located at:

<https://www.valdosta.edu/administration/student-affairs/title-ix/reporting.php>

There are a number of sanctions that can be made on the part of the University in these proceedings ranging from probation to expulsion from the University. Those sanctions can be found through the office of Human Resources or the Office of Student Conduct and Title IX.

Title IX of the Educational Amendments Act of 1972 (amending the Higher Education Act of 1965) forbids sexual discrimination, specifically stating that "no person... shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance". The following are examples of types of sex-based discrimination prohibited by Title IX:

1. Sexual misconduct including sexual harassment, sexual assault, rape, intimate partner violence, stalking, and/or bullying occurring in a way that impacts the student's participation in their educational environment, regardless of the location.
2. Discriminatory decision-making by a supervisor of an employee based on the employee's sex.
3. Failure to provide equitable opportunity for participation in intercollegiate sports.

Pursuant to Title IX and its regulations Valdosta State University's Title IX Coordinator is the designated University official with primary responsibility for coordinating the University's compliance with the Title IX and other federal and state laws and regulations relating to sex-based discrimination.

### **Valdosta State University Director of Student Conduct and Title IX:**

Selenseia Holmes  
Student Affairs  
1500 North Patterson St.

Valdosta, Georgia 31698  
(229) 333 -5409

## **SEX OFFENDER REGISTRATION-CAMPUS SEX CRIMES PREVENTION ACT**

The Campus Sex Crimes Prevention Act (CSCPA) of 2000 is a federal law that provides for the tracking of convicted sex offenders enrolled at, or employed by, institutions of higher education. The CSCPA is an amendment to the Jacob Wetterling Crimes against Children and Sexually Violent Offender Act. The federal law requires state law enforcement agencies (Lowndes County Sheriff's Office), to provide Valdosta State University with a Sex Offender Registry which we receive monthly. There is a link to this registry on the University Police web site and the Georgia Bureau of Investigation web side found at:

<http://gbi.georgia.gov/georgia-sex-offender-registry>.

The CSCPA further amends the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) to clarify that nothing in the Act can prohibit an educational institution from disclosing information provided to the institution concerning registered sex offenders.

### **Megan's Law**

Members of the general public may request community notification flyers for information concerning sexually violent predators in a particular community by contacting the Lowndes County Sheriff's Department at 120 Prison Farm Road Valdosta, Ga., 229-671-2900. This information is also available on the Internet at <http://gbi.georgia.gov/georgia-sex-offender-registry>.

## MISSING STUDENT NOTIFICATION POLICY

The Clery Act requires institutions that maintain on campus housing facilities to establish a missing student notification policy and related procedures (20 USC 1092 (j) Section 488 of the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008).

When it is determined that a residential student is missing from the University, staff at Valdosta State University, in collaboration with local law enforcement, will be guided by this Missing Student Notification Policy and related procedures.

### **Provisions**

In accordance with general institutional emergency notification procedures, when a Valdosta State University student is thought to be missing from the campus, staff in the Valdosta State University administration should be immediately notified. Specifically, Vice President for Student Affairs and Director of Public Safety/University Police, should be contacted so that they can coordinate efforts to locate the student. The Vice President of Student Affairs has the authority and the responsibility for coordinating the efforts made by Valdosta State University to assist the student and the student's family.

The Vice President of Student Affairs or designee, or other individual learning that a student is missing, will file a formal missing student report with the Valdosta State University Police or to the local law enforcement agency that has jurisdiction in the geographical areas around the specific campus location. It will be made clear to all students annually, that each residential student of the University has the option to designate an individual to be contacted by Valdosta State University administration no later than 24 hours after the time that Valdosta State University determines the student is missing. Valdosta State University provides each student with the means and opportunity to register their confidential Missing Student contact information. This information is only accessible to Valdosta State University employees who are authorized campus officials, and this information will not be disclosed to others with the exception of law enforcement personnel in the furtherance of a missing student investigation.

In accordance with the Valdosta State University's Missing Student Policy, it should be noted that Valdosta State University notifies each student who is under 18 years of age (and not an emancipated individual), that Valdosta State University is required to contact the student's parents or guardian in addition to the person identified as the missing student contact person. This contact will be made no later than 24 hours after the time that the student is determined to be missing.

In accordance with Valdosta State University procedures, it should be noted that Valdosta State University will inform each residential student that Valdosta State University will notify the appropriate local law enforcement agency when a student has gone missing, unless the local law enforcement agency was the entity that made the determination that the student was missing. This notification will be made no later than 24 hours after the time that the student is determined missing.

If campus law enforcement personnel have been notified that a student has gone missing and makes a determination that a student who is the subject of a missing person report has been missing for more than 24 hours, Valdosta State University staff will initiate emergency contact procedures as outlined in Valdosta State University's policy and protocol.

**Valdosta State University's missing student investigative procedures include the following:**

- Include communication procedures for official notification of appropriate individuals at Valdosta State University that a student has been missing for more than 24 hours.
- Require an official Missing Person Report relating to a Valdosta State University residential student to be referred immediately to the University Police Department.
- If through the investigation of an official report, the University Police determine that a student has been missing for more than 24 hours they will notify the local police; contact those individuals provided by the student as their missing student contact person; and if a student is under 18 years of age and not emancipated their custodial parent(s) or legal guardian(s) will be immediately contacted.

## **DAILY CRIME AND FIRE LOG**

University Police maintains a Daily Crime Log of all criminal offenses (including Arson/Fire) reported to the Police Department. This log individually lists crimes in the order they were received and will contain the type of offense, date, time, general location, and disposition of the incident. The University Police publish the Crime Log Monday through Friday, during business hours. All crimes are added to the Daily Crime Log within 2 business days, except when the disclosure is prohibited by law or would jeopardize the confidentiality of the victim.

Local newspaper, television and radio stations have access to this log and if they deem it newsworthy, they may publish said information.

The most current copy of the Log includes crime data for the previous 60 days and is available at the Records Customer Service window located in the lobby of the University Police Department. Upon request a copy of any Crime Log for the previous 7 years will be made available for viewing within two business days.

## **POLICY GOVERNING ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS**

Federal law requires Valdosta State University to notify all faculty, staff, and students annually of the following:

Valdosta State University prohibits the unlawful possession, use, manufacture or distribution of alcohol or controlled substances by students, faculty, staff, and guests in buildings, facilities, grounds or property controlled by the University or used as part of University activities. For students, this includes prohibiting the possession and consumption of any beverage containing alcohol in a residence hall room except by individuals who are twenty-one years or older. This also includes prohibiting the presences of students under the age of twenty-one in residence hall rooms where alcohol is present unless one of the roommates is 21 years of age or older. In addition, the smoking of any material is prohibited on the campus of Valdosta State University at all locations.

### **Alcohol Policy**

Valdosta State University fully complies with the alcohol laws for the State of Georgia. All state laws apply to VSU students, faculty, staff and visitors while on the campus of VSU. The use of alcoholic beverages, subject to the laws of the State of Georgia may be permitted at Valdosta State University sponsored activities in areas designated and with prior approval.

The written VSU Alcohol policy, as noted in the Student Code of Conduct specifically states:

1. Possession, consumption, or transporting of alcoholic beverages by persons under the age of 21 is prohibited.
2. If a student is under the age of 21 and determined to be under the influence of alcohol, he/she will be referred to the appropriate authorities.
3. A student in a publicly intoxicated state will be referred to the appropriate authorities for disposition.
4. The consumption or possession of alcoholic beverage(s) or possession of an open container of an alcoholic beverage on University property is prohibited in public areas. A public area is defined as any area outside of an individual's living quarters.
5. No student shall furnish or cause to be furnished any alcoholic beverage to any person under the legal drinking age of 21.
6. The serving of alcohol to someone visibly intoxicated and/or the facilitating of drinking games involving the consumption of alcohol is prohibited.
7. Common source containers of alcoholic beverages e.g., beer kegs, hunch-punch, etc., may not be present at any registered University organization event.
8. No alcohol may be purchased with student activity fee funds.

### **Specific Georgia laws concerning above noted prohibitions include:**

- Possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages by persons under the age of 21 (OCGA 3-3-23)
- Driving under the influence of alcohol (40-6-391)
- Possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages in public locations on campus, including residence halls common spaces; Common spaces in residence halls refer to any public space



that exists outside of a specific residential unit. Examples include, but are not limited to group study/lounge spaces, laundry rooms, elevator lobbies, computer rooms etc. Common spaces also include the public spaces located on the outside grounds of a residence hall

- The sale, distribution, or furnishing of alcoholic beverages to persons under the age of 21 (OCGA 3-3-23)
- The use of alcohol in an irresponsible manner (games, contests, forced or ritualized consumption of alcohol, behaviors requiring the response of a University official or law enforcement officer, etc.)
- Providing alcoholic beverages to a person who is intoxicated
- Any activity or conduct involving the use of alcohol that is in violation of law.
- Alcohol is not for sale on Valdosta State University property and all functions which serve alcohol require VSU Police Officers to be present
- Any other abuse of alcohol or drugs is subject to enforcement by VSU Police through federal and state laws pertaining to such violations
- Students 21 years of age and older living on campus are allowed to have alcohol in their residence hall room only for personal consumption.
- Carrying a False I.D. is prohibited under OCGA 16-9-4
- Open Container of Alcohol OCGA 40-6-253
- Public Drunkenness OCGA 16-11-41
- Refusal to take a Chemical Test or other Test as indicated within OCGA 40-6-391 MAY result in the suspension of a driver's license for one year upon first offense.
- Penalties for Alcohol possession and selling violations for Under 21 receive up to 6 months in confinement, \$300 fine, probations and/or Community Service. Providing alcohol to persons Under 21 can result in up to 12 months confinement, \$1000 fine and probation/and or Community Service.

**The University Policy for Alcohol Events pertains to events limited to on-campus events and/or public venue events. General guidelines include:**

- The department/organization (Event Sponsor) seeking to sponsor an event wherein alcohol will be served and consumed must assume direct responsibility for ensuring compliance with Valdosta State University's Alcohol Policy. The event Coordinator is responsible for purchasing alcohol in advance of the event from the campus food service provider or other provider. If the campus food supplier does not supply the alcohol, the Event Coordinator will be responsible for the transportation of the alcohol to the event site.
- The event Coordinator shall be present throughout the event and shall be responsible for the removal of all unopened alcohol from the event site immediately following the event. All opened alcohol will be disposed of immediately following the event by the event caterer.
- Valdosta State University adheres to Georgia's liquor laws and alcohol will be permitted at Valdosta State University only in instances which comply with state and federal law, local ordinances and this policy.
- Alcohol cannot be sold by the campus food service provider or Valdosta State University. Ticket sales for alcohol by the Event Sponsor is allowed upon coordination with the campus food service provider. The service of alcohol is prohibited without the approval of the Vice President to whom the space is assigned.
- No State funds may be used to purchase alcoholic beverages.
- Alcoholic beverages may not be served at any event which is primarily a student event.

- It is the sole responsibility of the Event Coordinator to obtain necessary signatures from the Director of Event Services, the Chief of University Police, and the Event Caterer.
- Event Caterer must have necessary alcohol licenses, supply a certified or licensed bartender and provide beverage set ups. Under no circumstance will self-service be allowed. Access to alcoholic beverages must be through a licensed certified bartender. Under no circumstance will server consume alcoholic beverages.
- Alcoholic beverages are not served to persons under the legal drinking age or to persons who appear intoxicated.
- Non-alcoholic beverages must be available and featured as prominently as the alcoholic beverages.
- A sufficient amount of food that is equal or greater in quantities to that of the alcohol served must be continuously available throughout the event.
- Police officers must be present for any event at which minors and/or 50 guests or more will be in attendance.
- All alcoholic beverages must remain inside the reserved or designated event space during the event.
- On-campus event sites must be reserved through the Office of Event Services or through the Union Reservations Office with a VSU Event Contract.
- The service of alcohol at an event will be limited to two (2) hours unless a special allowance is granted for extended service by the University President. Under no circumstances will alcohol service exceed 4 hours. Alcohol service will end forty-five (45) minutes before the scheduled end of the event unless the event itself is only two hours or less in length.

The Office of Student Affairs and the Counseling Center promote healthy decisions and provide services to students concerned about their alcohol/other drug use and students needing to satisfy judicial or student conduct sanctions. This includes planning, implementing, and evaluating prevention programming aimed at decreasing the negative impact that alcohol and other drugs have on our University community.

### **Controlled Substances**

Valdosta State University fully complies with the State of Georgia Controlled Substances Act and all other local, state, and federal laws governing controlled substances. The University strictly prohibits the illegal use or possession of any controlled substance:

- The possession, use, manufacture, cultivation, distribution, sale, and/or misuse of any controlled or illegal substance, designer drug, or synthetic cannabinoid. Common names: Spice, K2, Demon, wicked, Black Magic, Voodoo Spice, and Ninja Aroma. Individuals found responsible for manufacturing, possessing, importing/exporting, or distributing these substances will face criminal and civil penalties. University students engaging in these activities will also be held responsible under the University's illegal substances policies (OCGA 16-13-32.5).
- The possession and/or use of any drug paraphernalia, i.e. bowls, hookah pipes, bong, "homemade" smoking devices, any other smoking device or smoking paraphernalia (OCGA 16-13-32.3);
- Any activity or conduct involving drugs that is in violation of local, state, or federal law. (Violation of Georgia Controlled Substances Act)

- Possession of Marijuana (OCGA 16-13-30)

**Georgia's 9-1-1 Medical Amnesty Law** provides that any person who in good faith seeks medical assistance for a person experiencing or believed to be experiencing a drug overdose shall not be arrested, charged, or prosecuted for a drug violation if the evidence for the arrest, charge, or prosecution of such drug violation resulted solely from seeking such medical assistance. Any person who is experiencing a drug overdose and, in good faith, seeks medical assistance for himself or herself or is the subject of such a request shall not be arrested, charged, or prosecuted for a drug violation if the evidence for the arrest, charge, or prosecution of such drug violation resulted solely from seeking such medical assistance. Any such person shall also not be subject to, if related to the seeking of such medical assistance: (1) Penalties for a violation of a permanent or temporary protective order or restraining order; or (2) Sanctions for a violation of a condition of pretrial release, condition of probation, or condition of parole based on a drug violation.

**Know the signs:**

- Person is passed out or is difficult to awaken
- Person is cold, clammy, pale, or bluish skin
- Person has slowed breathing
- Vomiting (asleep or awake).

**Know how to help:**

- Turn a vomiting person on his/her side to prevent choking
- Clear vomit from the mouth
- Keep the person awake
- NEVER leave the person unattended
- Call 911 or 259-5555 for medical assistance.

For more information on the risks and consequences of drug and alcohol abuse visit:

<https://www.drugabuse.gov/>.

Employees wishing information on drug or alcohol abuse education programs may contact Employee Development (229) 259-5105 or Health Promotions and Wellness (229) 219-3191. For more comprehensive details, please refer to the University's policy on controlled substances at:

<https://www.valdosta.edu/admissions/financial-aid/documents/drug-free-policy1.pdf>

Students wishing the same information may contact the Health Promotions and Wellness (229) 219-3191, Health Services (229) 333-5886, or the Counseling Center (229)333-5940. The Crime Prevention Unit for University also has material on these subjects.

## ANNUAL DISCLOSURE OF CRIME STATISTICS

Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act (20 US 1092(f)) requires colleges and universities across the United States to disclose information about crime on and around their campuses. The University Police maintains a close relationship with all police departments where Valdosta State University owns or controls property to ensure that crimes reported directly to these departments which involve the University are brought to the attention of the University Police.

The University Police collects the crime statistics disclosed in the charts through a number of methods. Police communications officers and police officers enter all reports of criminal incidents made directly to the department through an integrated computer aided dispatch system/records management system. After an incident report has been reviewed and approved by a supervisor the report is entered into the system where the appropriate classification is entered into the correct crime category. The Department periodically examines the data to ensure that all reported crimes are recorded in accordance with the crime definitions outlined in the FBI Uniform Crime Reporting Handbook and the FBI National Incident-based Reporting System Handbook (sex offenses only). In addition to the crime data that the University Police maintains, the statistics below also include crimes that are reported to various campus security authorities, as defined in this report. The statistics reported here reflect the number of criminal incidents reported to the various authorities. The statistics reported for the subcategories on liquor laws, drug laws and weapons offenses represented the number of people arrested or referred to campus judicial authorities for respective violations, not the number of offenses documented.

### Disclosure of Reportable Crimes

#### Primary Crimes:

**Murder/ Non-negligent Manslaughter** – *defined as the willful killing of one human being by another.*

**Manslaughter by Negligence**– *is defined as the killing of another person through gross negligence.*

**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.

- A. 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 offense includes the rape of both males and females.*
- B. Fondling** — *The touching of the private body parts of another person for the purpose of sexual gratification, without the consent of the victim, including instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent because of his/her age or because of his/her temporary or permanent mental incapacity.*
- C. Incest** — *Non-forcible sexual intercourse between persons who are related to each other within the degrees wherein marriage is prohibited by law.*
- D. Statutory Rape** — *Non-forcible sexual intercourse with a person who is under the statutory age of consent.*

**Robbery** – is defined as taking or attempting to take anything of value from the car, 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** – is defined as 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.

**Burglary** – is the unlawful entry of a structure to commit a felony or a theft.

**Motor Vehicle Theft** – is the theft or attempted theft of a motor vehicle.

**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.

**Unfounded** – This category pertains to cases which have been fully and completely investigated by sworn or commissioned law enforcement personnel who make a formal determination that the report is false or baseless.

## **Hate Crimes**

**Hate Crimes** – includes all of the crimes listed above that manifest evidence that the victim was chosen based on one of the categories of prejudice listed below, plus the following crimes. Hate crimes are defined as criminal offenses that manifest evidence that the victim was intentionally selected because of the perpetrator's bias against the victim.

**Larceny/Theft**—includes, pocket picking, purse snatching, shoplifting, theft from building, theft from motor vehicle, theft of motor vehicle parts or accessories, and all other larceny.

**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.

**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.

**Destruction/Damage/Vandalism or Property (except Arson)**—to willfully or maliciously destroy, damage, deface or otherwise injure real or personal property without the consent of the owner or the person having custody or control of it.

## **Categories of Prejudice:**

**Race** – A preformed negative attitude toward a group of persons who possess common physical characteristics genetically transmitted by descent and heredity which distinguish them as a distinct division of humankind.

**Gender** – *A preformed negative opinion or attitude toward a person or group of persons based on their actual or perceived gender.*

**Religion** – *A preformed negative opinion or attitude toward a group of persons who share the same religious beliefs regarding the origin and purpose of the universe and the existence or nonexistence of a supreme being.*

**Sexual Orientation** – *A preformed negative opinion or attitude toward a group of persons based on their actual or perceived sexual orientation.*

**Ethnicity**- *A preformed negative opinion or attitude toward a group of people whose members identify with each other, through a common heritage, often consisting of a common language, common culture (often including a shared religion) and/or ideology that stresses common ancestry.*

**National origin** – *A preformed negative opinion or attitude toward a group of persons based on their actual or perceived country of birth.*

**Disability** – *A preformed negative opinion or attitude toward a group of persons based on their physical or mental impairments/ challenges, whether such disability is temporary or permanent, congenital, or acquired by heredity, accident, injury, advanced age or illness.*

**Gender Identity**- *A preformed negative opinion or attitude toward a person or group of persons based on their actual or perceived gender identity.*

### **Dating Violence, Domestic Violence, and Stalking (VAWA)**

**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 the relationship, and the frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship. It is not limited to sexual or physical abuse or the threat of such abuse.*

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

- *by a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim;*
- *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 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, 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 jurisdiction in which the crime of violence occurred.*

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

- *(i) Fear for the person's safety or the safety of others; or*

➤ (ii) *Suffer substantial emotional distress.*

*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.*

**The following is a report of the actual crime statistics reported in accordance with the Uniform Crime Reporting procedures and the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act January 1, 2020, through December 31, 2022:**

<u>Crime</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>On Campus -Other</u>	<u>On Campus Residential</u>	<u>On Campus Total</u>	<u>Non-Campus</u>	<u>Public Property</u>	<u>Unfounded</u>
Murder/ Non-Negligent Manslaughter	2020	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2021	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2022	0	0	0	0	0	0
Manslaughter By Negligence	2020	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2021	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2022	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rape	2020	0	2	2	0	0	0
	2021	0	1	1	0	0	1
	2022	4	4	4	0	0	0
Fondling	2020	2	2	2	0	0	0
	2021	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2022	0	0	0	0	0	0
Incest	2020	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2021	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2022	0	0	0	0	0	0
Statutory Rape	2020	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2021	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2022	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sexual Assaults Reported to CSAs- Anonymous Reporting***	2020	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2021	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2022	0	0	0	0	0	0
Robbery	2020	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2021	1	0	1	0	1	0
	2022	1	0	1	0	0	0
Aggravated Assault	2020	1	0	1	0	0	0
	2021	1	0	1	0	0	0
	2022	1	2	3	0	0	0
Burglary	2020	1	4	5	0	0	0
	2021	1	0	1	0	1	0
	2022	2	1	3	0	0	0



Motor Vehicle Theft	2020	1	0	1	0	0	1
	2021	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2022	3	0	3	0	0	0

Arson	2020	0	0	0	0	1	0
	2021	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2022	0	0	0	0	0	0

PLEASE NOTE THERE WERE NO HATE CRIMES REPORTED FOR CAMPUS IN 2020-2021-2022							
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**Campus Arrests:**

<u>Offense</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>On Campus-Other</u>	<u>Residential Facility</u>	<u>On Campus - Total</u>	<u>Non-Campus Building or Property</u>	<u>Public Property</u>
Liquor Law Violations	2020	3	3	6	0	0
	2021	3	2	5	0	0
	2022	0	1	1	0	0
Drug Abuse Violations	2020	25	25	25	0	0
	2021	11	11	22	0	0
	2022	11	4	15	0	5
Illegal Weapons Possession	2020	1	1	2	0	0
	2021	1	0	1	0	0
	2022	2	1	3	0	1

**Disciplinary Referrals:**

<u>Offense</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>On Campus-Other</u>	<u>Residential Facility</u>	<u>On Campus Total</u>	<u>Non-Campus Building or Property</u>	<u>Public Property</u>
Liquor Law Violations	2020	0	17	17	0	0
	2021	1	1	2	0	0
	2022	0	0	0	0	0
Drug Abuse Violations	2020	0	25	25	0	1
	2021	3	15	18	0	0
	2022	1	7	8	0	0
Illegal Weapons Possession	2020	0	0	0	0	0
	2021	0	0	0	0	1
	2022	0	1	1	0	0

**VAWA Amendment Offenses\*\*:**

<u>Offense</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>On Campus- Other</u>	<u>Residential Facility</u>	<u>On Campus- Total</u>	<u>Non-Campus Building or Property</u>	<u>Public Property</u>
Dating Violence	2020	4	3	7	0	0
	2021	0	0	0	0	0
	2022	0	0	0	0	0

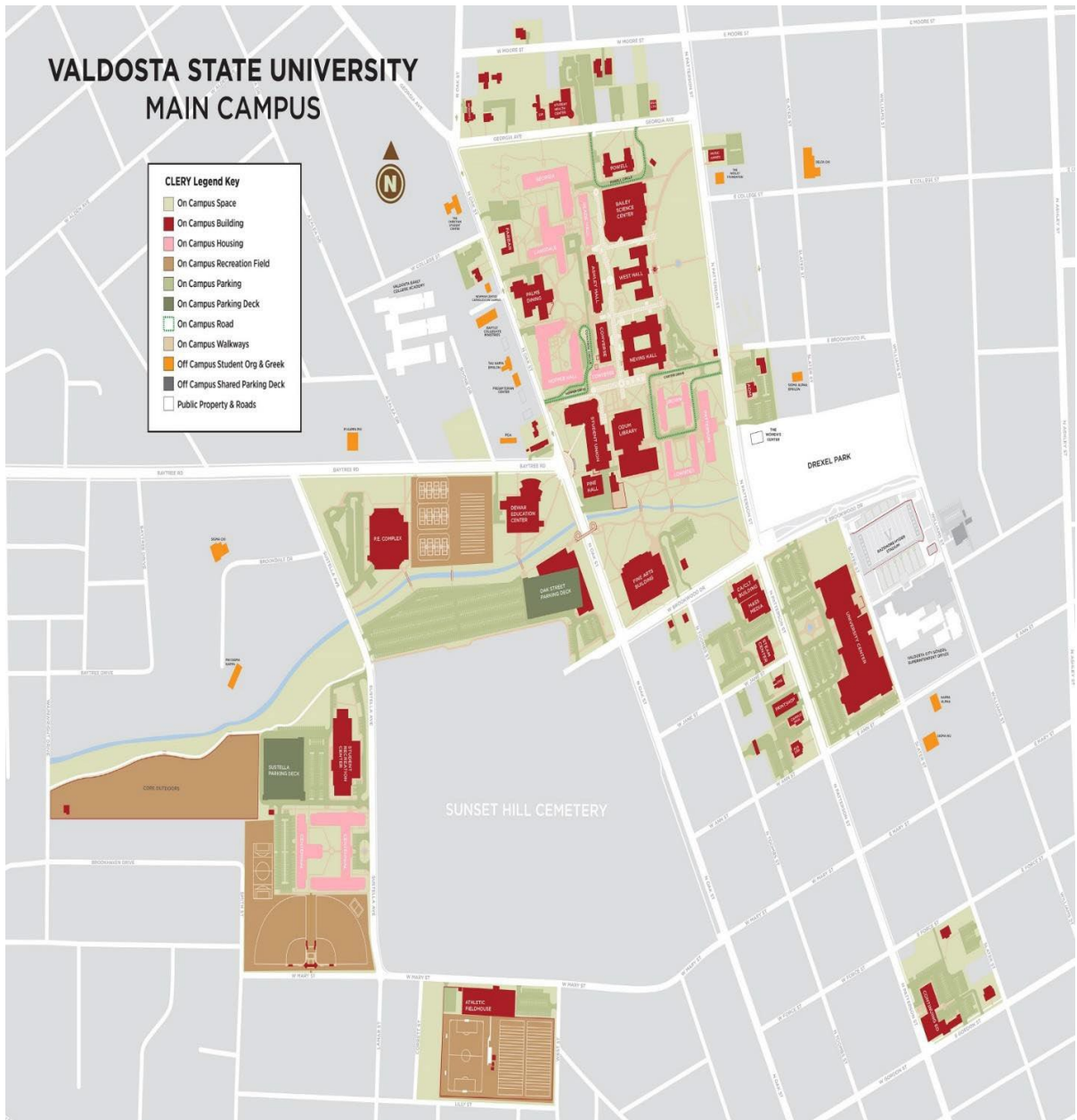
Domestic Violence	2020	1	1	2	0	1
	2021	0	0	0	0	0
	2022	0	1	1	0	0
Stalking	2020	0	0	0	0	0
	2021	0	0	0	0	0
	2022	0	0	0	0	0

**\*\*NOTE THAT THESE STATISTICS INCLUDE INCIDENTS REPORTED BY CAMPUS SECURITY AUTHORITIES**

The university requests the crime statistics from the law enforcement agencies that are responsible for property that coincides with the jurisdictional borders of the University. No reports were received in response to those requests.

# VALDOSTA STATE UNIVERSITY MAIN CAMPUS

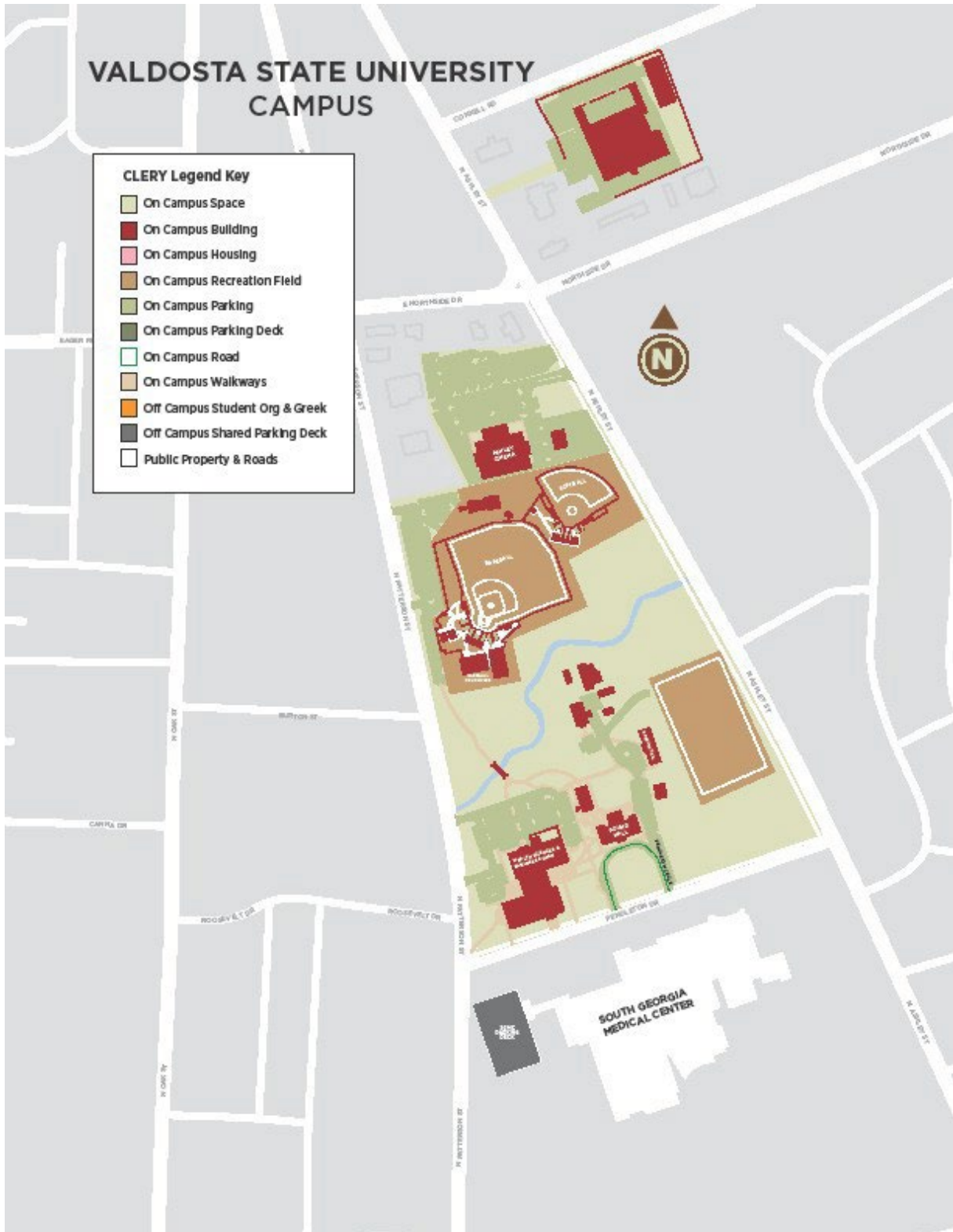
- CLERY Legend Key**
- On Campus Space
  - On Campus Building
  - On Campus Housing
  - On Campus Recreation Field
  - On Campus Parking
  - On Campus Parking Deck
  - On Campus Road
  - On Campus Walkways
  - Off Campus Student Org & Greek
  - Off Campus Shared Parking Deck
  - Public Property & Roads



# VALDOSTA STATE UNIVERSITY CAMPUS

## CLERY Legend Key

- On Campus Space
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## ANNUAL CAMPUS FIRE SAFETY REPORT

The Higher Education Opportunity Act enacted on August 14, 2008, requires institutions that maintain on-campus student housing facilities to publish an annual fire safety report that contains information about campus fire safety practices and standards of the institution. This report details all information required by this act for Valdosta State University.

### General Statement of College Owned/Controlled Student Housing

At Valdosta State University, fire safety is of paramount importance. The Environmental and Occupational Safety Department manages the campus fire safety program in coordination with other departments, such as University Police, Plant Operations, and Housing and Residence Life. Fire alarm systems report to Plant Operations and the University Police Communications Center and are monitored 24 hours per day, seven days per week. Any fire, smoke or suspicious odor condition should be immediately reported by calling 229-259-5555. Never hesitate to report these conditions, even if you are not sure there is a fire. If a fire condition existed but was extinguished, you must still notify University Police. If the emergency number 911 is called directly, make a follow-up call to University Police so they can meet and facilitate the Valdosta Fire Department response.

A fire log for residence hall facilities is maintained in the University Police Department located at 1410 N. Oak Street in the Oak Street Parking Deck. This log can be viewed during normal business hours, from 8:00 am – 5:30 pm Monday through Thursday and 8:00 am – 3:00 pm on Friday. The log records information concerning fires occurring inside a campus residence hall.

### Definitions

The following terms are used within this report. Definitions were obtained from the Higher Education Opportunity Act.

**On-Campus Student Housing:** A student housing facility that is owned or controlled by the institution or is located on property that is owned or controlled by the institution, and is within a reasonable contiguous area that makes up the campus.

**Fire:** Any instance of open flame or other burning in a place not intended to contain the burning or in an uncontrolled manner.

**Fire drill:** Is a supervised practice of an evacuation of a building for a fire.

**Fire-related injury:** Any instance in which a person is injured as a result of a fire, including an injury sustained from a natural or accidental cause while involved in fire control, attempting rescue, or escaping from the dangers of the fire. The term person may include students, faculty, staff, visitors, firefighters, or any other individuals.

**Fire-related death:** Any instance in which a person is killed as a result of a fire; including death resulting from a natural or accidental cause while involved in fire control; attempting rescue; or

escaping from the dangers of a fire; or deaths that occur within 1 year of injuries sustained as a result of the fire.

**Fire safety system:** Any mechanism or system related to the detection of a fire, the warning resulting from a fire, or the control of a fire including: sprinkler or other fire extinguishing systems, fire detection devices, standalone smoke alarms, devices that alert one to the presence of a fire (such as horns, bells, or strobe lights), smoke-control and reduction mechanisms, and fire doors and walls that reduce the spread of a fire.

**Value of Property Damage:** The estimated value of the loss of the structure and contents, in terms of the cost of replacement in like kind and quantity, including contents damaged by fire, related damages caused by smoke, water, and overhaul. However, it does not include indirect loss, such as business interruption.

### **Residence Hall Fire Drills**

Fire drills are conducted in all on-campus residence halls. Each fire drill is a supervised practice of a mandatory evaluation of a building for a fire.

### **University Housing**

Valdosta State University takes fire safety very seriously and continues to enhance its programs to the university community through education, engineering, and enforcement. Education programs are presented throughout the year, so the university community is aware of the rules and safe practices. Housing and Residence Life communicates information regarding fire safety systems, fire drills, evacuations, and other emergency procedures annually to all students during formal hall meetings after move-in.

### **Fire Safety Systems**

Each unit is equipped with smoke and fire alarms for safety to warn residents of smoke or fire. The alarm must be unobstructed at all times for safety purposes. If the smoke detector is so sensitive that it frequently alarms or malfunctions in other ways, contact your RA or a Housing staff member for assistance so that it can be inspected and repaired if needed. Never tape over, cover, or disconnect the smoke alarm or hang anything from a sprinkler head. Violation of this policy will result in disciplinary action.

Your smoke detector is wired to the electrical system. Be sure that the red signal light is blinking upon self-inspection. This lets you know the alarm is working properly and is active. Fire protection systems are tested annually under the supervision of Plant Operations.

Improvements, upgrades, or repairs to fire safety systems are made when tests or evaluations indicate a problem exists. Fire extinguishers are checked monthly and inspected annually by a contractor.

When a fire alarm is activated, the alarm simultaneously sounds at the location of origin and at the University Police Dispatch office, which is staffed 24/7. Officers respond immediately on such an alarm to determine the cause and notify the fire department.

### **Building Evacuation and Training Procedure**

An evacuation of a building is used to move persons out of a building by a pre-designated route (if usable), to avoid a potentially threatening situation. An evacuation renders the entire building unusable until further notice. Evacuate the building every time a fire alarm sounds. Generally, University Police will announce building evacuation instructions.

Any Valdosta State University staff or faculty member may issue an evacuation notification for a classroom or office area. Before a classroom or office can properly evacuate, a safe designated location (assembly area) must be communicated to all students, faculty, and staff.

Prior to emergencies, occupants should identify the location of the nearest exits and fire alarm pull stations, so they are able to initiate an alarm if necessary. To activate the alarm, the handle is pulled until you hear the alarm sound. It may be necessary to break a pane of glass to reach the handle.

Students with disabilities receive individual training with Housing staff within their first day of arrival to ensure they are familiar with evacuation routes and assistance they can expect in the event of an emergency within their personal space.

Mandatory, supervised fire drills, both announced and unannounced, are conducted for each residence hall at the beginning of fall and spring semesters by campus safety officers. Whether an alarm is planned or actual, occupants must exit through the nearest exterior door and walk quickly away from the building. Because a fire can happen at any time, drills are conducted at various times, night and day. Failure to evacuate a building during any fire alarm (planned or actual) will result in judicial action and/or possible arrest. Tampering with any of the fire systems (pull stations, smoke detectors, extinguishers, etc.) will result in judicial action and possible removal from the residence hall and the University.

### **WHAT TO DO IN CASE OF A FIRE OR BUILDING EVACUATION:**

1. Remain calm during any emergency.
2. Locate the nearest fire alarm box and activate the alarm if you discover fire.
3. Immediately contact University Police at 229-259-5555 to report information about the location, type, and extent of the fire or other emergency.
4. Direct persons to go immediately, in a calm and orderly manner, to the assembly area.
5. Consider persons with disabilities that may need assistance evacuating.
6. Individuals with disabilities should exit to the next building or outside by horizontal exit (when available) or otherwise to an enclosed stairway landing (considered an area of refuge). University Police or other emergency personnel will conduct the rescue.
7. Do not take personal items or return to your area for personal belongings.
8. The last person should close doors behind them while exiting to prevent spread of smoke and fire.

9. You may walk briskly, but do not run.
10. Do not go to restrooms.
11. Use stairway or horizontal exit to evacuate.
12. **DO NOT USE ELEVATORS!**
13. If smoke is present, stay low. The best quality air is near the floor.
14. From inside a room, feel the door or knob with the back of your hand. If hot, do not open.
15. Exit the building and go to your designated assembly area.
16. Provide emergency responders with any information you may have about the fire alarm condition, injured persons, or those needing assistance. Report any missing person to University Police along with the location where last seen.
17. Do not return to the building from your assembly area until told do so by University Police.

### **If Trapped:**

1. Wedge wet towels or cloth materials along the bottom of the door to keep out smoke.
2. Try to close as many doors between you and the fire as possible.
3. Use the telephone to notify University Police (229-259-5555) of your problem and location.
4. Be prepared to signal your location through the window.
5. Do not open or break windows unless necessary to alert emergency personnel to your location or to escape.

### **Assembly Areas**

Assembly areas for each building must be a minimum of 100 feet from the building (200 feet is preferred) and must not obstruct emergency access to buildings. Work or class groups should remain together to allow for head counts.

### **Campus Evacuation**

Students who do not have the means to evacuate or who cannot safely evacuate will be directed to community shelters. If a total campus evacuation is needed, assistance will be provided under the Memorandums of Understanding with Lowndes County and the City of Valdosta.

### **Evacuees from Other Locations**

Evacuees from other locations may be provided with shelter at the President's discretion.

### **Fire or Explosion**

If you discover Fire or Smoke remember: R.A.C.E.

**R** Remove/Rescue anyone from immediate danger.

**A** Activate the nearest fire alarm pull station.

**C** Close all doors to confine smoke and fire.

**E** Extinguish/Evacuate.



If the fire is small and you have been trained in fire extinguisher use, you can attempt to extinguish a fire. Never allow the fire to come between you and the exit. Otherwise follow your Evacuation Plan and proceed to the nearest exit and then to the assembly area for the building.

### **If You Catch Fire, Do Not Run!**

**Stop** where you are, **drop** to the ground **and roll** over and over to smother flames.

### **Evacuation Procedure for Persons with Disabilities**

Persons with disabilities who may have difficulty evacuating are individually responsible for informing their supervisors, Housing staff as applicable, and University Police (229-333-7816) of their name, location and the nature of their disability. This information will be given to emergency responders during an emergency situation. The rescue of disabled persons who are unable to evacuate themselves will be an initial priority for responding fire units.

Co-workers may assist in evacuating disabled persons only if this places them in no personal danger but should always ask someone with a disability how they can help before attempting any rescue technique. They should also ask the individual if there are any special considerations or items that need to stay with the person for their health and safety. Mobility- impaired persons in wheelchairs on non-ground-level floors should proceed to the nearest enclosed stairwell and wait for responders to arrive. Someone should stay with the disabled person if it does not place them in additional danger, and someone should meet responding firefighters to report the location of persons still in the building. Visually impaired persons should have a sighted individual guide them to safety. Hearing- impaired persons should be informed of the nature of the emergency by co-workers, other students, faculty, or staff. It should not be assumed that they know what is happening by watching others.

### **Fire Safety Violations and Prohibitions**

Fire safety violations will result in fines, sanctions and possible revocation of the privilege of living in campus housing. Repeat or egregious offenses will result in heavier fines or sanctions and possible suspension or expulsion from the University.

- Covering or tampering with smoke detectors and/or sprinkler heads creates life safety hazards and is strictly prohibited.
- Residents may not have or use candles, incense, Stern, potpourri burners, hookahs or other items that function by burning. Candles may not be present in the room, even for decorative purposes. No flammable liquids such as lighter fluid, kerosene, gasoline, etc., may be stored in rooms.
- Flammable items such as sheets, cloth, fish net, etc., may not be hung or draped from the walls or ceiling. Light fixtures may not be covered with flammable items such as cloth, paper or cellophane.

- No live Christmas trees or live greenery may be used in any building. All decorating materials used on floors where students live must be fireproof.
- Residents and their guests and visitors shall not tamper with the fire alarm system, fire extinguishers, fire hoses, fire doors, residence hall room door closures, red phones, smoke detectors or other fire equipment.
- Residents and their guests and visitors must evacuate the building immediately when a fire alarm sounds. Residents should always take a fire alarm seriously, never assuming that an alarm merely signifies a drill.
- Stairway and hallway fire doors shall be kept closed at all times unless the door uses a hold-open device tied into the fire alarm system that automatically disengages when the alarm is activated. Mandated by the state fire marshal, these closed doors can contain a fire long enough to allow the occupants to escape.
- Residents may not leave items in the hallways.
- Residents shall not use the elevator in the event of a fire or fire drill.
- Residents may not leave an outside door propped open and unattended at any time; this endangers the safety and security of every resident of the building. Under no circumstances may fireplaces be used.

### **Cooking, Appliances, and Kitchens**

Residents should make sure they are aware of all guidelines and restrictions as outlined in the University Housing community guides, which can be found on the Housing website:

<http://www.valdosta.edu/administration/student-affairs/housing/policies-and-procedures/welcome.php>.

All residents are urged to exercise extreme caution when cooking and should never leave anything cooking unattended.

### **Approved Appliances and other items for Traditional University Housing and Suites:**

- Coffee pot with automatic shut-off
- Holiday decorations (Only 2 strands of lights may be strung together)
- Hot pot
- Iron with automatic shut-off
- Power strip – one per resident (Not allowed in the bathrooms or kitchens)
- Toasters

### **Non-Approved Appliances and Other Items for Housing Suites**

- Air conditioning units
- Live (cut) trees (holiday decorations)

- Candles/candle wax burners/open flames
- NuWave ovens
- Charcoal, gas, or open flame grills
- Parachutes
- Deep fryers (gas or electric)
- Personal freezers
- Electric frying pans
- Electrical equipment with exposed wiring
- Personal washer/dryer
- George Foreman-type grills/appliances
- Plug-in air fresheners
- Halogen lamps
- Portable space heaters
- Hookahs
- Potpourri burners
- Incense
- Rope lighting
- Large Flags/Banners
- Slow cookers
- Lava lamps Toaster ovens

**Approved Appliances and other items for University Housing Apartment**

- Coffee pot with automatic shut-off
- Electric griddle
- George Foreman- type grills/appliances
- Holiday decorations (Only 2 strands of lights may be strung together)
- Hot pot
- Iron with automatic shut-off
- Panini press
- Power strip – one per resident – bedroom only (not allowed in the bathrooms or kitchens)
- Power strip – one per living room (not allowed in the bathrooms or kitchens)
- Quesadilla maker
- Rice cooker
- Toasters/toaster ovens
- Waffle Iron

**Non-Approved Appliances and other items for University Housing Apartments**

- Air conditioning units
- Candles/candle wax burners
- Charcoal, gas, or open flame grills
- Deep fryers (gas or electric)
- Electric frying pans
- Electrical equipment with exposed wiring
- Halogen lamps
- Hookahs
- Incense

- Large flags/banners
- Lava lamps
- Live (cut) trees (holiday decorations)

Violation of this policy will result in sanctions as well as possible criminal charges. The violator will then have 2 days to remove the unapproved appliance or item and provide Housing with verification of compliance.

### **Tobacco and Smoke Free Campus**

Effective October 1, 2014, the use of all forms of tobacco products on property owned, leased, rented, in the possession of, or in any way used by the USG or its affiliates is expressly prohibited. "Tobacco Products" are defined as cigarettes, cigars, pipes, all forms of smokeless tobacco, clove cigarettes, and any other smoking devices that use tobacco such as hookahs or simulate the use of tobacco such as electronic cigarettes.

### **Fire Safety Education and Training Programs**

All residence life staff receive fire safety training and are responsible for providing fire safety guidance to students. Prior to the first fire drill of the year, Housing staff members conduct a mandatory hall meeting for students during which evacuation procedures and fire safety rules are reviewed with new and returning residents. Fire safety education/training including fire drills, fire extinguisher use, and general fire safety are available through Environmental & Occupational Safety (229-293-6171).

### **Incident Reporting**

All fire alarms, fires, fire drills and related incidents are documented on Incident Reports. Copies are maintained in our fire safety logbook for easy public access and inspection in the University Police Department office located at 1410 N. Oak Street inside the Oak Street Parking Deck.

### **General Information**

Emergency lighting systems are placed throughout hallways and stairwells of all residence halls and are tested quarterly.

Exterior lighting checks are conducted nightly and exterior doors are checked nightly to ensure they are not propped open. There are emergency phones located around the residence halls.

Each residence hall has a contact point for all emergency responders to report to when alarms are activated. The senior staff member in the residence hall serves as the point person during all emergencies.

Fire extinguishers are located in each building and inside units that have a kitchen. All fire extinguishers are inspected annually. Occupants should become familiar with locations and how they work. Before use, occupants should check the fire extinguisher to assure it is properly

charged (arrow in the green area). To utilize the fire extinguisher for emergency reasons, use the following guidelines:

- P** Pull the pin.
- A** Aim the extinguisher nozzle at the base of the flames.
- S** Squeeze the trigger while holding the extinguisher upright.
- S** Sweep the extinguisher from side to side, covering the fire with extinguishing agent.

Extinguishers must be replaced after use, even if not completely empty. Work orders for replacement or other fire safety issues can be submitted using the “Work Order” link on the Housing website or by calling CGL/Entrata at 229-509-2340. For after-hours non-emergency service, call University Police at 229-333-7816 (Emergencies should be reported to University Police at 229-259-5555).

### **Fire Safety Inspections and Improvements**

Fire protection systems are tested annually under the supervision of CGL in concert with Housing and Residence Life. Improvements, upgrades, or repairs to fire safety systems are made when tests or evaluations indicate a problem exists. Notify Environmental and Occupational Safety whenever you notice damage or a possible problem with fire protection equipment. Each month, Environmental and Occupational Safety staff performs monthly general building fire safety inspections. In addition, Residence Life staff performs resident room inspections twice per semester and once over the summer. Any fire safety violations will be cited and referred for immediate correction. Violators may be judicially referred.

Future plans for fire safety improvements include:

1. Increase the number of training sessions offered for Resident Directors, Community Leaders and student residents.
2. Recognize staff and students who display heroism and exceptional response efforts when responding to emergency situations.
3. Provide education for students and Housing staff regarding violations noted during inspections or fire drills. It is important for staff and students to not only know what needs correction, but to understand why the violation is a problem.

### **Emergency Quick Reference Guides**

Printed copies of the University’s Emergency Quick Reference Guide are available in the office of Environmental & Occupational Safety during normal business hours of Monday – Thursday from 8:00 am – 5:30 pm and Friday from 8:00 am – 3:00 pm. The guide is also available online at [www.valdosta.edu/emergency](http://www.valdosta.edu/emergency).

## Fire Alarm System Overview

Main Campus Residential Facilities:

Bldg. #	Name	Fire Control System	Sprinkler System Wet/Dry	Smoke Detector	Fire Extinguisher
3	Brown Hall	Yes	None	Yes	Yes
4	Patterson Hall	Yes	Wet	Yes	Yes
5	Lowndes Hall	Yes	Both	Yes	Yes
9	Reade Hall	Yes	Wet	Yes	Yes
11	Georgia Hall	Yes	Both	Yes	Yes
12	Langdale Hall	Yes	None	Yes	Yes
15	Hopper Hall	Yes	Wet	Yes	Yes
22	Centennial East	Yes	Wet	Yes	Yes
23	Centennial West	Yes	Wet	Yes	Yes

## Fire Statistics 2020

Valdosta State Residential Facilities	Total Fires In each Building	Date	Time	Cause Of Fire	No. of Injuries that required treatment at a medical facility	No. of Deaths Related to Fire	Value of Property Damage Caused by Fire	Fire Drills
Georgia Hall	0				0	0	0	2
Reade Hall	0				0	0	0	2
Langdale Hall	0				0	0	0	2
Hopper Hall	0				0	0	0	2
Brown Hall	0				0	0	0	2
Patterson Hall	0				0	0	0	2
Centennial Hall	0				0	0	0	2
Lowndes Hall	0				0	0	0	2

**Fire Statistics 2021**

Valdosta State Residential Facilities	Total Fires In each Building	Date	Time	Cause Of Fire	No. of Injuries that required treatment at a medical facility	No. of Deaths Related to Fire	Value of Property Damage Caused by Fire	Fire Drills
Georgia Hall	0				0	0	0	2
Reade Hall	0				0	0	0	2
Langdale Hall	0				0	0	0	2
Hopper Hall	0				0	0	0	2
Brown Hall	0				0	0	0	2
Patterson Hall	0				0	0	0	2
Centennial Hall	0				0	0	0	2
Lowndes Hall	0				0	0	0	2



**Fire Statistics 2022**

Valdosta State Residential Facilities	Total Fires In each Building	Date	Time	Cause Of Fire	No. of Injuries that required treatment at a medical facility	No. of Deaths Related to Fire	Value of Property Damage Caused by Fire	Fire Drills
Georgia Hall	0				0	0	0	2
Reade Hall	0				0	0	0	2
Langdale Hall	0				0	0	0	2
Hopper Hall	0				0	0	0	2
Brown Hall	0				0	0	0	2
Patterson Hall	0				0	0	0	2
Centennial Hall	0				0	0	0	2
Lowndes Hall	0				0	0	0	2