

Sexual Assault Victim's Bill of Rights

- Accuser and accused must have the same opportunity to have others present.
- Both parties shall be informed of the outcome of any disciplinary proceeding
- Survivors shall be informed of their options to notify law enforcement
- Survivors shall be notified of counseling services
- Survivors shall be notified of options for changing academic and living situations.

The United States Congress enacted the "Campus Sexual Assault Victims' Bill of Rights" in 1992 as a part of the Higher Education Amendments of 1992 (Public Law: 102-325, section 486(c)). It was signed into law by President George Bush in July of 1992. The legislation which was originally introduced in May of 1991 by Congressman Jim Ramstad (a Minnesota Republican) has also been referred to as the "Ramstad Act" although this is not an official title.

This law requires that all colleges and universities (both public and private) participating in federal student aid programs afford sexual assault victims certain basic rights. It also requires the school to notify victims of their option to report their assault to the proper law enforcement authorities. Schools found to have violated this law can be fined up to \$27,500 or lose their eligibility to participate in federal student aid programs. Complaints about schools that have failed to comply with this law should be made with the U.S. Department of Education.

The "Campus Sexual Assault Victims' Bill of Rights" exists as a part of the campus security Campus Sexual Assault Victims' Bill of Rights

reporting requirements of the federal law that establishes all student aid programs, the Higher Education Act of 1965. It has not been amended since its enactment, except for a citation change to accommodate 1998 amendments to other requirements found in the campus security section.

The late Frank Carrington, then counsel to Security On Campus, Inc., developed this legislation to combat the re-victimization of rape survivors at college campuses across the country who found that many image-conscious schools were more concerned about protecting their image than seeing justice done. The legislation was also supported by nearly 200 members of the House of Representatives from both political parties led by Rep. Susan Molinari (R-NY) and many students and victims' rights groups.

Statute Text-20 USC § 1092 (f)(8)

(A) Each institution of higher education participating in any program under this subchapter and part C of subchapter I of chapter 34 of Title 42 shall develop and distribute as part of the report described in paragraph (1) a statement of policy regarding--

(i) such institution's campus sexual assault programs, which shall be aimed at prevention of sex offenses; and (ii) the procedures followed once a sex offense has occurred.

(B) The policy described in subparagraph (A) shall address the following areas:

(i) Education programs to promote the awareness of rape, acquaintance rape, and other sex offenses.

(ii) Possible sanctions to be imposed following the final determination of an on-campus disciplinary procedure regarding rape, acquaintance rape, or other sex offenses, forcible or nonforcible.

(iii) Procedures students should follow if a sex offense occurs, including who should be contacted, the importance of preserving evidence as may be necessary to the proof of criminal sexual assault, and to whom the alleged offense should be reported.

(iv) Procedures for on-campus disciplinary action in cases of alleged sexual assault, which shall include a clear statement that--

(I) the accuser and the accused are entitled to the same opportunities to have others present during a campus disciplinary proceeding; and (II) both the accuser and the accused shall be informed of the outcome of any campus disciplinary proceeding brought alleging a sexual assault.

(v) Informing students of their options to notify proper law enforcement authorities, including on-campus and local police, and the option to be assisted by campus authorities in notifying such authorities, if the student so chooses. (vii) Notification of students of options for, and available assistance in, changing academic and living situations after an alleged sexual assault incident, if so requested by the victim and if such changes are reasonably available.

(C) Nothing in this paragraph shall be construed to confer a private right of action upon any person to enforce the provisions of this paragraph.

Implementing Regulations-34 CFR § 668.46 (b)(11)

Annual security report. An institution must prepare an annual security report that contains, at a minimum, the following information:

(11) A statement of policy regarding the institution's campus sexual assault programs to prevent sex offenses, and procedures to follow when a sex offense occurs. The statement must include--

(i) A description of educational programs to promote the awareness of rape, acquaintance rape, and other forcible and nonforcible sex offenses;

(ii) Procedures students should follow if a sex offense occurs, including procedures concerning who should be contacted, the importance of preserving evidence for the proof of a criminal offense, and to whom the alleged offense should be reported;

(iii) Information on a student's option to notify appropriate law enforcement authorities, including on-campus and local police, and a statement that institutional personnel will assist the student in notifying these authorities, if the student requests the assistance of these personnel;

(iv) Notification to students of existing on- and off-campus counseling, mental health, or other student services for victims of sex offenses;

(v) Notification to students that the institution will change a victim's academic and living situations after an alleged sex offense and of the options for those changes, if those changes are requested by the victim and are reasonably available;

(vi) Procedures for campus disciplinary action in cases of an alleged sex offense, including a clear statement that--

(A) The accuser and the accused are entitled to the same opportunities to have others present during a disciplinary proceeding; and

(B) Both the accuser and the accused must be informed of the outcome of any institutional disciplinary proceeding brought alleging a sex offense. Compliance with this paragraph does not constitute a violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g). For

the purpose of this paragraph, the outcome of a disciplinary proceeding means only the institution's final determination with respect to the alleged sex offense and any sanction that is imposed against the accused; and

(vii) Sanctions the institution may impose following a final determination of an institutional disciplinary proceeding regarding rape, acquaintance rape, or other forcible or nonforcible sex offenses.