

# **2025 Public Description of Work for Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education**

**University of Kansas**

## **Confidential Employee Materials**

### **Relevant Rubric Area(s):**

1. Prevention: Audience-specific anti-sexual harassment education
2. Response: Providing anonymous and non-mandatory reporting resources and tools
3. Remediation: Increased or Enhances Confidential Resources and Support Services

### **Description of Work:**

Our Director of Intake, Outreach, and Compliance Ash Wilson, and Assistant Director, Sam Deming, developed these materials to serve confidential employees in understanding their confidential employee designation and mandatory reporter obligations. A base presentation with the intended audience of confidential employees, as well as supplemental resources of two cards were created. The cards are 5"x7", printed on cardstock and provided at OCRTIX in-person tabling events and presentations.

In totality, these resources connect to two Office of Civil Rights & Title IX (OCRTIX) sponsored policies: [Mandatory Reporting](#), and [Sexual Harassment](#). The materials are also connected to the office's grievance processes: [Hearing Procedures for Complaints of Sexual Harassment](#) and [Title IX Resolution Process](#).

### **Purpose and Goals:**

Collectively, the purpose and goals of these three resources are to help confidential employees understand their changing status of mandatory reporters and confidential employees based upon the context of a disclosure of sexual harassment. Additionally, the cards are intended to supplement the presentation, allowing confidential employees to refer complainants to our office in order to self-report an incident, if they choose to do so.

The materials were designed utilizing KU's newly released branding expectations (2025), which helps the community to recognize the legitimacy of the resource.

Individually, the purpose and goals of the individual materials are outlined below:

#### **Confidential Employee Presentation & Confidential Employees & OCRTIX card**

A purpose of this presentation and card are to assist confidential employees (specifically health care providers) with understanding their roles as a mandatory reporter and confidential employee. Our university has a medical campus, student health services, and various offices offering therapy to students. These professionals are often accustomed to engaging in privileged communication and/or doctor/patient privilege (i.e., only engaging in mandatory reporting when pertaining to child/elder abuse or imminent homicidal or suicidal behaviors). Because of this professional standard, the mandatory reporting policy and requirement for the university can be largely unknown. Based on the confusion between their professional privileged communication and their mandatory reporting obligations, we learned confidential employees, as a whole, were misunderstanding their role and obligation to the

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university and its constituents. The presentation and card act to provide clarifying information and reminders about their obligations while respecting the classification of confidential employee when appropriate.

Another purpose of the presentation and card was to help inform confidential employees of our process and procedure. In the past, we believe the confidential employees believed they never needed to report anything to our office. Because of that, they also did not learn our office's procedures/process. Given confidential employees do not have to report to our office when they receive information through their privileged role, it is important they be able to communicate our office's role directly to the complainant. This lack of knowledge created a gap in referral opportunities. The presentation and accompanying cards help provide complainants with an understanding of our office without having to report to us or through a mandatory reporter.

The presentation was created to serve KU's One University mission, being applicable to all KU campuses. Given this, there are duplicate slides with tailored content for each respective campus/population.

### **Consider Self-Reporting: Access to Options**

The purpose of this card is to help confidential employees provide referral information to complainants who have disclosed sexual harassment in a confidential situation (therapy, medical appointment). In respecting and honoring the confidential employee's role, our office felt it important to equip confidential employees with referral information to our office in the event they receive reports. This card provides an overview of our processes. This card, however, also includes the benefits of reporting, and talks more about the office's trauma-informed approach and network of resources. The goal is to increase transparency so complainants can make informed decisions about if they self-report to our office.

### **Assisting Peer Institutions for Adaptation:**

The creation process was largely described in the purpose and goals section for each resource. I do not believe confidential employee's understanding of reporting obligations are specific or unique to our institution. Because of this, I believe they will be highly applicable to other institutions.

Things to consider for adapting this work at peer institutions:

- The nuances of your mandatory reporter policy, and exceptions that may exist/what constitutes a confidential employee.
- What imagery can you use to convey nuances?
- What relationship do you have with your confidential employees/their units?

### **New/Novel/Particularly Impactful:**

New work: These materials are all new, and the cards are part of a larger new series of informational cards. Intake Specialist Sam Deming started in our office in July of 2024. Sam holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts and is a talented designer. Combining their skill with staff's knowledge, Ash and Sam developed these materials over the past year.

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Novel work: The materials are novel in that the intended audience is exclusively Confidential Employees. Confidential Employees are a very small amount of staff members, and because they are often exempt from reporting, often do not receive much attention in terms of education on mandatory reporting. They are also novel in that they combine a presentation with supplemental information of the cards. The cards allow confidential reporters, and students disclosing to confidential reporters, the ability to refer to materials and processes of our office.

**Particularly Impactful or Effective Work:** After our first distribution of the materials to confidential employees, we received feedback from that audience that they appreciated the tailored information and it was beneficial to have readily available. In building strong relationships between our office and student health services, conversations arose pertaining to reporting obligations. In those conversations, it became clear there was confusion regarding reporting. The materials were developed in response to this conversation, and were presented to various units. After presenting, all units stated the materials were effective and helpful in addressing the confusion.

The materials are also impactful and effective in that they provide referral information to our office from a source that cannot report to our officer per the mandatory reporter policy. This resource provides support to both the employee and the student.

### **Current Status of the Work:**

The materials are active. We have presented to approximately 65 confidential employees and distributed the cards to supplement the presentation. The materials are also posted to our website to ensure they are available as needed to the necessary audiences.

### **Evaluation:**

The materials are continually evaluated through the feedback received after presentations are delivered through a formal assessment as well as anecdotal feedback. Audiences have received the materials well and have referred other units containing confidential employees to attend.

### **Next Steps:**

Staff are establishing relationships with other units containing confidential employees in order to build trust and communicate information about their roles. Staff are aiming to present to other units in Spring 2026 and as requested.

**Website for further information (if applicable):** <https://civilrights.ku.edu/collection-materials>

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