



COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Andy Beshear
GOVERNOR

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Dear Kentucky Colleges and Universities:

Team Kentucky believes everyone has the right to feel safe, whether they are a student on a college campus or employee in the workplace.

As the largest employer in Kentucky, we take this responsibility seriously. Upon taking office, we strengthened workplace protections for more than 30,000 state employees by:

- Mandating “Sexual Harassment Prevention” training for all employees. To emphasize the importance, it begins with a message from me stressing that maintaining a safe and supportive work environment for all team members is a top priority for Team Kentucky.
- Developing an Executive Branch Harassment Reporting Procedure, which requires notice to the agency’s Legal Office, Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Coordinator, and Human Resources (HR) within 24 hours after a complaint is made.
- Conducting annual workplace investigations training with agency HR, Legal, and EEO.
- Training employees that criminal allegations generally require involvement of law enforcement, including allegations of physical assault, sexual assault, or stalking.
- Training employees in bystander prevention methods.

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Recent disturbing events on university campuses nationwide have demonstrated the importance of having in place stronger policies and protocols to help combat sexual violence and protect individuals. In some situations, the chosen policies have fallen short, showing that when these measures are not comprehensive the issues will persist or lead to untenable outcomes.

Today, I am calling on all Kentucky colleges and universities to conduct a rigorous review of their policies and practices related to sexual assault and harassment over the next 90 days. As part of this review, universities and colleges should, at a minimum, examine awareness campaigns, ease of access to resources, reporting steps, victim services, due process, bystander prevention, education about retaliation, and any resulting appropriate action. Once complete, I am urging all institutions to release the results of their reviews, including their latest policies and procedures to combat sexual assault and harassment, so every person in Kentucky will know that higher education also prioritizes the safety of students on their campuses.

Under KRS 164.020, I am also requesting the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education to use its authority to ensure members of university boards are educated in the university's sexual harassment policies and procedures, including best practices related to reporting and conducting investigations.

This letter is not meant to suggest that your institution has not endeavored to put good policies in place. Instead, it is an acknowledgment we should always be looking to improve and do better, especially when it involves the safety of our students. Working together we must create learning environments where everyone feels free and safe to pursue their education.

Sincerely,



Andy Beshear
Governor