

# 1.21 RESPONSIBLE ACTION PROTOCOL

## I. Scope

As a Catholic, Jesuit university, Saint Louis University (SLU) strives to create an atmosphere that supports the holistic development of its Students. For the University and its Students to thrive, we all must share the responsibility to create a community that protects both individuals and property from harm.

The University recognizes that, at times, it can be a challenge for Students to make decisions that demonstrate responsibility as it pertains to living in community with others. At times, Students may find themselves facing an ethical dilemma. Sometimes, a series of poor choices leads to a situation that results in alcohol intoxication, drug overdose, sexual misconduct, or physical assault, and a Student is in serious need of medical treatment or professional assistance. A companion of the "Endangered Student" or a witness may be afraid to seek help for fear of disciplinary repercussions. The purpose of this protocol is to provide guidance and encouragement for an "Assisting Student" to act in ways that help and care for the "Endangered Student."

In situations where Students seek appropriate help, Saint Louis University considers such actions, first and foremost, as responsible health and safety interventions. The University has accepted the following Responsible Action Protocol, which it hopes will help alleviate Students' concerns about seeking help for Endangered Students and therefore promote responsible action on the part of all Students.

## II. Definition of Terms

For the purposes of this protocol, the following definitions apply:

**"Assisting Student":** any Student trying to assist an "Endangered Student" by seeking help.

**"Endangered Student":** any Student whose physical or mental safety is impaired and is in need of emergency medical assessment and possibly treatment or other professional support and assistance. The sources of impairment may be, but are not limited to, alcohol poisoning, drug overdose, sexual assault, or physical assault.

## III. Purpose

The Responsible Action Protocol (RAP) is intended to encourage Students to act as concerned citizens of the campus community by helping Endangered Students seek the assistance they may need. In situations where a Student may need help due to a possible alcohol or drug overdose, this protocol encourages responsible Students to assist Students whose lives may be endangered. Because Students sometimes have concerns about calling for immediate emergency assistance due to a fear of "getting in trouble", the RAP attempts to eliminate altogether, or at least lessen, a disciplinary response for Students involved in an Endangered Student situation.

## IV. Protocol

In situations where Students, who act in good faith to seek help for Endangered Students, may not face disciplinary violations relating to alcohol or drug policies as outlined in the Community Standards. When it has been determined that the Assisting Student acted responsibly and demonstrated an appropriate response, no formal university disciplinary

sanctions involving alcohol or drug use by the Assisting student will be accrued. The University will strive to balance the Assisting Student's actions against the series of choices that led to the emergency situation. In most cases, the Assisting Student will not be charged with any Community Standard violations. In other cases, when the Assisting Student's actions prior to seeking help negatively contributed to the Endangered Student's situation, some educational requirements (i.e. drug/alcohol assessment, reflection paper, counseling, etc.), may be imposed.

Without question, when an Assisting Student acts responsibly to assist an Endangered Student, such actions will be viewed positively by the University when determining whether any conduct actions, including parental notification, are required. For more information about parental notification, refer to the University's Community Standards, 2.7. It is important to note that all incidents reported on campus are documented and that educational, community, and health interventions may be required for Students involved in an incident involving an Endangered Student. In cases where serious or egregious incidents have occurred (particularly those involving severe injury, assaults, and damage, etc.), Assisting Students may be held accountable with formal Community Standards action(s), but the University will consider an Assisting Students' efforts to summon aid as a mitigating factor when determining any sanctions.

Helping an Endangered Student does not provide the Assisting Student with blanket amnesty. Students who demonstrate consistent and repeated patterns of engaging in at-risk behaviors or who have contributed to an Endangered Student's condition may be subject to disciplinary action, medical review and/or treatment. Failure to complete requirements or sanctions may be treated as a conduct matter by the Office of Student Responsibility and Community Standards. The RAP does not preclude or prevent action by police or other legal authorities. Students may be held accountable for misconduct and/or damages accompanying the use and/or abuse of alcohol or other substances.

An Endangered Student who calls for assistance for themselves will receive similar consideration under this policy as an Assisting Student. Students' health and wellness are of utmost importance and concern. Perceived potential disciplinary action should not preclude one from seeking medical or mental health assistance. An Endangered Student who calls for assistance may still be required to complete certain educational, restorative, or wellness related outcomes, however; each situation will be viewed in its unique context and will be addressed on a case-by-case basis consistent with this policy and the Community Standards.

Students who fail to take responsible actions in emergency situations void all protections under the RAP and may be held responsible for contributing aggravating factors in a Community Standards proceeding. Failure to act responsibly may lead to serious consequences when such failure to act results in a violation of University rules, regulations, or policies.

In a situation involving imminent threat or danger to the health or safety of any individual(s), Students are generally expected to:

1. **Call** emergency officials (DPS) at (314) 977-3000 and/or to report the incident to a Housing and Residence Life staff member (if the situation is in or around a residence hall or apartment community),
2. **Stay** with the individual(s) needing emergency response so long as it is safe to do so, and cooperate with emergency officials,

3. **Cooperate** with appropriate University officials after the incident by meeting with them to provide identification and eyewitness testimony, debrief the incident, and assist with any University investigation after the incident.

Remember: **Call. Stay. Cooperate.**

## V. Frequently Asked Questions About Responsible Action Protocol

### What is the Purpose of the Responsible Action Protocol (RAP)?

The Responsible Action Protocol (RAP) is designed to encourage Students to help other Students. In situations where an Endangered Student may need medical attention or professional intervention due to a possible alcohol or drug overdose, this protocol recognizes and supports responsible Students who seek help on behalf of other Students. It is the University's hope that this protocol will reduce an Assisting Student's concerns about calling for immediate emergency assistance by eliminating or lessening the University's disciplinary response for Students involved in the situation.

### If Students Follow the RAP Does That Mean That No Conduct Action is Taken?

In many cases, the answer is yes; however, Assisting Students may be required to meet with University official(s) and complete educational or developmental exercises. For example, Assisting Students may be asked to complete an alcohol/drug assessment or write a reflection paper.

In cases where more serious or egregious incidents have occurred (particularly those involving severe injury, assaults, damage, etc.), Assisting Students may still be subject to formal conduct action, but the University will consider the Students' efforts to summon aid as a mitigating factor when assessing possible sanctions.

### Does This Protocol Protect the Endangered Student From Sanctions?

The RAP seeks to reduce an Assisting Student's concerns about calling for immediate emergency assistance by eliminating or lessening the University's conduct actions for Students involved in the situation. In situations where help is sought, a Student's decision to seek help will be considered favorably and will be considered in any decision to pursue possible conduct action.

### What Records are Kept Regarding Incidents Involving the Responsible Action Protocol?

The Office of Student Responsibility and Community Standards (OSRCS) maintains Student disciplinary records. In accordance with the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and University Policy, in most circumstances, information from a Student's disciplinary record may only be shared with others when the Student has given consent to do so. If you act in accordance with the RAP and no conduct action is taken by the OSRCS, information about the incident in question will not be part of your Student disciplinary record. If you are a witness and your name is in the incident report involving another Student, your name will be redacted from that record prior to the record being shared unless the request is made via a subpoena.

### Is There a Limit to the Number of Times the Responsible Action Protocol Can Be Used?

Students are always encouraged to look after and care for their friends and peers, and are expected to take responsible actions at all times. The OSRCS will inquire if it appears a Student is abusing the RAP in order to avoid being held accountable for actions that are in violation of the Community Standards. In addition, a Student who demonstrates consistent and repeated patterns of such behavior may require further assessment and/or intervention. Failure to complete such referrals will be treated as a conduct matter.

### Will My Family Find Out?

Possibly, but not necessarily. The University reserves the right, consistent with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), to contact parents or guardians when Students under the age of 21 have violated University policies regarding alcohol or drugs or where there is a health or safety emergency. As stated previously, the goal of the RAP is to help reduce Students' apprehensions about seeking help for an Endangered Student because of their concerns about possible conduct action being taken by the University as a result of their actions. It is the University's hope that the RAP will reinforce to Students that they should always take responsible action to assist an Endangered Students and that by doing so, the University is less likely to take any punitive action against them or notify their parents.

### Does the Responsible Action Protocol Protect Students From the Police or Legal Action?

No. The Responsible Action Protocol only applies to University conduct action; it does not prevent or preclude police or other legal actions.

### Does the Responsible Action Protocol Cover Student Clubs/Organizations, Fraternities, and Sororities?

Yes, in certain situations. Student clubs/organizations, including fraternities and sororities (herein referred to as "Student groups"), are held to a high standard, and following the RAP should not be construed as a way for a Student group to avoid conduct actions altogether. Responsible behavior does help the cause of the Student group and is a factor in determining sanctions.

Student groups are expected to incorporate the RAP into their risk management plans, and thus always comply with the Responsible Action Protocol. The University will therefore deem the failure of a Student group to comply with the RAP as an egregious factor when determining conduct actions or sanctions.

### What is Alcohol Poisoning?

Alcohol poisoning is another term for an alcohol overdose, when individuals consume so much alcohol that their bodies can no longer process it quickly enough. Alcohol poisoning and overdoses are potentially lethal; the human body simply cannot tolerate or process excessive amounts of alcohol.

### What are the Signs or Symptoms of Alcohol Poisoning or Overdose?

The signs of alcohol poisoning and overdose include (not all of these need to be present in any affected individual):

- Confusion or stupor
- Vomiting
- Seizures

- Slow, irregular or abnormal breathing
- Cold, clammy, pale or bluish skin
- Loss of consciousness: Inability to rouse a person with shouts or shaking (unconscious) or inability of a person to remain awake for more than a few minutes or to carry on a coherent conversation when awake (semi-conscious). A person who has lost consciousness and cannot be roused is in danger of dying. Help is needed immediately.

### **How Do I Aid a Friend Who Might Be Experiencing Alcohol Poisoning or Overdose?**

**First**, call (314) 977-3000. If you are in a residence hall, also call or send someone else to notify your RA or the RA on duty, **but don't leave the person alone**.

**Second**, stay with the person needing assistance until emergency help arrives. During this time, here are some additional pieces of advice:

- **DO**: Turn the person on their side to prevent choking if the person vomits.
- **DO**: Be prepared to tell emergency personnel as much information as possible, such as the amount and type of alcohol or substances consumed and how much time has elapsed since the Endangered Student began exhibiting symptoms.
- **DO NOT**: Leave the person alone.
- **DO NOT**: Leave the person on their back.
- **DO NOT**: Try to make the person vomit.
- **DO NOT**: Try to get the person to eat or drink anything, even water. (In cases of alcohol poisoning, the stomach is already severely irritated and cannot handle anything else.)
- **DO NOT**: Put the person in a cold shower. (This will not lower a person's blood alcohol content and could cause shock.)

**Third**, after the help arrives, be prepared to meet with University officials to address the events that led to this situation.