

Annual Security & Fire Safety Report



Choose Your Direction

OFFICE OF SAFETY & SECURITY

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Office of Safety & Security

The Office of Safety and Security is responsible for security and emergency response on all Gadsden State Community College campuses. Safety and Security (which includes security, mail, transportation, Alabama Department of Emergency Management reporting, severe weather monitoring, residence hall, and switchboard services) is an important component of the educational environment at the College.

To achieve the highest degree of safety and security at all campuses, centers, and sites, we encourage community members to recognize the importance of following good safety practices. They should also understand that safety is their responsibility, not just that of those officially charged with enforcing the laws, policies, and rules. This includes using the escort service available by calling the duty (security) number posted on each campus, locking valuables, and reporting suspicious or criminal activities. We take a leadership role by providing educational programs on campus safety, patrols, incident investigation and reporting, fire safety and prevention, and crime prevention.

Our officers receive training in security and emergency care. The College has a Campus Safety Committee, whose mission is to ensure that appropriate health and safety standards are maintained and that the appropriate Federal and State statutes are observed.

Policy for Reporting the Annual Disclosure Crime Statistics

The Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Crime Statistics Act is a Federal law that requires institutions of higher education in the United States to disclose campus security information including crime statistics for the campus and surrounding areas. To comply with the Act, our office is responsible for gathering crime statistics and providing safety information to all students, staff, faculty, visitors, and prospective students. We collect the crime statistics from all of our campuses and from the local law enforcement agencies that have campuses located within their jurisdictions. For statistical purposes, crime statistics reported to any of these sources are recorded in the calendar year the crime was reported. A copy of the crime statistics for the most recent three calendar years is located on our web site at <http://www.gadsdenstate.edu/college-info/pdf/crime.pdf> and copies may be obtained from our office.

Crime Reporting, Emergencies, and Timely Warnings

Numerous and diligent efforts are made to advise members of the campus community about crime-related problems. The College's duty to inform students of threatening situations is taken seriously, and as a result, information related to crime and criminal activity is provided in an accurate and timely fashion. Because awareness is essential to effective crime reduction, we will release information that can be used by students and other College community members to reduce their chances of becoming

victims. We will issue timely warnings or safety alerts to campus community members informing them of incidents/crimes affecting the College community and/or surrounding property. This information is disseminated to the College community members via use of electronic mail messages, electronic sign, informational flyers posted at highly visible locations throughout campus, Cardinal Alert, crime prevention presentations by Safety and Security personnel, Freshman Focus, all campus orientations, and on-line orientations required of all students. Cardinal Alert is an emergency notification service that will allow us to contact all enrolled students and employees via cell phone, text message, home phone, and e-mail. For follow-up emergency information to the College community, all of the above media to include postings on our web site, television, and radio will be utilized.



To report a crime or emergency, members of the community should call your campus security number **or** 911. We have the ability to notify county emergency dispatchers regarding emergencies occurring on campus. Criminal activity can also be reported to persons in the following positions on each campus: President, Vice-President, Dean of Financial and Administrative Services, Dean of Technical Education and Workforce Development, Dean of Instructional Services, Assistant to the Dean of Student Services and Coordinator of Student Activities, Dean of Health Sciences, Associate Dean of Student Services/Director of Counseling Services, Academic and Vocational Division Chairs, Campus Directors, Director of Safety and Security, Residence Hall Director, Safety and Security Employees, Athletic Director, and Team Coaches.

It is the duty of all students and employees to report promptly all on-campus crime and suspicious activities to us. The College operates no off-campus housing and does not have off-campus student organizations. While off campus, students and employees are encouraged to contact the local police department. Security officers have no arrest authority beyond that of an ordinary citizen; however, they may address offenses and refer them to the local law enforcement authorities. We have a good working relationship with the local law enforcement authorities where campuses are located. They conduct all of our formal investigations of traffic and criminal activity. We operate under a clear mutual agreement with all local law enforcement agencies.

If you are the victim of a crime and do not want to pursue action through the College or the criminal justice system, you may still want to consider making a confidential report. With your permission, the Office of Safety and Security can file a report on the details of the incident without revealing your identity. The purpose of a confidential report is to comply with your wish to keep the matter confidential, while taking steps to ensure the future safety of yourself and others. With such information, our office can keep an accurate record of the number of incidents involving students, faculty, staff, and visitors; determine where there is a pattern of crime with

regard to a particular location, method, or assailant; and alert the campus community to potential danger. Reports filed in this manner are counted and disclosed in the annual crime statistics for the College. We do not have counselors who are not required to report crimes for inclusion in our crime statistics. Students may contact the Vice President for information on local agencies and counseling services who may provide confidential counseling services. Faculty/staff may contact the Human Resources Department for information regarding confidential counseling services.

Emergency Response and Evacuation Procedures

The College has established procedures to immediately notify the campus community upon the confirmation of a significant emergency or dangerous situation involving an immediate threat to the health or safety of students or employees occurring on campus. These procedures provide for rapid notice to local law enforcement and senior administration to evaluate and confirm an emergency or dangerous situation and if confirmed, for some persons to determine the appropriate segment or segments of campus to be notified and the content of the notification.

In the event of a serious incident that poses an immediate threat to members of the College community, the College has various systems in place for communicating information quickly. Some or all of these methods of communication may be activated in the event of an immediate threat to the College community. These methods of communication include Cardinal Alert which is our emergency notification system which utilizes voice messages to phone numbers, text messages to cell phones, e-mail messages, and using faculty and staff to communicate verbally.

The College will, without delay, and taking into account the safety of the community, determine the content of emergency/dangerous situation notifications and initiate the notification system, unless issuing a notification will, in the professional judgment of responsible authorities, compromise efforts to assist a victim or to contain, respond to, or otherwise mitigate the emergency. The dissemination of emergency information to the larger community shall be coordinated by the Office of the President and the Director of Public Relations.

Following are the titles of the persons responsible for carrying out the actions/procedures described in the above paragraphs: President, Dean of Financial and Administrative Services, Vice President, and Director of Safety and Security.

To better prepare in the event of an emergency situation, the College tests the emergency notification process once during each calendar year with the entire campus community.

Fire Safety Policy

Fire Safety is of paramount importance. Our department manages the campus fire safety program. Fire alarm systems report to Safety & Security and are monitored on a 24-hr basis on and off site. Anyone may report an incident of fire to the Director of Safety & Security, Residence Hall



Director, or any Safety & Security Employee.

A fire log for residence hall facilities is maintained in the Security residence hall office located in Fowler Hall. It may be viewed anytime during business hours, Monday through Friday. The log records information concerning fires occurring inside Fowler Hall. A copy of the fire statistics for the most recent three calendar years is located on our web site at <http://www.gadsdenstate.edu/college-info/pdf/Fire%20Safety%20Report.pdf>.

Fire drills are held in Fowler Hall once per semester. All residents and guests are required to evacuate when an alarm is activated. During a fire alarm, evacuate the building by using stairs and moving away from the building a distance equal to the approximate height of the building. Do not block parking or service road and entrance areas, as emergency responders may need these. Drills will be evaluated for their effectiveness by Safety & Security staff. The College conducts fire drills in other buildings annually. In the future, the present individual room fire alarm system will be upgraded.

Each resident receives a copy of the Policy and Procedures and Lease Agreement. It contains information concerning evacuation procedures, fire safety, prohibited items, and fire equipment. Smoking and any type of open flame is not permitted within Fowler Hall. This includes candles, incense, or any type of open flame. Residents should consult our staff if they have a question about any appliance. Dorm Residents are required to attend a detailed orientation each semester to include mandatory viewing of a fire safety DVD.

Missing Persons Policy

The Higher Education Act requires that all institutions that provide on-campus student housing must establish a missing student notification policy and procedures. The following apply to residents at Fowler Hall:

- Each resident will have the option to register a confidential contact person to be notified in the case that the student is determined to be missing.
- Only authorized campus officials and law enforcement officers may have access to this information.
- Even if a student has not registered a contact person, local law enforcement will be notified that the student is missing.
- The parent or guardian of a student less than 18 years of age and not emancipated must be notified in the event of a missing person investigation.
- A missing student report will be filed with campus security and/or local law enforcement once it is determined that a student has been missing for 24 hours or less.

Sexual Assault Prevention Program and Procedures

In the event of sexual assault, a variety of campus and area resources are available to victims. The College supports the victim's right to choose

which avenues of assistance are best for the individual. These resources include the following: Safety and Security, where all crimes including sexual assaults should be reported (a designated employee is assigned to assist victims of sexual assault); the Vice President; the Title IX Coordinator; the local police agency with jurisdiction; and the Emergency Department of the local hospital. An individual who has been sexually assaulted has the following rights:

- An opportunity to contact the law enforcement authorities. We will assist the student in this notification;
- Transport to the nearest medical facility approved for the collection of rape evidence;
- Awareness of pastoral and professional mental health counseling on campus or in the community; and
- Alternative academic and living arrangements if requested and reasonably available.

Due to the severity of sexual assault, we encourage individuals who have been sexually assaulted to contact the police. Reporting the incident to the police immediately will greatly increase the possibility of successful prosecution if criminal charges are brought. Preserving all evidence of a sexual assault is extremely important. An individual who has been sexually assaulted will be offered the chance to make a formal complaint against the offender through the College's disciplinary process pursuant to the Student Code of Conduct. The College may pursue charges regardless of whether any criminal charges are filed. The College will initiate internal proceedings in incidents of sexual assault when a student requests such proceedings and/or when subsequent investigation produces evidence of a violation of College policy.

Individuals have the right to have any questions about College policy and the College judicial process answered. If an individual who reports a sexual assault is harassed by anyone in connection with the incident in question, the harassment should be reported immediately. An individual has the option to have a victim's advocate and/or any other advisor with him/her at all times throughout such procedures. The accuser and the accused are entitled to the same opportunities to have others present during judicial disciplinary proceedings. Both the accuser and the accused shall be informed of the institutional disciplinary proceeding (the College's final determination and any sanction against the accused) brought alleging a sex offense.

Sexual Offender Registry and Access to Related Information

In accordance with the Campus Sex Crimes Act of 2002, institutions of higher education are required to issue a statement advising the campus community where information about registered sex offenders may be obtained. It also requires sex offenders already required to register in a state to provide notice, as required under state law, of each institution of higher education in that state at which the person is employed, carries on

a vocation, or is a student. In the State of Alabama, information regarding registered sex offenders may be obtained from local municipal police departments, the county sheriff's office, or the Alabama Highway Patrol. This information can also be found online if one visits <http://dps.alabama.gov/Community> and searches under the Sex Offender Registry.

Access to College Facilities

Most of the College's buildings and facilities are accessible to members of the College community, guests, and visitors during normal business hours, Monday through Friday, except holidays. Faculty and staff who wish to enter any facilities after hours should notify Safety and Security.

Maintenance of Campus Facilities

Facilities and landscaping are maintained in a manner that minimizes hazardous conditions. Officers regularly patrol all campuses and report malfunctioning lights and other unsafe physical conditions directly to the College's maintenance department for correction.

Policy on Drugs, Alcohol, and Weapons

The presence, possession, manufacture, use, sale, or distribution of any controlled substance or drug paraphernalia as defined by Federal or Alabama law and/or alcohol is prohibited on College property. Possession of any firearm or dangerous weapon or destructive device is prohibited. All information regarding or relating to violations of the College policy on drugs, alcohol, and weapons will be surrendered to the proper authorities for investigation and use as they see fit. Violators are subject to criminal prosecution. Legal sanctions may include fines and/or imprisonment. Student violators are subject to disciplinary action under provisions of the Student Code of Conduct. College employees are subject to disciplinary action under personnel disciplinary policies.



Any College community member who feels that they have a drug or alcohol problem is urged to voluntarily seek assistance. For information, call the Human Resources Department, check the Employee Handbook, call Student Support Services, and check the Catalog and Student Handbook.

Helpful Web Sites

Additional information can be found on our web site at <http://www.gadsdenstate.edu>, in our Catalog and Student Handbook at <http://catalog.gadsdenstate.edu/>, in the Employee Handbook at http://www.gadsdenstate.edu/faculty-and-staff/documents/2010HyperlinkHandbook_006.pdf, and our Safety & Security Handbook at <http://www.gadsdenstate.edu/college-info/pdf/sechandbook.pdf>.



Gadsden State Community College

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This brochure has been produced in compliance with the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy & Campus Crime Statistics Act of 1998, formerly known as The Student Right to Know Act of 1990. Federal law requires colleges & universities receiving federal funding to disclose reported instances of criminal activity on their campuses. This brochure serves to direct you to the Gadsden State Community College's Crime Statistics, which can be downloaded from: <http://www.gadsdenstate.edu/college-info/pdf/crime.pdf>. To receive additional copies of this brochure, please contact Sam W. Ledbetter, Jr., Director of Safety & Security at sledbetter@gadsdenstate.edu or (256) 549-8603.