

Addressing and Combatting ONLINE HARASSMENT

**For a details and specific contact/resource information, view the complete guide online:
salisbury.edu/online-harassment**

Online harassment can occur when digital technologies (social media, email, text message, gaming platforms or other messaging services) are used to post unwanted, inaccurate or threatening content specifically targeting an individual or group.

Behaviors that could potentially be considered online harassment include remarks that a reasonable person would perceive as seriously alarming, seriously annoying, seriously tormenting or seriously terrorizing of the person and that serves no legitimate purpose, which can include impersonation, threats, revealing personal information, cyber stalking, or sending unsolicited sexual messages or images.

Actions to Take if You Are the Target of Online Harassment

1 Assess the Threat.

- Call the police.

2 Gather Evidence.

- Document it.

3 Get Support.

- *For faculty:* Connect with your administrative leader.
- *For staff and student employees:* Reach out and alert your supervisor right away.
- If the harassment is gender-based harassment and/or sexual in nature, consult the Title IX Coordinator.
- If the harassment is based on another protected class (e.g., race, age), consult with the Office of Institutional Equity.

- Ask for PR Office help before responding to media.
- Ask for your personal information to be temporarily removed from the campus directory and webpages and social media.

4 Secure Your Social Media Boundaries.

- Revisit your privacy settings.
- Change your passwords.
- Take a social media break.
- Mute and block.
- Report it to the platform.
- When the storm has passed, do a Google audit.

Checklist for Academic Leaders and Supervisors Supporting Employees Experiencing Online Harassment

1 Evaluate If Immediate Action Is Needed.

CALL 911 IF YOU FEEL THE EMPLOYEE, THEIR FAMILY OR AN IDENTIFIABLE GROUP (FOR EXAMPLE, A CLASS) ARE IN IMMINENT DANGER.

2 Provide Resources.

3 Document It.

4 Confirm that the SU Police Department Has Been Contacted.

5 Understand Roles, Actions and Resources and Mobilize As Needed.

Individuals in the following roles have suggested actions to take and resources available to them – view the online guide for role-specific details: salisbury.edu/online-harassment

- Department Chair/Program Director
 - Dean/Associate Dean
 - Marketing and Communications Staff
 - Provost's Office (For Faculty Incidents)
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6 Prepare Teams for Potential Impacts.

Tips to Help Safeguard Your Social Media Engagement

1 Avoid using your full name.

2 Regularly review your privacy settings.

3 Do not post personally identifiable information (address, office number).

4 Don't post about your whereabouts until after you've left.

5 Change your passwords often and set up two-factor authentication.

6 Only follow accounts that you know are credible and are trustworthy.

7 Build your support network and ground your own reputation.

8 Take the high ground and don't feed the trolls.

9 Use your voice – in some rare circumstances, it is appropriate to share your side of the story.

10 Block, mute and report without remorse.

This guide was created, with permission, from excerpts adapted for Salisbury University from the University of California, Davis' "Guide to Combatting Social Media Trolls and Online Harassment" and Boise State University's "Faculty Support and Resources Guide."