

# Guide for Writing a CARE Report

*If you need immediate assistance, contact the CSU Channel Islands Police Department (9-1-1 or 805-437-8444).*

Once a report is submitted, it is reviewed by a member of the CARE Team. Individuals who make a referral will be contacted by a representative of the CARE Team for more information or clarification prior to a CARE Team member contacting the individual of concern. Depending on the circumstances, that individual may not receive specific information about how the CARE Team plans on responding to their referral.

The information below provides a guide on writing a factual report. In the event you are referring a student, we rely on your observations, facts, and objectivity. Please remember the "ABC's of Documentation" while writing a report.

## The ABC's of Documentation:

**A**bout the Person (name, relationship to reporter and the University)

**B**ehaviors Observed (body language, phrases stated, tone of voice, actions)

**C**ontext (when, location of incident, if it occurred in a class what class did this take place in, any unique factors of the setting)

**D**etails (witnesses, times of incidents, anything else objective that is relevant)

**E**ffect (impact to others, impact to you)

**F**ollow-Up/Response (did anyone try to intervene, how did the individual receive that intervention, has the incident been reported to the police)

## When to Report:

It is recommended that you file a report within 24 hours of the incident, observed behavior, or concern. Depending on the reported issue it is important that we receive a timely notice so that we may address the behavior promptly.

## Where to Report:

Please report the incident, observed behavior, or concern to the CARE Team utilizing the [CARE Team Report Form](#).

## Tips for Writing Quality and Useful Referrals:

It is recommended that you first write your report in a word processor such as Microsoft Word before submitting a report.

1. ***Avoid language that labels, demeans, or stereotypes the individual.***  
Instead of "he creeps me out" or "she is a freak," try "he exhibited behaviors that made me feel uncomfortable. He did not stay seated for more than a few minutes at a time and raised his voice three times in the course of our 10-minute conversation while standing over my desk."
2. ***Avoid generalizing and describe specific behaviors.***  
A statement like "she yelled for approximately 30 seconds about topics which I could not understand" is more helpful than "she went nutso."

3. ***Avoid providing diagnoses for someone; instead, describe the observed behaviors.***

Instead of "he's a vet so he has PTSD," describe the observed behaviors: "he has written about having upsetting dreams and waking up screaming in the middle of the night. Some of his writings convey difficulty with his family and the transition back into civilian life." Please note, if the student self identifies as having a medical or mental health diagnosis, or other attributing reason for the described behavior then you may consider including what the student self-disclosed with you if it is relative to the concern or observed behavior. For example, "Jacob has described that he has had difficulties transitioning back into civilian life within his written assignments. Earlier in the semester he disclosed to me that he has been diagnosed with PTSD as a result of his three tours in Iraq and Afghanistan."

4. ***Avoid exaggerating or embellishing.***

While it is helpful to hear the impact or effect of an incident, exaggerating within the report does not change the CARE Team's level of responsiveness to the incident. For example, students in a class or fellow office mates might share that the person "concerns them" or that they feel uncomfortable around the person. This does not necessarily translate to "this person is a threat."

5. ***Write as if the individual may read the report.***

Your communications may be subject to legal information requests, such as those under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), Public Records Act (PRA), Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), or subpoenas. Students have a right to review their records and a student may review the record. If you are concerned about writing information down, consult with the appropriate staff member rather than avoiding submitting a referral.

## **Anonymity & Confidentiality:**

The CARE Team will take reasonable steps to maintain the privacy of those who make a referral, if requested. If the circumstances do not allow privacy to be maintained, this will be discussed with the person making the referral. On occasion, the nature and context of the report may make it easy for the individual to speculate the reporting source.

Many community members refer students to the CARE Team for various reasons. Occasionally, individuals choose to remain anonymous on the reporting form. The CARE Team would like to outline some common misconceptions about remaining anonymous and how we sometimes encourage the opposite, depending on the situation. It can actually help a student tremendously to know that someone cared enough to refer them to the Team for assistance. We encourage you to read [Common Misconceptions of Remaining Anonymous](#) prior to making a decision regarding your anonymity so that we can best serve the wellbeing and safety needs of the student and our campus community.

## **Other Types of Incidents:**

To report other issues use the guidance above and report at the following locations relative to the incident:

[Discrimination and Harassment \(including sexual misconduct, dating/domestic violence, and stalking\)](#)

[Academic Dishonesty](#)

[Non-Academic Misconduct](#)

## **Contact Information:**

If you have questions or concerns about reporting please contact the CARE Team at:

Phone: 805-437-8512

Email: [care@csuci.edu](mailto:care@csuci.edu)

Location: Bell Tower 2565

[CARE Team Report Form](#)