

■ UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA AIKEN

Security and Fire Safety at USCA

ANNUAL REPORT 2024



Security and Fire Safety Annual Report

January 1, 2024 – December 31, 2024

The mission of the USCA Police Department is to interact with and serve the campus community; protect life and property; to enforce the law; and to provide emergency medical first response to the campus community. In this effort, police officers work with the campus community in a cooperative community policing effort to prevent crime from occurring and to respond and provide assistance to victims once crime has occurred.

UniversityPolice@usca.edu

www.usca.edu/departments/campus-safety



Contents

Introduction.....	4
Campus Security Act.....	4
Introduction.....	5
Reporting campus emergencies and crimes.....	6
Reporting a crime.....	7
Crime prevention.....	7
Policies.....	8
General policy information.....	9
Campus access and security policy	10
University policies	11
Sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking policy	14
Victim's bill of rights.....	15
Missing persons in university housing	21
Annual Security Reports.....	22
Criminal incidents	23
Hate crime identification 2022-2024.....	24
Federal definitions of reportable crimes.....	24
Annual fire safety report	26
University fire statistics 2022-2024.....	27
Fire safety and improvement upgrades	30

Introduction

Policy for Reporting the Annual Disclosure of Crime Statistics

The University of South Carolina Aiken (USCA) is committed to providing the safest environment for work and study. Part of that commitment involves providing information about campus security to current as well as prospective students and employees.

Campus Security Act

This report, prepared in compliance with the Crime Awareness and Campus Security Act, outlines the university's security policies and discloses campus crime statistics.

This federal law was originally passed in 1990 as part of the Student Right-to-Know and Campus Security Act. It was amended in 1992 and 1998 by the Higher Education Amendment. It requires all institutions of higher education that receive federal financial assistance to produce an annual security report which is distributed to all current students and employees and a summary of which is available to all prospective students and employees.

Campus crime, arrest and referral statistics include those reported to the University Police

Department, designated campus officials (including, but not limited to, directors, deans, department heads, judicial affairs, advisors to students and student organizations, athletic coaches), and local law enforcement agencies.

Prompt reporting to the local law enforcement agency by health care professionals (such as Health Services) is mandatory if the care provider suspects or reasonably suspects that the person seeking treatment has suffered wounds inflicted by a firearm or suffered assaultive or abusive conduct.

Counseling services informs their clients of the procedures to report crimes to the police on a voluntary or confidential manner should they feel it is in the best interest of the client.

More specifically, the law requires the reporting of violent crimes, burglary, arson, motor vehicle theft and a summary of arrests and disciplinary referrals for liquor law, drug abuse and weapons violations:

- murder
- manslaughter
- sex offenses
- forcible (rape, sodomy, rape with a foreign object, forcible fondling and sexual battery) non-forcible (incest and statutory rape)
- robbery
- aggravated assault
- burglary
- motor vehicle theft
- arson
- domestic violence
- dating violence
- stalking
- hate crimes (where evidence reflects victim selection based on actual or perceived race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, or disability).
- arrests or persons referred for campus disciplinary action for liquor law violations, drug abuse violations and weapons possession.

This information is posted on the University Police Department website under Campus Crime Statistics at usca.edu/university-police/ and is available in printed form by writing:

USCA
c/o University Police Department
471 University Parkway
Aiken SC, 29801

Introduction



Reporting campus emergencies and crimes

University Police Department

The University Police Department (UPD) is staffed by fully commissioned law enforcement officers. The UPD enforces state, county, and campus laws, rules and regulations for the protection and security of persons at and the property of the university, 24 hours per day, 365 days per year.

The main campus is equipped with more than 40 emergency phones at the entrances to most campus buildings and strategically located blue light call boxes. These phones connect the caller directly to UPD. The blue light call boxes are located in the parking lots across campus, including the housing area and the convocation center.

Off-campus organizations.

Local law enforcement agencies are requested to provide the UPD with reports of any criminal activity of USCA student organizations at locations other than the campus. Since no recognized campus organizations currently own or occupy housing off the campus, this request is, necessarily, limited in its scope. Reported activity is investigated by the proper jurisdiction when incidents are reported, and the information is forwarded to the judicial officer on campus.

Students, faculty, staff, visitors

Campus community members are encouraged to contact the police promptly to report any medical emergency, fire, suspicious person or circumstance, or crime. This encouragement is publicized in the [Student Handbook](#) and [university policies](#). These publications are available to all students, faculty and staff members and may be accessed online at the university website.

In the event of an emergency

Contact UPD immediately at 803-648-4011 (or ext. 6111 from a campus phone) or use of the Alertus App which can be downloaded for smartphones.

Support Services

Students may also contact Counseling Services (ext.3609) or dial (803) 641-3609, where staff

members are trained to assist with victim support and/or individual counseling, or to make referrals to the appropriate member of Student Health Center, (ext. 2841) or dial (803) 641-2841, Aiken Regional Medical Center (803) 641-7700 or other appropriate agencies as listed:

Counseling Center
Student and Educational Support Building,
Ste. 107 | 803-641- 3609

Peer Educators
Student Activities Center | (803) 641-3412

University Police
(803) 648-4011 (off campus) or 6111 (on-campus)

Cumbee Center to Assist Abused Persons, and Rape
Crisis Center | (803) 641-4162

Aiken Regional Medical Center
The Resource Center
655 Medical Park Dr., Aiken | (803) 641-5926

Aiken-Barnwell Community Mental Health Ctr.
104 Florence St., Aiken | (803) 641- 7700



Reporting a crime

Reporting Campus Emergencies and Crimes

Advising the proper authorities of a crime may be facilitated in several different ways. The easiest way is to call UPD at 803-648-4011 or ext. 6111 and have an officer come to gather the information. One may also visit the department offices, which are located opposite Pacer Downs.

More than 40 emergency telephones around the campus provide our community with a convenient and quick method of contacting UPD if assistance is needed.

Preventing crime is a shared responsibility between the police and the entire campus community. If you witness a hazardous condition, crime, or suspicious activity, do not assume someone else has, or will, report it. Contact the police immediately. If the crime occurs on campus, call the UPD at 648-4011 (or dial ext. 6111 from a campus phone) or use an emergency phone. If you reside off campus, contact the local authorities.

Any time a crime is reported to someone other than the police, the information should be passed on to one of the appropriate campus officials (below), who in turn will report it to the proper authorities:

Ahmed Samaha
Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs

Dr. Jamel Hodges
Dean of Students

Dana Cullum
Director of the USCA Counseling Center

If you reside off-campus, you and your family should know that Aiken County is served by three separate law enforcement units, with jurisdiction determined by location within the City of Aiken, the City of North Augusta, and the balance of the county, which is served by the Office of the Sheriff of Aiken County. Please contact the rental agents for the county or city emergency numbers (such as fire, police, and hospital). If you are considering off-campus housing, contact the appropriate law enforcement agency for specific crime and safety information about the residential areas under consideration.

Local Law Enforcement

Aiken County Sheriff
803-642-1761 or 911 for emergencies
www.aikencountysheriff.org

City of Aiken Public Safety: 803-642-7620

Reporting to the campus community

In the event that a notice or warning is necessary, several ways have been identified to distribute information to the campus community including the emergency notification system which can be used to send out loudspeaker messages, text messages, automated phone calls, and messages on campus computers.

Other means of less emergent postings include campus postings, Pacer Times, and the Stall Wall. Notification may also be made in meetings with on-campus residents, members of an affected classroom, administrative department, or building.

Crime prevention

USCA takes a multi-prong approach to crime prevention using several educational methods. Information is provided to incoming students at orientation sessions each academic year. The police also conduct informational sessions with groups or individuals upon request on various topics of safety issues.

UPD provides safety on campus literature during major events such as open houses and new student orientation. This literature provides information about steps individuals can take to help deter crime on campus and in their homes. Topics include avoiding theft and measures to improve personal safety.

UPD has developed an emergency action plan for all buildings across the university campus, including extensive safety and emergency response information.

Residents in University Housing apartments also receive refrigerator magnets and community guides. These materials include contact information for the police on and off campus.

Policies



General policy information

Emergency vehicles

You must yield and pull over for any vehicle exhibiting flashing emergency lights. Failure to do so may result in arrest, citation, and/or disciplinary action.

Identifying yourself to campus officials

When requested, you must correctly identify yourself to any campus official, including University Housing and Residential Life staff and UPD officers. Students must produce and provide their IDs for verification purposes. This process ensures the safety of students on campus.

Individual responsibility

Every student and employee must bear an appropriate amount of responsibility for their own safety and security as well as their fellow students and coworkers. To this end, please observe the following guidelines:

- Report all crimes on campus immediately to UPD.
- Report suspicious persons and circumstances as this may prevent a crime from occurring.
- Ensure you lock your doors and windows to your dorm rooms, office space, and vehicles.
- Do not prop open or try to compromise the security features of residence hall doors. If you find a door propped open, please close it. If it will not lock, notify an RA, the Assistant Director for the residence hall.
- Secure any property, such as bicycles, left outside.
- If you walk across campus late at night, consider going with a friend, having a cellphone, and using lighted sidewalks.

Littering and vandalism

Please help keep your campus clean! Students found responsible for littering or vandalism may face arrest, citations, and disciplinary action.

Lost and Found

Lost and found items may be turned in or claimed at the UPD. If no one available, the emergency phone located at the front of the building can be used to communicate with an officer.

Timely Warning Notice

USCA ALERT is the university's emergency notification system. If there is a condition that threatens the health and safety of persons on campus, university officials will warn the campus community using one or more of the following methods:

1. Home page: usca.edu
2. Alerts page: usca.edu/alert
3. outdoor loudspeakers
4. text messages
5. e-mail
6. Alertus desktop alert

During an emergency, the homepage of the university website will prominently display a hyperlink to the Alerts page.

- The USCA ALERT emergency notification system has three outdoor warning sirens on campus.
- These loudspeakers are designed to be heard outdoors only. Three sirens provide campus-wide alerts.
- Solar-powered battery operation of the three speakers will keep them operating even if there is an AC failure.
- Emergency tone alerts will generally be followed by voice messages providing specific instructions.
- Siren tones and messages can be activated from multiple locations on campus using wireless technology.
- The sirens are mounted on 50-foot painted metal poles. Each has a three-speaker array with digital and live voice capability.
- The system will be available 365 days-a-year, 24 hours a day.

- A computer-controlled system does periodic self-checks to make ensure the outdoor campus speakers are always fully operational.
- There are two fixed command and control stations, one at Pacer Downs police station and the other in the Alumni House.
- Live public address (PA) announcements can be made via phone, with proper security and codes.
- Live instructions can be made over the speakers.

In an emergency that threatens the safety of persons outdoors, the university may sound the sirens. The alert tones are loud and distinct and should be easily heard by anyone outdoors on campus. Voice instructions may follow the alert tone. The university may also use the speakers for other non-emergency or testing purposes. For example, Westminster chimes are played daily at noon.

Campus access and security policy

Campus buildings are open and accessible to students, faculty, staff, and authorized visitors during regular business and/or instructional periods. However, evening, weekend, and holiday access will be limited, as specified below.

- During business hours, UPD will unlock buildings' doors, and offices are opened as appropriate by the occupants.
- After regular business hours (as defined on a building-by-building basis according to usage and special requirements), buildings will be secured by UPD to prohibit unauthorized access.
- If students, faculty or staff require after-hours or holiday access, the UPD should be notified through emergency telephones as noted elsewhere in this report or through personal contact with a patrolling officer. After hours, weekend or holiday access will require positive identification of a USCA ID card on the part of the requesting party. No outside visitors or guests will be allowed after regular business hours. Specific rooms and/or buildings may have additional restrictions for access as determined by the appropriate manager, department head, or vice/ associate/assistant chancellor.

- Student housing is under the management control of the university. The Pacer Downs, Pacer Commons, and Pacer Crossings occupancy is only open to students and university-approved residents. Residents are strongly encouraged to lock their apartment/suite door, especially when out or sleeping.
- Any student, faculty, or staff member should immediately report inoperative or malfunctioning locking mechanisms on doors or other security devices on the main campus to the maintenance department during business hours or to the police after hours and on holidays (using the emergency telephones, the campus telephone, or in person). UPD will determine the best course of action until a complete repair can be done. In every instance, the maintenance of safety for persons and property will be the primary objective for the responding organization.
- All areas considered "restricted" will require the student to show ID. The appropriate faculty or staff member in charge of that area will submit after-hours requests to UPD. No access will be granted to a restricted area without this permission. This procedure does not affect entrance to the general computer rooms.

Pacer Commons and Pacer Crossings residence halls are locked 24 hours a day and require the use of card access during the academic school year and as determined by the Housing Office during the summer. Two entrances to housing located by the Pacer Downs and the Pacer Crossings residence halls have entrance gates that require resident card access. Pacer Crossings gate is locked 24 hours a day and the Pacer Downs gate is locked from 9 p.m. until 7 a.m.

Emergencies may necessitate changes or alterations to any posted schedules. Areas identified as security concerns will have safety surveys conducted to identify measures to enhance them. Administrators from UPD and University Housing will review these results. These surveys will examine security issues such as lighting, fencing, landscaping, locks, alarms, and communications.

University policies

Behavior and conduct by students whose judgment is impaired due to substance abuse and which interferes with the decorum and atmosphere of the university will not be tolerated. As university community members, students must comply with and abide by all laws and university policies.

The drug and alcohol policies are publicly available to all interested parties. Students, faculty, and staff are encouraged to read them all (see below). Copies may also be obtained from the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Engagement and Belonging or the director of University Housing and Judicial Affairs.

University policy must comply with local, state, or federal laws or changes in university operating procedures about drugs and/ or the possession and consumption of alcoholic beverages, and is subject to change.

UPD works closely with the campus judicial officer and other relevant offices to educate the student population concerning the responsible use of alcohol and the abstinence from drug use.

Officers deal with situations of illegal alcohol and drug use, applying discretion specific to the totality of the circumstances. University policies and laws are enforced to improve and ensure safety.

Policy on smoking

USCA is a tobacco-free campus.

Policy on Illegal drugs

The possession, use, manufacture, sale, or distribution of any counterfeit, illegal, or controlled drug without a prescription or the possession of drug paraphernalia, such as pipes, bongs, or an item modified or adapted so that they can be used to consume drugs, is not permitted on university premises or at any university sponsored event.

Specific prohibited actions include:

- the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of illegal drugs or controlled substances

- being in the presence of illegal drugs or controlled substances
- the possession or sale of drug paraphernalia (such as roach clips, bongs, water pipes, cocaine spoons, etc.)
- the distribution or delivery of an imitation ("look-alike"), non-controlled substance, which is represented as a controlled substance.

As citizens, students are responsible for knowing and complying with the provisions of state and federal drug laws. A student violating these laws is subject to prosecution and punishment through the legal system.

University disciplinary process

In addition to federal and state charges, a student is subject to disciplinary action through the university judicial process. This process may precede criminal or civil proceedings. It is not considered "double jeopardy" for the civil authorities and the university to proceed against and sanction a person for the same specified conduct.

The university considers any violation of the drug policy a serious offense. The university will respond to all reported violations in accordance with disciplinary procedures included in the [Student Handbook](#).

Although violations will be handled on a case-by-case basis, any violation that is deemed to threaten the safety and health of the campus community will result in summary suspension before a formal hearing.

Sanctions that the university may impose include, but are not limited to, the following:

- suspension
- summary suspension
- suspension held in abeyance with conditions
- expulsion
- counseling
- educational programs
- conditions and restrictions

University Housing

A student suspected of violating the drug policy while living in on-campus housing may be subject to immediate removal from housing as a response to violating the terms of the housing contract.

Parental notification policy

In 1998, changes in the law that governs the privacy of student records, the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), permitted colleges and universities to inform the parents/guardians of students under 21 when they determine the student violated university alcohol and drug policies. USCA believes such notification can help educate students. While the university strives to educate and empower students to make responsible decisions about drug and alcohol usage, we know that the support of parents in this process is critical.

The university may exercise its right to notify parents of students under 21 in the following situations:

- cases involving drug violations
- repeat or serious alcohol violations

The university also reserves the right to notify parents for first alcohol violations if deemed appropriate.

Future Revisions

The university reserves the right to update this policy. Students are responsible for being aware of changes as they are disseminated to the campus community.

Alcoholic Beverages

The university is committed to providing all its residents with a safe and healthy community. University Housing is an educational and social community wherein its students and their guests may engage in activities that involve the consumption of alcoholic beverages. This policy is established to conform with state and federal laws and to align with the university's mission to promote responsible conduct regarding alcohol consumption.

This policy governs students' consumption of alcohol (defined as beer, wine, and distilled spirits) on the university campus and at university-sponsored off-campus events. In keeping with state and local laws, this policy is designed to promote the responsible

use or non-use of alcoholic beverages. USCA values responsible citizenship. Students are expected to assume responsibility for their own behavior while consuming alcoholic beverages and to understand that being under the influence of alcohol in no way lessens accountability to the university and the community. Behavior and conduct by students whose judgment is impaired due to substance abuse and which interfere with the decorum and atmosphere of the university will not be tolerated. Students must comply with and abide by all the laws and policies.

Local ordinance (City of Aiken)

It is against local ordinances university policy to consume alcohol in public within the city limits. All campus housing is located within the city limits. Therefore, consuming alcohol on apartment balconies or on the grounds of any residence hall is a violation of local ordinances and university policy.

Alcohol policies for University Housing

Underage residents and their guests (regardless of age) may not possess or consume alcohol; this includes minors being present in an area where alcohol is present (constructive possession).

Individuals of legal drinking age may consume alcoholic beverages only within the confines of an apartment/ suite. All individuals present must be of legal drinking age. Underage residents whose roommate(s) are 21 years of age or older may be present when alcohol is possessed or consumed in their apartment/suite but are not permitted to consume alcoholic beverages themselves. (NOTE: It is the responsibility of the host resident to ensure all guests are at least 21 years of age.)

- Possession or use of an empty or full keg, party ball, or other common container of alcohol beverages is strictly prohibited.
- Misuse of alcohol beverages and/or inappropriate or illegal behavior will result in disciplinary action and/or legal action.

Regardless of the age of the student, the abuse of alcohol that results in significantly impaired behavior is considered a violation of the alcohol policy. Chugging, drinking games, initiations, "funneling" or other potentially dangerous drinking activities is prohibited. The sale of alcohol is prohibited. Neon

signs or other signs for alcohol related products may not be hung in windows or anywhere outside the apartment/suite.

University Sanctions

Students or organizations violating university policies are subject to civil, criminal, and university proceedings and sanctions.

The university campus is not a sanctuary that relieves students of their responsibilities as citizens to abide by local, state and federal laws, or university regulations, policies, and procedures. Violations of this campus alcohol policy will be referred to appropriate university agencies. Students and organizations may be sanctioned by more than one appropriate agency. Sanctions for the violations of university policies are based on the severity and frequency of violation. Sanctions may include, but are not limited to, referral to on- or off-campus alcohol assessment and/or counseling, alcohol education, community service, disciplinary probation, suspension of individual students, suspension from use of university facilities for a designated period of time and suspension of student organization status.

Alcohol and Drug Resources

There are several university and community resources available to provide information on the physical effects and social issues related to alcohol and other drug use, including, but not limited to: programs presented by resident mentors, the Counseling Center, peer educators, and the police.



Sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking policy

USCA's policy prohibits sexual harassment of employees or students. Such conduct is a form of behavior that undermines the atmosphere of trust essential to the academic environment. This policy is consistent with federal and state laws prohibiting sex discrimination. It is also a policy of the university that willful false accusation of sexual harassment shall not be condoned. The full text of the policy is located online at:

<https://www.usca.edu/departments/student-affairs/dean-of-students/title-ix/>

In the last several years, there has been a greater focus nationwide on sexual assaults on college campuses. During this time, there has also been an increased awareness of relationship violence, such as domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. The university provides several resources for victims of such crimes. The prevention of such crimes is a shared responsibility of the university community. Victims and witnesses are encouraged to come forward to make the university community a safer place and an environment where all are treated with respect.

Rationale

USCA is an educational institution bound by common standards of conduct and a commitment to its mission. Sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking will not be tolerated as they may interfere with our educational mission by:

- endangering the physical and emotional safety
- damaging trust
- offending the dignity and violating autonomy
- disrupting the academic progress of victims during their recovery

The purpose of this policy statement is to describe the university's efforts to provide:

- resources aimed at reducing the risk of sexual assault, including educational programs for men

and women

- a statement of expectations for behavior regarding sexual conduct
- procedural interventions to offer support and information following a sexual assault
- campus judicial procedures that provide for the needs of victims and protect the rights of alleged assailants

Statistically, members of college communities are at significant risk of being assaulted or exploited sexually, and most probably by someone known to, or trusted by, the victim. Studies have shown that sexual assaults occur with disturbing frequency among college-age men and women, but are very often unreported. To provide for the needs and care of victims and enforce the behavioral standards critical to our mission, all violations of this policy must be reported to appropriate authorities, including law enforcement officials or agencies with jurisdiction in the location of the incident.

Portions of this policy may parallel published laws, but are in no way intended to substitute or supplant those laws. USCA students are expected to comply with and abide by university policies and the laws of the State of South Carolina.

Because research has shown that alcohol and other drug use is typically associated with sexual assault, especially date and acquaintance rape, it is crucial to be aware of and manage health and safety risks while complying with all university policies and state and federal laws related to alcohol and drug use. The use of these substances, in conjunction with an incident of sexual assault, does not mitigate responsibility or diminish the seriousness of the crime. This policy is subject to change to comply with changes in relevant laws, university operating procedures, or regulations.

Victim's bill of rights

Victims of sexual assault who report their experience to university officials can anticipate that:

1. Sexual assaults will be investigated.
2. Campus organizations and services that can assist victims will be identified.
3. When a crime is reported to university officials, those officials will notify the proper authorities.
4. When victims report and choose to pursue action against alleged assailants, assaults will be investigated and adjudicated by appropriate criminal and/or university officials.
5. University personnel will not discourage victims from reporting, nor encourage them to under-report the incident as a lesser crime.
6. Victims may invite an advisor to accompany them through university disciplinary proceedings.
7. A victim will be notified of the outcome of related university discipline proceedings.
8. The victim and the charged student must respect the privacy rights of all involved.
9. Police officers are responsible for securing and maintaining evidence (including a medical examination) necessary in legal proceedings.
10. Victims will be made aware of any state or federal laws regarding mandatory testing of sexual assault suspects for communicable diseases and whether these professionals can notify a victim of the results of these tests.
11. Victims will be informed of mental health services available.
12. Victims will be allowed to request immediate on-campus housing relocation, transfer of classes, or other steps to prevent unnecessary or unwanted contact or proximity to an alleged assailant when reasonably available.
13. All students have the right to an environment free from sexual or physical intimidation, or any continuing disruptive behavior, by persons sharing rooms or their guests, that would prevent a

reasonable person from attaining their educational goals. Disruptive behavior of this nature should be reported to the appropriate university staff to address it.

University definitions

For this policy and related procedures, the term sexual assault is defined as "unwilling or unconsenting sexual intercourse or penetration of any bodily opening with any object; the touching of an unwilling person's intimate parts (such as genitalia, groin, breast, buttocks, mouth, and/ or clothing covering them); touching an unwilling person with one's own intimate parts; or forcing an unwilling person to touch another's intimate parts."

Behavior contemplated in this definition includes acts that are unwanted and/or may be committed either by force, threat, intimidation, or deceit, or through exploitation of another's mental or physical condition, of which the assailant was aware or should have been aware.

USCA student conduct regulations incorporate this definition by obliging students to comply with all published university policies and procedures (see USCA [Student Handbook](#)).

Such behaviors may also be simultaneously covered by the general regulations prohibiting "disruptive activity" and "disorderly conduct". Attempting, abetting or being an accessory to any prohibited act is considered the same as a completed violation.

Criminal definitions

USCA does not intend to substitute or supersede related civil and criminal law by publishing this policy. The university strongly encourages victims to report all incidents and violations to the law enforcement agencies or officials with appropriate jurisdiction and to avail themselves of all the services and rights to which they are entitled by law.

There is a fundamental difference between the nature and purpose of student discipline and criminal law. Regardless of the charge(s) issued or procedures employed, sanctions issued by the university can be expected to be consistent with the university's educational mission.

According to the USCA [Student Handbook](#), students who are apprehended and charged by law enforcement agencies with felony criminal charges off campus are required to inform university officials. The university may bring disciplinary action against the student for the same incident if the alleged conduct is prohibited by the institution and/ or if it is judged to be averse to the recognized mission of the institution. University disciplinary procedures should be considered distinct and independent of any criminal procedures.

Discipline procedures may precede, co-occur, or follow, and consider any relevant court action results. When necessary, temporary action may be taken in the form of summary suspension, summary restrictions, or officially requesting no contact between the victim and the accused assailant. Any of these measures may result in a student's restricted participation in university events outside of attendance of classes and appointments related to resolving discipline matters.

Domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking definitions

The university considers incidents of domestic violence and dating violence to fall within the definition of "relationship violence." The university defines relationship violence as "physical behavior" (e.g., slapping, pulling hair, punching), threats of abuse (e.g., threatening to hit, harm, or use a weapon on another, or other forms of verbal abuse), and emotional abuse (e.g., harassment) directed toward a current or former partner or spouse. This definition is more expansive than the South Carolina state law prohibiting domestic violence. Under the state criminal law, "domestic violence" is defined as: "physical harm, bodily injury, assault or the threat of physical harm" directed toward "persons who have a child in common, and persons cohabiting or formerly cohabiting."

South Carolina law does not make it a crime to engage in dating violence. However, as with any violent act, an individual may be guilty of assault and battery or other appropriate charges, such as harassment.

South Carolina law defines assault and battery in four categories. Assault and battery of a high and aggravated nature occurs when the perpetrator unlawfully injures another person and either:

- the victim suffers from significant bodily injury,

which causes a substantial risk of death or serious, permanent disfigurement; or

- the injury is accomplished by means likely to produce death or significant bodily injury.

Assault and Battery in the First Degree occurs when an individual injures another person and either:

1. involves nonconsensual touching of the private parts of a person, either under or above clothing, with lewd and lascivious intent; or
2. occurred during the commission of a robbery, burglary, kidnapping, or theft.

Further, Assault and Battery in the First Degree may occur when the assailant offers or attempts to injure the victim with the ability to do so and the act:

1. is accomplished by means likely to produce death or significant bodily injury; or
2. occurred during the commission of a robbery, burglary, kidnapping, or theft.

Assault and Battery in the Second Degree occurs when a person injures or attempts or offers to injure another person with the present ability to do so, and:

1. the victim suffers moderate bodily injury or such injury could have resulted; or
2. the act involves nonconsensual touching of the private parts of a person either under or above clothing.

Assault and Battery in the Third Degree occurs when the assailant unlawfully injures or offers or attempts to injure another person with the present ability to do so.

Under South Carolina criminal law, harassment is the "pattern of intentional, substantial and unreasonable intrusion into the private life of a targeted person that causes the person and would cause a reasonable person in their position to suffer mental distress."

The university defines "stalking" as "a pattern of conduct that is intended to cause or does cause a person to fear death or death of others important to that person, assault or assault of others important to that person, bodily injury or bodily injury of others important to that person, sexual assault or sexual assault of others important to that person, involuntary

restraint or involuntary restraint of others important to that person, damage to property or damage to property of others important to that person, confinement or confinement of others important to that person, or threats of harassment via electronic devices (e.g. e-mail, phone, fax)."

The relationship between the perpetrator and the victim may be a current or former partner or spouse, a dating relationship, an acquaintance, or a stranger.

Under South Carolina criminal law, sexual assaults may be prosecuted under the above Assault and Battery statutes and under the prohibitions of the Criminal Sexual Conduct laws.

Criminal Sexual Conduct in the First Degree occurs when the assailant sexually batters a victim with one or more of the following aggravating circumstances:

1. the assailant used aggravated force to accomplish the sexual battery;
2. the victim submits to sexual battery after being a victim of forcible confinement, kidnapping, trafficking in persons, robbery, extortion, burglary, housebreaking, or other similar act; or
3. the assailant causes the victim to become mentally incapacitated or physical helpless by administering, distributing, dispensing, delivering, or causing to be such a controlled substance or intoxicating substance.

Criminal Sexual Conduct in the Second Degree occurs where the assailant uses aggravated coercion, as defined as threats to use force or violence of a high and aggravated nature, where the victim reasonably believes the assailant can carry out the threat, or where the assailant threatens to retaliate in the future by infliction of physical harm, kidnapping or extortion.

Criminal Sexual Conduct in the Third Degree occurs when the assailant uses force or coercion to accomplish the sexual battery, or the assailant has reason to know the victim is mentally defective, mentally incapacitated, or physically helpless. A member of the university Community violates university policy for "Sexual Assault" where one of the following occurs:

1. **Offensive touching:** the touching of an unwilling or non-consenting person's intimate body parts,

such as genitalia, groin, breast, buttocks, mouth, and/or clothes covering them; the touching of an unwilling person with one's own intimate parts; or forcing an unwilling person to touch another's intimate body parts.

2. **Non-consensual sexual assault:** unwilling or non-consensual penetration of any bodily opening with any object or body part, including, but not limited to, penetration of a bodily opening without consent through the use of coercion.
3. **Forced sexual assault:** unwilling or non-consensual penetration of any bodily opening with any object or body part that is committed either by force, threat, intimidation, or through exploitation of another's mental or physical condition of which the assailant was aware or should have been aware.

The university considers that an individual has consented to such conduct where:

1. both individuals are physically free and capable to act
2. both individuals are willing and clear about their intent to engage in sexual activities
3. silence may not in and of itself constitute consent
4. past consent of sexual activities does not imply ongoing future consent

Procedures for the victim: immediate care and treatment

Medical attention may be necessary for both physical and emotional injuries. It is crucial to assess possible internal injuries or sexually transmitted diseases, as well as to collect medical evidence, should the victim choose to pursue prosecution.

The police will coordinate the collection of evidence from the hospital or medical care provider as necessary. Any student who feels that they have been sexually assaulted and requires medical attention should immediately:

Contact University Police at 648-4011 (6111 from a campus phone extension); or

The Rape Crisis Center at 641-4162 (after hours and weekends at 648-9900).

The sooner a sexual assault is reported, the easier it is to collect valuable evidence. To facilitate evidence collection, the victim:

- should not bathe or douche
- should not urinate
- should not drink any liquids
- if oral contact has occurred, the victim should not smoke, eat, or brush teeth, and
- if clothes are changed, soiled clothes should be placed in a paper bag (plastic destroys crucial evidence).

UPD may transport the victim to Aiken Regional Medical Center for medical attention and any appropriate examination. A friend or relative may transport the student to the hospital if the victim does not want law enforcement involvement. When the victim arrives at the emergency room, the hospital may call the Rape Crisis Center to arrange for a victim advocate to accompany the victim throughout the exam and any law enforcement procedures. The hospital staff may also contact the UPD and/or appropriate law enforcement agency having jurisdiction in the event.

If an assault occurs off-campus

Contact area police via 911 system (Aiken County) or if no 911 system is available, call your local police, or in Aiken call the Rape Crisis Center at 641-4162 (after hours and weekends at 648-9900). The sooner a sexual assault is reported, the easier it is to collect valuable evidence. To facilitate evidence collection, the victim:

- should not bathe or douche
- should not urinate
- should not drink any liquids
- if oral contact has occurred, the victim should not smoke, eat or brush teeth
- if clothes are changed, soiled clothes should be placed in a paper bag (plastic destroys crucial evidence)

The police department with jurisdiction in the area will most often direct the victim to an area hospital

for medical attention and a rape protocol exam. If the victim does not want to contact police, a friend or relative may transport the student to the hospital. When the victim arrives at the emergency room, the hospital staff may call a rape crisis center in that area and/or may contact the local police where the incident occurred. The hospital staff may also contact UPD.

If a victim chooses not to go to the hospital, the victim is strongly urged to seek appropriate medical attention.

Reporting

All victims of sexual assault/battery are encouraged to report the incident to law enforcement agencies. Should the victim choose not to involve law enforcement officials immediately, the victim is strongly urged to go through the rape protocol exam for medical attention and for the purpose of preserving crucial physical evidence of the assault. This evidence may be used if the victim chooses to pursue legal prosecution at a later date. The rape protocol exam should be completed as soon as possible. Physical evidence can be obtained up to 72 hours after the assault, recognizing that the quality of the evidence diminishes as time passes.

A student victim may also file a report with the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs or the Director of the Counseling Center. An explanation of this procedure can be obtained in the [student handbook](#). The disciplinary procedures are also described in a separate section below and published in the student handbook.

Whether legal or disciplinary action is desired, an anonymous report may be filed at any time with the Director of the Counseling Center. This report provides university staff with information about the crime that may be valuable in their efforts to prevent future crimes and educate other students about high-risk areas. The Director of the Counseling Center can be reached by calling (803) 641-3609.

Discipline policies and procedures for victim and/or witness:

Witnesses to or victims of sexual misconduct may wish to contact the vice chancellor for student affairs if the accused is a USCA student. In this event, the vice chancellor will meet with the witness or victim

to discuss the report and determine whether there is reason to believe a conduct code offense has occurred. At the same time, discipline procedures will be reviewed, and the possible roles the witness or victim may play in gathering this information and/or resolving the complaint will be explored.

If the victim or witness is willing and prepared, staff may conduct an investigative interview at this meeting. At the victim's or witness's request, an advisor, counselor, attorney, parent, friend, or the director of the counseling center may attend. In this meeting, and as needed, the vice chancellor will answer questions and provide offended individuals with general information about civil and criminal options available to victims or witnesses.

When sufficient reason exists to believe a violation of university policy has occurred, disciplinary procedures may be initiated. Victims and witnesses need not "press charges"; the university is responsible for initiating this investigative process.

Furthermore, the university is not required to await the outcome of any criminal action against the accused before initiating disciplinary action if warranted.

Victims or witnesses may be asked to contribute testimony and information to assist in the resolving of the complaint.

Follow-up and recovery services for the victim

Research has shown that follow-up counseling is of significant benefit to a victim of sexual assault and/or related trauma. Counseling may be initiated at any time after an assault (from hours to years).

On or off-campus counseling and other services are available to student victims whether or not the crime was reported or prosecuted.

The Rape Crisis Center (division of the Cumbee Center to Assist Abused Persons "CAAP") is an off-campus resource that provides short-term counseling, as well as crisis intervention. Services are provided for all victims, no matter when the assault occurred. Their 24-hour hotline number is (803) 641-4162. A representative from the center works in the university's counseling center at least one day each

week and can be contacted at (803) 641-3609.

The Counseling Center is an on-campus resource that provides free counseling to students. Their phone number is (803) 641-3609

The Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs can assist a victim with filing a discipline complaint, notifying instructors of absences or other needs, and/or helping a student withdraw. You may reach him at (803) 641-3588,

Discipline policies and procedures for the accused party

To begin discipline procedures, appropriate university officials will contact and interview individuals with relevant information or testimony, including the accused party. If sufficient information is available to conclude there is reason to believe, or "reasonable grounds" to do so, the university will issue charges from the general student conduct regulations. It will follow the judicial procedures for non-academic offenses outlined in the [USCA Student Handbook](#).

A summary of this procedure follows:

- The accused party will be allowed to choose one of two possible hearing procedures.

Note: under certain circumstances outlined in the Student Code of Conduct, an administrative hearing is NOT an option.

- The accused party may choose an administrative hearing, in which the university's judicial officer or designee is authorized to consider testimony and act as hearing officer, deciding whether the accused is responsible for the charge(s) as issued, and what the university response or sanction, if indicated, should be.
- The accused student may choose a hearing before the University Judicial Board (UJB), a group of faculty and students trained and authorized to conduct hearings to determine responsibility and appropriate sanctions.

In each hearing procedure, the burden of proof shall be on the university as the adjudicating party.

Decisions regarding responsibility for charges shall be based on a “preponderance of evidence” standard, meaning responsibility does not have to be proven beyond a shadow of a doubt. The university needs only to demonstrate that the charged student is more likely than not responsible for the charge.

In these investigative hearings, regardless of the procedure chosen, the hearing officer or UJB members will not be restricted from testimony by technical rules of evidence.

Charged students are assured a right of access to a list of witnesses invited to testify, and an opportunity to review all available physical and documentary evidence to be presented at the hearing. In these informal, non-adversarial hearings, there is no formal cross-examination.

Charged students are entitled to question and rebut any evidence presented. To conduct a fair, orderly hearing, special accommodations may be made in hearing procedures, such as indirect questioning, or special seating arrangements in the hearing room. The charged student and the victim may be accompanied by an advisor of their choice and remain present while all testimony is presented.

The advisor or counsel may, with the written permission of the charged student:

- advise the accused student about the preparation and presentation of the case
- accompany the charged student to all judicial proceedings.
- have access to evidence, witness lists, documents and exhibits relating to the case.

Should the hearing authority determine a student is responsible for the charges issued, the student’s disciplinary record may be made available to the authority. The hearing authority will then adjourn again to determine what sanction(s) are appropriate to the circumstances and individual. Possible sanctions include permanent suspension, suspension for a period of time, suspension held in abeyance, disciplinary probation, conditions, reprimand, restitution, and educational sanction.

Follow-up services for accused party

Follow-up counseling may be of significant benefit to an accused party. On- or off-campus counseling and other services are available to an accused party whether or not the crime was reported or prosecuted.

The Counseling Center is an on-campus resource that provides free counseling to currently enrolled students.

The Cumbee Center to Assist Abused Persons provides referrals to counseling services for men who commit sexual assault or abuse their partners.

A representative from the center works in the USCA Counseling Center several days each week.

The vice chancellor for student engagement and belonging can assist an accused party with notifying instructors of absences or other needs. This office also handles the investigation and resolution of discipline complaints. Call (803) 641-3588.

The South Carolina Bar Association, Lawyer Referral Service, can assist an accused party in finding an attorney to represent them in civil and/or criminal proceedings. Call 1-800-868-2284 or 799-7100.

Procedures for reporting

Federal law requires that the campus community be notified of assaults in a timely manner if it is felt that a threat to any other person(s) exists. In these cases, the UPD chief, in consultation with the vice chancellor for student affairs, will notify the campus community through appropriate means as befits the particular case.

Educational Resources

The following offices provide a variety of educational offerings related to sexual assault, personal safety, appropriate use of alcohol, healthy relationships, etc.

- USCA Counseling Center
Student & Educational Support Building, Ste. 107
Ph: (803) 641-3609
- University Police
Ph: 803-648-4011 (from off campus) or
6111 (from on-campus)

- Cumbee Center to Assist Abused Persons,
Rape Crisis Center
Ph: 803-641-4162
- Aiken Regional Medical Center
655 Medical Park Dr.
Ph: 803-641-5900
- Aiken-Barnwell Community Mental Health Ctr.
1135 Gregg Highway
Ph: 803-641-7700

Missing persons in university housing

The Higher Education Opportunity Act (P.L. 110-315) requires the university to maintain a missing notification policy and protocol for on campus residents. A student shall be deemed missing when the student is absent from the university for more than 24 hours without any known reason. The protocol is posted on the university housing website and provided at check-in.

You should report missing students by filing a missing person report with the University Police by calling 803-648-4011 or (ext. 6111 from a campus phone).

Residents 18 and older: students may register a confidential contact during the housing check-in process. This contact will be notified no later than 24-hours after the time that you are determined to be

- missing. You can update this form at your area office at any time.

Residents younger than 18: The university is required to notify your custodial parent or guardian no later than 24-hours after the time that you are determined to be missing. You must provide parental emergency contact information during your housing check-in. You may update this form at your area office at any time.

Should a missing person report be filed on your behalf, UPD and University Housing will:

- gather information from the individual reporting the missing person to include details about the reason for the report and any information on the missing student, such as: personal descriptors,

clothing last worn, locations where student may be, persons or witnesses who may have information, vehicle descriptions, information of the physical and mental well-being of the student, up-to-date photographs, class schedule, etc.

- Use of any or all of the following resources to assist in locating the student: examination of the student's room, interviews with roommates, securing a photo of the student, calling or texting the student's cell phone; calling other phone numbers on record, sending the student an email, checking all possible campus locations the student may be, reviewing the campus card access log and video from security cameras; and attempting to locate the student's vehicle.

Ensure that UPD has filed a missing persons report no later than 24-hours after a student is determined missing.

Notify the confidential emergency contact (custodial parent or guardian if the student is less than 18 years old) within 24 hours after the student is determined missing.



Annual Security Reports



Criminal incidents

USCA is federally required under the Jeanne Clery Act to publish an Annual Security Report and an Annual Fire Safety Report, using data from the UPD crime log, University Housing, Student Judicial Affairs, and reports from the Aiken County Sheriff's Office and Aiken Department of Public Safety.

Criminal Incidents 2022-2024

	On Campus			Campus Housing			Hate Crimes			Non-Campus Building/Property			Public Property		
	2022	2023	2024	2022	2023	2024	2022	2023	2024	2022	2023	2024	2022	2023	2024
Murder/Non-Negligent Murder	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Negligent Manslaughter	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Forcible Sexual Offenses	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Non-Forcible Sexual Offenses	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Incest	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Statutory Rape	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Robbery	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Aggravated Assault	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Burglary	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Motor Vehicle Theft	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Arson	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
* Violence Against Women Categories															
Dating Violence	0	1	2	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Domestic Violence	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Stalking	0	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hate Crime Categories															
Larceny/Theft	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Simple Assault	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Intimidation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Destruction/Damage/Vandalism of Property	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Arrests															
Liquor Law Violations	1	0	0	0	0	0				0	0	0	1	0	0
Drug Law Violations	3	1	1	0	0	1				0	0	0	3	1	0
Illegal Weapons Possession	0	1	1	0	1	1				0	0	0	0	0	0
Judicial Referrals															
Liquor Law Violations	8	12	5	7	11	5				0	0	0	1	1	0
Drug Law Violations	9	6	3	7	6	3				0	0	0	2	0	0
Illegal Weapons Possession	0	0	0	0	0	0				0	0	0	0	0	0

Hate crime identification 2022-2024

	On Campus			Campus Housing			Non-Campus Building/Property			Public Property		
	2022	2023	2024	2022	2023	2024	2022	2023	2024	2022	2023	2024
Race	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Religion	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sexual Orientation	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ethnicity	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
National Origin	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Disability	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Gender Identity	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Federal definitions of reportable crimes

Murder/Manslaughter: the willful killing of one human being by another.

Manslaughter by Negligence: the killing of another person through gross negligence.

Sex Offenses: any sexual act directed against another person, without the consent of the victim, including instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent.

Rape: penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus with any body part or object, or oral penetration by a sex organ of another person, without consent of the victim. This offense includes the rape of both females and males.

Fondling: the touching of the private body parts of another person for the purpose of sexual gratification, without the consent of the victim, including instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent because of his/her age or because of his/her temporary or permanent mental incapacity.

Incest: non-forcible sexual intercourse between persons who are related to each other within the degrees wherein marriage is prohibited by law.

Statutory Rape: sexual intercourse with a person who is under the statutory age of consent.

Robbery: taking or attempting to take anything of value from the car, custody, or control of a person or persons by force or threat of force or violence and/or by putting the victim in fear.

Aggravated Assault: an unlawful attack by one person upon another for the purpose of inflicting severe or aggravated bodily injury. This type of assault is usually accompanied by the use of a weapon or by means likely to produce death or great bodily harm. Attempts to kill or murder, poisoning (including date-rape drugs), using a dangerous or deadly weapon, maiming, inciting mayhem, assault with explosives and assault with disease are all examples of aggravated assault.

Burglary: the unlawful entry of a structure to commit a felony or theft.

Motor Vehicle Theft: the theft or attempted theft of a motor vehicle.

Arson: any willful or malicious burning or attempt to burn, with or without intent to destroy a dwelling, house, public building, motor vehicle, aircraft, personal property of another, etc.

Hate Crimes: a criminal offense that manifests evidence that the victim was intentionally selected because of the perpetrator's bias against the victim.

Larceny/Theft: pocket picking, purse snatching, shoplifting, theft from a building, theft from a motor

vehicle, theft of motor vehicle parts or accessories, and all other larceny.

Simple Assault: causing a physical altercation with another person is a crime, with some incidents carrying more severe punishments than others. In some cases, the individual does not need to cause actual harm or physical injury to the victim for it to be considered unlawful. Instead, the mere threat of committing a violent act is seen as a criminal offense. Alternatively, an individual can be arrested for attempting to hurt another person even if they never touched them. Both of these are legally known as examples of simple assault. Simple assault does not involve weapons.

Intimidation: unlawfully placing another person in reasonable fear of bodily harm through the use of threatening words and/or conduct but without displaying a weapon or subjecting the victim to actual physical attack.

Destruction/Damage/Vandalism to Property (except arson): To destroy willfully or maliciously, damage, deface, or otherwise injure real or personal property without the consent of the owner or the person having custody or control of it.

Geography Definitions from the Clery Act

On-Campus is defined as:

1. Any building or property owned or controlled by an institution within the same reasonably contiguous geographic area and used by the institution in direct support of or in a manner related to the institution's educational purposes, including residence halls.

2. Any building or property that is within or reasonably contiguous to the area, that is owned by the institution but controlled by another person, is frequently used by students and supports institutional purposes (such as a food or retail vendor). This includes parking facilities and dining facilities that are physically attached to and accessed directly from residence halls. Non-Campus Building or Property is defined as:

- Any building or property owned or controlled by a student organization that is officially recognized by the institution or registered with the institution.
- Any building or property owned or controlled by or registered with an institution that is used in direct support of or in relation to the institution's educational purposes, is frequently used by students, and is not within the same reasonably contiguous geographic area of the institution.

Public Property

Public property is defined as all public property, including thoroughfares, streets, sidewalks, and parking facilities, that is within the campus or immediately adjacent to and accessible from the campus.

Annual fire safety report

HEA Section 668.41 Reporting Requirements

The Institutional Fire Safety Act is a federal law applicable to all Title IV colleges and universities. Each eligible institution participating in any program under this title that maintains on-campus student housing facilities shall on an annual basis, publish a fire safety report which contains, at a minimum, fire safety information concerning campus fire safety practices and standards of the institution. This report shall be made available to students, prospective students, employees and prospective employees.

Specifically this report shall include:

1. Fire Statistics: Institutions must report statistics for each on-campus housing facility for the three most recent calendar years for which data are available, concerning:
 - the number of fires and cause of each fire;
 - the number of injuries related to a fire that resulted in treatment at a medical facility, including an on campus health center;
 - the number of deaths related to a fire;
 - value of property damage caused by the fire.
2. A description of each on campus student housing facility fire safety and sprinkler system, including the type, age, design, area covered, activation sensitivity, and other pertinent information.
3. The number of regular mandatory supervised fire drills.
4. The policies or rules on portable electrical appliances, smoking and open flames (such as Candles) in a student housing facility.
5. The procedures for evacuation in the case of a fire.
6. A list of the titles of each person or organization to which students and employees should report a fire.
7. The policies regarding fire safety education and training programs provided to students, faculty and staff.

8. Plans for future improvements in fire safety, if applicable.

USCA maintains a fire log of any fire in an on-campus student housing facility. The log includes the nature, time, date and general location of each fire.

University fire statistics 2022-2024

Residence Hall	Year		
Pacer Downs	2022	2023	2024
Number of Fires	0	1	0
Cause of Fires	0	Grease	0
Number of Injuries	0	0	0
Number of Deaths	0	0	0
Value of Property Damage	0	0	0
Pacer Commons	2022	2023	
Number of Fires	0	0	0
Cause of Fires	0	0	0
Number of Injuries	0	0	0
Number of Deaths	0	0	0
Value of Property Damage	0	0	0
Pacer Crossings	2022	2023	
Number of Fires	0	1	0
Cause of Fires	0	Grease	0
Number of Injuries	0	0	0
Number of Deaths	0	0	0
Value of Property Damage	0	0	0

Instructions for residents evacuating university housing

- Keep low to the floor if smoke is in your room.
- Before opening your door, feel the door handle. If it is hot, do not open the door. If the handle is not hot, brace yourself against the door and open it slightly (fire can create enough pressure to push open a door if it is not held firmly). If heat or heavy smoke is present in the corridor, close the door and stay in the room.
- If you cannot leave the room, open the windows.
- Seal the cracks around the door with towels or bed clothing to keep out the smoke.
- Call the police to make them aware of your location. To attract attention if you are trapped, hang an object out of the window, such as a sheet, jacket, shirt or anything that will attract attention. Shout for help. If you are trapped in a Pacer

Commons stairwell use the emergency buttons located by the stairwell doors to notify the police and fire department of your location.

- If you can leave the room, close all doors behind you as you exit. This will retard the spread of smoke and lessen damage.
- Go to the nearest exit or stairway. If this means of egress is blocked by smoke, heat or fire, go to an alternate exit. If all means of egress from a floor are blocked, go back to your room, close the door, open the window and follow the procedures described above.

DO NOT USE THE ELEVATORS.

University housing responsibilities for fire safety

University Housing is committed to provide as safe of an environment as possible for students during their stay at USCA. Thus, the following tasks are performed each year and documented by university housing:

- Fire safety education is provided for all residential students.
- Fire extinguisher training is presented to all RA's.
- A minimum of two fire drills are conducted each semester in Pacer Downs, Pacer Commons, and Pacer Crossings.
- Smoke detectors are placed in every bedroom, hallway, and living areas of all housing facilities.
- Smoke detectors are checked once a year by an outside company to ensure proper functioning.
- Fire extinguishers are placed in each apartment within Pacer Downs and Pacer Commons as well as in the hallways of Pacer Crossings and Pacer Commons.
- Each community kitchen within Pacer Crossings (8 total) has a fire extinguisher as well as a hood system fire extinguisher.
- All fire extinguishers are checked monthly by housing maintenance staff.
- All kitchens with stoves in Pacer Downs and Pacer Commons come equipped with four Fire Stop canisters underneath the hood to help extinguish stove fires. These are replaced every five years.
- The director of housing and the UPD chief will reassess all procedures updating as necessary and appropriate.

Resident hall fire procedures, prevention and response

In the event of a fire, sound the fire alarm immediately at the closest pull station. Call UPD at 803-641-4011 or from a campus phone 6111. Provide important details.

Evacuate the building according to the following procedures:

- Residents should evacuate through their closest exit.
- No one should enter the building when the alarm sounds.
- Residents will evacuate to the following points for each building:

1. Pacer Downs – soccer field parking lot behind Buildings 8 and 9.
 2. Pacer Commons – back of east parking lot by the soccer fields.
 3. Pacer Crossings – back of big parking lot on the east side of building.
- Students and staff members will be allowed to return to the building once the safe to re- enter by the responding personnel.

Fire drills

In order to ensure fire equipment is working properly and that residents are aware of evacuation procedures, at least two fire drills will be held a semester. All residents are required to leave the building during the drill and report to their designated meeting areas. Those students who fail to evacuate the building will face disciplinary action. University Housing staff will check the building to ensure all residents have left the building.

Who to notify in the event of a fire:

University Police (from campus phone)
x6111

University Police (off campus)
(803) 648-4011

Aiken Public Safety
9-1-1

Misuse of fire prevention and control equipment

Smoke detectors save lives. Each apartment/suite has several smoke detectors throughout the apartment. It is unlawful to tamper with or disengage a smoke detector. Tampering with this equipment not only puts your life at risk, but also other students who live in your building/complex. There is a \$50 fine for tampering with or disengaging a smoke detector.

Students found violating this policy will be referred for judicial action. The fire alarm system is fully monitored and any tampering will result in an alarm sounding. University Housing may, at any time, come into your apartment/suite to test the smoke detectors.

Prohibited items

Prohibited items include—but are not limited to—the following:

- extension cords
- fireworks, firearms, air guns, explosives, highly flammable substances, knives (other than kitchen knives), slingshots and other weapons
- halogen lamps
- hot plates
- toasters
- toaster ovens
- fry-daddy's
- refrigerator neon lights
- candles
- incense
- grills (no grilling is permitted on the porches or balconies)

General information regarding University Housing

Pacer Downs is comprised of 23 buildings containing 91 individual apartment units (approximately 800 square feet each) that provides housing for 364 students. Each apartment contains two bedrooms, two full bathrooms, a furnished living area, and a fully equipped kitchen. Pacer Commons, an apartment-style hall which opened in 2004, houses 316 students. Each suite contains two bedrooms; two full bathrooms, a furnished living/dining area and a fully equipped kitchen.

Pacer Crossings is a four-story, 88,930 square feet hall providing living space for 288 freshmen. Each suite contains four bedrooms, four full bathrooms, and a furnished living area. Also within Pacer Crossings are two community kitchens per floor.

All buildings are equipped with smoke detectors and a fire monitoring system. Smoke detectors are located in every bedroom as well as hallways and living areas within all rooms.

The systems for each building are monitored by Alarm Center Excellence.

Pacer Commons and Pacer Crossings are equipped with sprinkler systems. The sprinkler will only activate if there is an actual fire in progress. Water rushes out at approximately 70 gallons per second. Residents are not permitted to hang any items from the sprinkler head. Students found in violation will be referred to Judicial Affairs. Any student setting off a sprinkler head will be responsible for any damage that results. Each professional housing staff member and RA is trained on the procedures involved in properly shutting off the sprinkler system if necessary.

Emergency fire response is provided by the City of Aiken Public Safety.

Fire safety improvements and upgrades

The USC Fire Marshall as well as the City of Aiken Fire Marshall reviews the fire system in each building at least annually and recommends or orders upgrades, repairs or revisions as needed.

Fire log

The University Police Department maintains an activity log which contains any record of fires occurring in on-campus housing. The log includes the nature of the fires, the date, time, and location of fire.

Testing and Inspection of Fire Safety Systems

Testing and inspection is done in accordance with the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA 71 and 72), local ordinances and university policy.

Fire safety and improvement upgrades

Building	Smoke Detectors	Sprinkler System	Fire Extinguishers	Monitoring System	Stove Canisters	Fire Drills (Per Year)
Pacer Downs	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	2
Pacer Commons	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	2
Pacer Crossings	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes (per community kitchen)	2



805-B Leadership Drive
Aiken, SC 29801

www.usca.edu/departments/campus-safety

UniversityPolice@usca.edu



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