

13.8 The institution takes reasonable steps to provide a healthy, safe, and secure environment for all members of the campus community.
(Institutional environment)

Rationale and Notes

An institution has an ethical responsibility to take reasonable steps to provide a healthy, safe, and secure environment for all campus constituents. A healthy, safe, and secure environment enhances the accomplishment of the institution's mission and contributes to more effective risk management.

NOTE

In March 2017, the SACSCOC Executive Council determined that, in an institution's Compliance Certification and Fifth-Year Interim Report, the institution shall include within Standard 13.8 (Institutional environment) information relating to investigations by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights for possible violations alleging sexual violence as part of its narrative addressing a healthy, safe, and secure campus environment. This should include open investigations as well as closed investigations that were active at the time of the last SACSCOC comprehensive review or occurred since the last SACSCOC comprehensive review. If the institution has not been the subject of any such investigations, the institution should indicate as much in its response to this standard.

Questions to Consider

- Does the institution have a safety plan, and is it followed?
- Who has campus administrative responsibility for health, safety, and security functions, and what is the reporting structure to the CEO?
- Does the institution have a crisis communications plan? When was the system last tested?
- If crisis communications have been necessary, were they effective?
- Are facilities and grounds regularly reviewed and/or tested for health and safety concerns? If there were findings, have concerns been addressed?
- How is building access provided? After hours?
- How does the institution ensure campus security? In house? Outsourced?
- What is the relationship with local law enforcement?
- How does the institution address this standard at off-campus sites and branch campuses?
- How does the institution disseminate emergency procedures and other health and safety related procedures?

Sample Documentation

- Evidence that the institution has qualified staff to carry out the safety, security, and health plans of the institutions.
- Current safety, emergency, and disaster plans.
- Emergency procedures and evacuation plans.
- Inspection reports (e.g., health, safety).
- Clery Act reports and evidence of their publication.
- Evidence of compliance with environmental and occupational regulations.
- Evidence of corrective action, if appropriate.
- Policies and training regarding harassment, hazardous materials, etc.
- Copies of safety committee minutes.
- Summary of any open or recently closed investigations by the Office of Civil Rights for possible violations alleging sexual violence.
 - Correspondence with the Office of Civil Rights on such cases (e.g., letters and emails—not the full file).
- Note: While international institutional members may not be required to adhere to the United States Department of Education or other United States federal guidelines, they still need to address the content of the standard and address the steps taken by the institution to provide a healthy, safe, and secure environment for students and other constituents.

Reference to SACSCOC Documents, If Applicable

SACSCOC Interpretation: [Interpretation on Standard 13.8 \(Institutional environment\)](#)

Cross-References to Other Related Standards/Requirements, If Applicable

None noted.