

Frequently Asked Questions (CARES Team)

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About the CARES Team

What is the CARES Team?

CARES stands for CONCERN, ASSESS, REFER & EDUCATE for SUCCESS.

The CARES Team serves as a resource to the campus community by providing guidance and assistance in reporting behaviors that can be concerning or disruptive — behaviors that potentially impede an individual's success or others' ability to function successfully or safely. Through regular and consistent meetings, the Core Team reviews referrals, gathers data, conduct assessments, and provides support services to include campus and community referrals.

The Core Team meets weekly and serves as case managers for students referred to the process. Additional members serve on the CARES Team. Meeting monthly, this group provides support to the Core team.

It's important to recognize that the CARES team is not conduct and not involved with discipline. For students with disruptive behavior, our goal is to provide support before it may become a disciplinary issue.

Who can make a referral to the CARES Team?

Anyone who feels that a student is in need of help or assistance can make a referral to the CARES Team by completing the online referral form.

What types of student issues should be reported?

In general, any behavior that raises concern for a student's well-being should be reported. There are three key categories of behavior that are of utmost concern to the CARES Team process:

- Self-injurious behavior (e.g., suicidal thoughts/attempt, cutting behavior, dangerous alcohol or drug consumption, etc.)
- Disruptive behavior that violates campus safety (e.g., homicidal threats, stalking, assault, online bullying, carrying weapons, etc.)
- Unusual behavior (e.g., changes in personality, depressive symptoms, shifts in mood, unexplained irritability and/or lethargy, hopelessness, etc.)

How do I report concerning behaviors to the CARES Team?

It is the responsibility of individuals within the campus community to immediately report any concerning behaviors. Each report will be reviewed for appropriate action. The main and preferred way to refer a student to the CARES Core Team is by completing the

[online referral form](#). Once the form is submitted, the referral source will be contacted for more information before reaching out to the student.

Should I approach the student before making a referral to the CARES Team?

If you're comfortable, it's highly recommended that you discuss your concerns with the student. When doing so, it's important that you reference the observed behaviors or written/verbal communication they've shared. If you feel that the student is threatening, aggressive, or an immediate danger to him/herself or others you should immediately contact Campus Security or reach out to the Associate VP of Student Affairs.

Will the student know that I am the person who reported her/him to the CARES Team?

Through conversation with a student often the source of the referral becomes apparent or may be questioned. If this is the case, the student will know the source of the referral. While this may be a concern, full disclosure aids in the health, safety, and transparency for the student involved. If you have additional concerns regarding confidentiality, please contact us.

What happens after a referral is made?

Once a referral is made to the CARES Team, the chair of the Core Team assesses the referral and determines what, if any, immediate response is necessary. A case manager is assigned to the case and works with the student. Each week, the case is discussed with the Core Team as a review and to provide support and information to the case manager. Once the student is stable and provided support, the case is closed.

What about confidentiality and FERPA?

There are often questions and confusion about the limitations and allowances of FERPA in regard with the reporting of concerning student behavior. FERPA pertains to the privacy of educational records but it does not prohibit the reporting of observable behavior. If you are concerned about a personal interaction you had with a student or an observation you have made pertaining to behavior, you are encouraged to report.

If I have more questions about the CARES Team, what should I do?

More information about the Lee College CARES Team can be found online at www.lee.edu/cares-team. You are also encouraged to contact any of the [Core Team members](#). We welcome all questions and suggestions.

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