IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS AND WEBSITES

All numbers are area code 843 unless otherwise indicated.

PUBLIC SAFETY

publicsafety.cofc.edu

Emergencies: 911

Non-Emergencies: 953.5609

Campus Escort Program: 953.5609

Crime Action Line: 953.4998

College Information/Operator: 805.5507

Disability Access/Relay South Carolina: 800.735.2905

TTY Text Telephone: 953.1419

Counseling and Substance Abuse Services: 953.5640

counseling.cofc.edu

Office of Victim Services: 953.2273

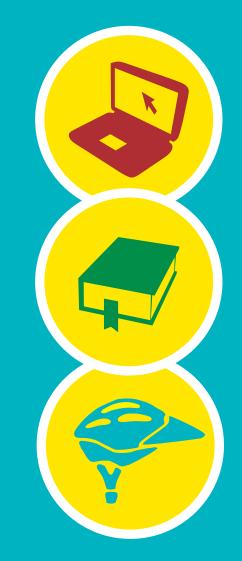
victimservices.cofc.edu

Severe Weather/Emergency Hotline: 953.7246

emergency.cofc.edu

Student Health Services: 953.5520

studenthealth.cofc.edu





GUIDE TO SAFER LIVING

WELCOME

The mission of the Department of Public Safety is to support the College of Charleston by providing a safe, orderly and secure environment where students can learn, faculty can teach, and staff can work to support the College's learning and teaching environment.

While reported crime at the College of Charleston is low, it is important for students, faculty, staff and visitors to be cognizant that we are located in an urban setting. Thus, it is incumbent upon each of us to take responsibility for ensuring our personal safety by practicing good crime-prevention habits. The Department of Public Safety is here to provide a high level of service to the College community. However, the safety and security of the College is the shared responsibility of the entire community.

This guide offers an overview of the Department of Public Safety and its services. We hope you find it informative and a good reminder of safety precautions you already know. Our website, publicsafety.cofc.edu, is another good source of information and we hope that you'll take a moment to review it as well.

Sincerely,

Francis M. Searson Chief of Police and Director of Public Safety

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EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

The first priority of all campus workers is the safety of students and the campus community. If a major emergency occurs, the College will activate the Emergency Management Team, which will provide up-to-date information to campus and aid in short-term and long-term decision making.

COUGARALERT (EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION SYSTEM)

The College of Charleston has an agreement with the NTI Group to provide an emergency notification system that is capable of reaching students, faculty, staff and parents within minutes of a campus crisis. This system, called CougarAlert, allows students to select multiple notification phone numbers for themselves and their family members. To update your contact information, log on to MyCharleston and follow the instructions.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

It is critical to know what to do in case of emergency. Below is a quick reference for what to do in a variety of emergency situations, although students should always follow the directions of Public Safety officers. More information can be found at emergency.cofc.edu.

Fires

- Remain calm.
- Activate the nearest fire alarm pull station.
- Call 911
- Notify occupants and help those needing assistance in the immediate area.
- Confine the fire by closing doors as you exit.
- Evacuate the building at the nearest exit.
- Do not re-enter the building until authorized to do so by emergency personnel.

Building Evacuation Procedures

- Evacuation is mandatory when a fire alarm is activated.
- Do not use elevators.
- Take personal belongings (ID, keys, purses, wallets) and dress appropriately for the weather.
- Close doors as you exit.
- Move all personnel to a safe area, away from the building in danger.

Suspicious Packages

- Do not touch or disturb the object or package.
- Evacuate the immediate area.
- Call 911.
- Notify your building administrator, residence hall director or RA.

Bomb Threats

- Remain calm.
- Get as much information as possible from the threatening caller.
- Call 911
- Follow instructions from emergency personnel.

Suspicious Behavior/Persons of Concern

- Do not physically confront the person exhibiting the behavior.
- Do not let anyone into a locked room/building.
- Do not block a person's access to an exit.
- Call 911.

Active Shooters

- If possible, exit the building immediately and call Public Safety at 953.5611.
- If you cannot exit, clear the hallway immediately and/or remain behind closed doors in a locked or barricaded room, if possible. Stay away from windows.
- Remain calm and quietly call Public Safety at 953.5611.
- Do not assume someone else has called police or emergency personnel.
- Evacuate the room only when authorities have arrived and instruct you to do so.
- Do not leave or unlock the door to see what is happening.
- Do not attempt to confront or apprehend the shooter, unless as a last resort.

Weather Emergencies

- Call the Emergency Weather Hotline at 725.7246 (725.RAIN).
- For procedures, refer to the College's Hurricane Plan at emergency.cofc.edu, the College's emergency website.
- Throughout the event, continue to check the emergency website.
- For updates, monitor local television and radio stations for appouncements



PROTECTING PERSONAL PROPERTY

The majority of crimes on campus involve theft. Regardless of the monetary or personal value of what is stolen, being victimized by a thief can cause a lot of anger and frustration. The good news is that you can minimize the chances of becoming a victim.

The most effective method of preventing theft is eliminating the opportunity — lock up! You can also be prepared should you ever have property stolen. Make an itemized list of your valuables, including serial numbers and a brief description of each article. Report lost or stolen items immediately. The more accurate information you have available for the responding agency, the better the chance of recovery.

Lock your windows and doors and secure valuables like jewelry, cash and important documents in a safe place. Thieves often look for an easy target and it only takes a matter of seconds for them to make off with your property.

COMPUTERS

The theft of computers and computer accessories has become a major crime industry. Laptops are especially at risk for being stolen. Losing your computer means more than just the loss of its use and the cost to replace it — it means lost schoolwork, personal information, photos and music, some of which is irreplaceable.

Again, preventing theft is your best bet, and insurance companies are now requiring more proof that sufficient safeguards were in place if a computer is stolen. Register your computer with Public Safety to ensure that all the proper information is on file in case you have to file a police report. Keep your computer out of easy view, in a lockable area, and consider using a locking plate or tie to secure it to a desk, wall or the floor. To protect yourself if your computer is stolen, back up all of your important files regularly and store them in a safe place. Keep your purchase receipts for insurance claims and to prove ownership.

AUTOMOBILES

Keep all items locked in the trunk or out of sight. Thieves target vehicles that contain items like personal bags or cell phones. Engrave any items that could be removed from your vehicle (stereo equipment, satellite radio, etc.).

TEXTBOOKS

You make a financial investment in your textbooks each semester — make sure to protect them. If you can sell back your books for cash, so can anyone else. Never leave your belongings unattended and mark your bookbag and books clearly so they can be identified as yours.

BICYCLES

Bicycle theft is most prevalent on and around college campuses. Stolen bicycles can be extremely difficult to recover, which is why theft prevention is so important.

Register your bike with the Department of Public Safety. This is a very effective deterrent.

The majority of bicycles that have been stolen around the College were not locked or were locked using a cable or chain lock. Use a high-quality lock — Public Safety and most bike shops recommend a U-lock (which still must be used properly to be most effective).

Type of Lock

Ask yourself how much your bike is worth to you. It's probably worth investing the time to learn how to properly lock it, the money to purchase a good quality lock, and the effort to keep it locked at all times.

- Seek advice about the best lock for your needs and how to use it properly.
- U-lock or cable lock? Lightweight cables or chains no longer provide adequate security in most areas.
- Combine a cable and a U-lock, or even two U-locks, when securing your bicycle.
- Make sure that the design of the lock is functional and not just there for looks.
- The best locks are made of steel.
- Do not buy a larger lock than you need.

Proper Use of Lock

A good lock is only worth the effort you put into using it properly.

- Lock your bike to an immovable object. Beware of locking it to items that can be easily cut, broken or otherwise removed.
- Lock your bike in visible, well-lit areas.
- Select a location where there are other bikes. Avoid locking your bicycle to sign posts, stair rails and handicap ramps.
- Position your bike frame and wheels so that you fill up as much as possible of the opening in the U-portion of the lock.
- Don't let your lock rest against the ground a thief can easily smash it.
- Always secure your components and accessories, especially those that can be easily removed like quick-release wheels or seats.
- Public Safety may confiscate unlocked bikes.

YOUR APARTMENT OR HOUSE

By far, the most common threat to an apartment or house is burglary. Burglary, by definition, is a non-confrontational crime, but being victimized can leave you feeling vulnerable and violated. The majority of burglaries occur during the day when people are away at work or at school. They also occur at night when there are obvious signs that no one is home.

Although burglaries may seem to occur randomly, they actually involve a selection process; homes with easy access, the greatest amount of cover and the best escape routes are likely targets. The following suggestions will help you to minimize your risk by making your home unattractive to potential burglars.

Doors and Locks

The first step to preventing burglary is to make your home difficult to enter.

- All exterior/entry doors should be made of solid wood, solid wood core or metal
 and should fit tightly into the doorframe. They should also have a heavy-duty
 deadbolt lock with a throw bolt (the bolt that extends from the door) that is at
 least one-inch long.
- If door hinges are on the exterior, the hinge pins should be non-removable.
- Locks that can be opened from inside should be at least 40 inches from glass.
- Make sure locks have been re-keyed after the last occupants.
- Strike plates (small metal plates surrounding the hole in the door frame) should be of a heavy-duty metal with four 3-inch screws to penetrate into the doorframe.

• Check for, or install a 180-degree peephole — it should be no higher than five feet off the ground.

Windows

It's easy to forget about an open window, but it may be the sole reason a home is burglarized.

- When opening a window for ventilation, open it six inches or less, block it from being opened more, and make sure someone can't reach in from the outside and remove the blocking device. Make sure you can easily remove the blocking device from the inside to comply with fire codes.
- Double hung windows should be pinned.
- Metal windows should have auxiliary locks.
- Curtains and drapes should fully cover windows.
- If the home has a window AC unit, it should be secured from inside.

Lighting

Interior lighting shows signs that a residence is occupied. Avoid regularly leaving your lights off at night, whether you are at home or away.

- Exterior lighting is also very important and becomes critical if you park in a common area or garage and need to walk to your front door. Perimeter lighting of your apartment building or house, especially at the entryway, is very important.
- Lights should be on a timer or photocell to turn on at dusk and turn off at dawn. Motion-activated lighting is a good alternative.
- Lighting should allow 100-foot visibility, illuminating the entire front of the house, any hiding places, and the building number.
- A well-lit pathway and front door ensure visibility when walking to or answering your door.

If you are beginning your search for an apartment or house off campus, keep these tips in mind.

- The manager/landlord should be responsible for and concerned about security.
- The manager/landlord should allow you to change or re-key the locks.
- All entrances should be key-controlled.
- Check that there is a neighborhood watch program in effect.
- Ask police about crime in the area.

PROJECT IDENTIFICATION

Marking your property with permanent identification foils thieves in several ways: First, it works as a deterrent. Removing markings defaces the property, reducing its attraction to a would-be thief. Second, it's easier to recover your property when it's distinctively marked. Further, the ability to trace stolen property through a formal identifier helps law enforcement link the crime to the criminal.

Public Safety strongly recommends engraving your property — from bicycles to computers — with your driver's license number or name. Stop by our office to learn about our engraving service. We will also loan out engraving tools.

As an additional deterrent, students can obtain stickers that indicate their property has been marked to put on their doors.

PROTECTING YOURSELF

At the College of Charleston, incidents of violent crimes such as assaults and robberies are infrequent. However, the prevention of crimes should remain in the forefront of your mind. Your best protection against violent crime is to know how to avoid it.

AT HOME

- Report all suspicious activity to the building manager or your landlord.
- Keep emergency numbers in or near your phone.
- Keep your doors and windows locked at all times, even if you are at home.
- Don't hold the door open for strangers and never buzz them in.
- Always ask service people to identify themselves before you allow them entry into your home. If you feel uneasy about something, don't let them in. Call your landlord or the office to verify identity.
- Report all burnt out light bulbs in the building and on the street.
- If you lose your keys along with your identification, have the locks changed immediately.
- Make sure your landlord does not store ladders outside the building.
- Don't keep large amounts of cash in your apartment.
- Always double-check doors and windows before leaving your residence.
- Draw curtains or blinds after dark.
- Do not place purses, radios, stereos, TVs or similar articles near windows.
- Introduce yourself to your neighbors and establish a buddy system.
- Keep keys in your possession. Don't place them under mats or other obvious hiding places. If you can find it a burglar can find it, too!
- Mark all valuables using the Project Identification system.
- If you return to your residence, even after a brief absence, and you think it has been illegally entered, do not go in. Call the police.

WALKING

- Use well-lit routes. Avoid dark, vacant areas, and those not frequented by other pedestrians.
- Avoid walking at night. Walk in a group of two or more if you have to travel at night.
- Be alert and aware of your surroundings at all times. Avoid distractions like talking on your cell phone or trying to find something in your bag or purse.
- Notify your local law enforcement agency if you observe suspicious people or activities. The community is the eyes and ears of police.
- Carry a noise-making device such as a whistle. Do not hesitate to make a commotion if you feel you are in danger. Yell "back off," "get away" or other statements that won't be misconstrued for horseplay.

DRIVING

• Have your key ready when you approach your car. Make sure no one is hiding under or in your car — check under it as you approach and look inside before getting in. Don't forget to check the back seat or hatchback.

- Lock your doors immediately upon entering the car.
- Drive on well-traveled streets and keep your car in gear while it is stopped.
- Allow at least one car-length space between your car and the car in front of you so you can escape should someone try to get into your car.
- Keep doors locked and windows shut. Keep valuables out of sight by covering them or putting them in the trunk.
- If your car breaks down, open the hood and then remain inside your car. Ask anyone who offers help to call for assistance, but do not open your window or door.
- If you suspect you are being followed, drive to the nearest well-lit public area and call the police.
- Beware if someone in another vehicle bumps you from behind. If you suspect
 that you were bumped intentionally, lock your doors and do not get out of
 the vehicle. Ask the other driver to contact the police and call them yourself.

USING ATMS

- Use ATMs during the day. If you must go at night, do not go alone.
- Avoid ATMs that are not clearly visible from the street.
- Be aware of people loitering or sitting in cars.
- Prepare your transaction ahead of time. Spend as little time as possible at the ATM.
- Memorize your Personal Identification Number (PIN) never keep a written copy of it in your wallet or purse and do not write it on your bank card. Do not give out your PIN. Thieves will attempt to find out your PIN by calling you and claiming that they are the police, security officers or bank officers.
- Keep your receipt or destroy it. Thieves can acquire valuable information from your receipt, including your account number and balance.





KNOW THE LAW — IT'S YOUR RESPONSIBILITY

Not knowing the law does not exempt you from obeying it. Following are a few of the laws that are particularly important for college students to understand. The penalties for breaking them can be found on Public Safety's website, publicsafety.cofc.edu. Protect yourself — don't get arrested because you didn't know the law.

FIREARMS ON CAMPUS

Possessing or carrying a weapon onto any College of Charleston property is a violation of both state law and campus policy.

Don't be confused by the Law Abiding Citizens Self-Defense Act of 1996, also referred to as the Concealed Weapons Law. Section 16-23-420(A) of this law states, "it is unlawful for a person to carry onto any premises or property owned, operated, or controlled by a private or public school, college, university, technical college, other post-secondary institution, or any publicly owned building a firearm of any kind, without the express permission of the authorities in charge of the premises or property." A person who violates the provisions of Section 16-23-420(A) is guilty of a felony and, upon conviction, must be fined not more than five thousand dollars or imprisoned not more than five years, or both.

Additionally, Section 23-31-217 outlines the right of a public/private employer as well as a private property owner to prohibit the carrying of a concealable weapon upon the premises.

If you witness or suspect someone has a weapon of any kind, call 911. Keeping our campus free from the tragedy of violence is a community effort.

SELF DEFENSE VS. ASSAULT AND BATTERY

Don't let your temper get in the way of using common sense. Striking a person because you are provoked by his/her words or deeds — unless you are protecting yourself against life-threatening violence — isn't self-defense, it's assault and battery.

Assault: An unlawful attempt, coupled with a present ability, to commit a violent injury

upon another person. Just the threat of bodily injury can constitute simple assault.

Battery: The successful accomplishment of such an attempt.

Assault and battery of a high and aggravated nature: an unlawful act of violent injury to another person accompanied by any circumstances of aggravation, including:

- use of a deadly weapon (gun, knife, baseball bat, garden tool, etc.) that inflicts serious bodily injury;
- infliction of serious bodily injury such as painful gashes or serious injuries to the face;
- disparity between the sizes, ages and physical conditions of the parties, or impaired health on the part of the victim;
- resistance of lawful authority accompanied by an unlawful act against the arresting officer, even though no bodily harm may be inflicted;
- indecent liberties or familiarities with a female.

FRAUD AND FORGERY

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Credit card, driver's license, identification card — you don't leave home without them. As important as these cards are to you, you should be aware that there are stiff penalties imposed if the cards are misused, including fines, driver's license suspension and imprisonment.

The following acts may seem like no big deal, but they are all illegal.

Driver's License and IDs

- Possession of an altered driver's license or personal ID
- Lending a driver's license or personal ID to any other person
- Altering a driver's license
- Using someone else's driver's license or personal ID

Financial Transaction Cards and Checks

- Theft or unlawful possession of a Financial Transaction Card with intent to use the card
- Financial Transaction Card Fraud, i.e., use of an FTC with the intent to defraud the issuer
- Check Fraud: passing a check when one knows the account lacks sufficient funds to make the check good or placing a stop payment on a check with the intent to defraud in order to obtain money, goods or services
- Forgery: creating or altering a document with intent to defraud

HARASSMENT AND STALKING

Harassment and stalking are two illegal behaviors that carry with them penalties including fines and imprisonment. It is important that you familiarize yourself with what constitutes both.

Harassment: A pattern (two or more acts within a 90-day period) 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 his/her position to suffer mental distress. Harassment may include, but is not limited to:

- following the targeted person as he/she moves from location to location;
- visual, physical or verbal contact that is initiated, maintained or repeated after a person has been provided notice that the contact is unwanted;
- surveillance of, or the maintenance of a presence near the targeted person's residence, place of work, school or another place regularly occupied by the targeted person;
- vandalism and property damage.

Stalking: A pattern (two or more acts within a 90-day period) of words or conduct that is intended to cause and does cause a targeted person and would cause a reasonable person in the targeted person's position to fear:

- death of the person or a member of his/her family;
- assault upon the person or a member of his/her family;
- bodily injury to the person or a member of his/her family;
- criminal sexual contact on the person or a member of his/her family;
- kidnapping of the person or a member of his/her family;
- damage to the property of the person or a member of his/her family.

Harassment and stalking do not include words or conduct protected by the South Carolina or United States Constitution, and do not apply to law enforcement officers or process servers performing their official duties.

If you or someone you know is being harassed or stalked:

- Document each and every incident. Include date, time, witnesses and a description of the incident. Also include a description of the individual and other identifying information, such as a vehicle description and license plate number.
- Contact the police and have an official report filed.
- Don't keep the harassing/stalking behavior a secret tell people and ask for their support.
- Use the buddy system. Never walk or jog alone at night and always let someone know where you are going and when you expect to arrive home.
- Locate support groups within your community.



Bicycles are the main form of transportation for many students on our campus. It is your responsibility to know and abide by South Carolina and City of Charleston bicycle laws.

SOUTH CAROLINA BICYCLE LAWS

Bicyclists riding on the road have all of the rights and responsibilities of, and must abide by the same laws as, a person operating a motor vehicle.

- When riding your bike, stay as near to the right side of the road as possible and exercise care when passing a standing or moving vehicle.
- Ride no more than two abreast except on paths set aside exclusively for bicycle use. If a bike path is available next to the road, you must use the path.
- When riding your bicycle, you must ride on a permanently installed seat and with your legs on both sides of the bike. Do not carry more people at one time than the number for which the bike is designed.
- Clinging to a vehicle while riding a bicycle, roller skates, sled or toy vehicle is prohibited.
- If carrying a package or article while riding your bike, you must be able to keep at least one hand on the handlebars.
- If riding at night, your bicycle must have a lamp on the front that emits light visible from at least 500 feet. It must also be equipped with either a red reflector on the rear that is visible from 50 to 300 feet when directly in front of a car's headlights or with a lamp that emits red light visible from at least 500 feet.
- Your bike must be equipped with a bell or similar device audible from at least 100 feet (excluding sirens or whistles, which are prohibited).
- Your bike must be equipped with a brake that makes the braked wheel skid on dry, level, clean pavement.

COLLEGE OF CHARLESTON BICYCLE OPERATION AND PARKING

- All bicycles used, stored, parked or operated on the College of Charleston campus must be registered with the Department of Public Safety. Proof of ownership may be required to register a bicycle. There is no charge for bicycle registration.
- Bicycle registration stickers must be displayed on the front seat tube of the bicycle frame.
- Bicycles must be parked, stored or left only in areas specifically designated by the presence of racks or other devices designed for bicycle parking or when designated by the posting of signs indicating the space as a bicycle parking area.
- No bicycle shall be parked, stored or left so as to block or impede the normal flow of traffic on any highway, roadway, street, alley, sidewalk, mall, patio and parking area at the College. Nor shall any bicycle be parked, stored or left so as to interfere with or impede the normal movement of disabled persons, pedestrians or bicyclists upon ramps, stairways or curb cuts.
- All bicycles operated on College property or property leased or controlled by the



College are subject to the provisions of the South Carolina Code of Laws for violation of any such provisions, and the operator of any bicycle may be issued a traffic citation to appear in court and/or be subject to disciplinary action.

- No person shall operate a bicycle at a speed greater than is reasonable and prudent under the existing conditions. Maximum speed limit on main campus is 5 MPH.
 Maximum speed limits in any parking lot or parking area is 10 MPH.
- Mopeds shall park in specifically designated areas or designated motorcycle spaces as established by the College and in accordance with the rules and regulations set for by the College's Parking Services. Mopeds are prohibited from being parked at any bicycle rack or other device designated for bicycle parking.
- Skateboarding is prohibited on all streets and most sidewalks in the City of Charleston. Skateboard operators should familiarize themselves with the City's skateboard ordinance.

BICYCLE RIDING RULES AND SAFETY

- Wear a helmet.
- Learn, use and obey traffic signals.
- Ride with traffic, not against it.
- If riding at night, use reflectors and lighting systems. Be visible!
- Give pedestrians the right of way.
- Ride defensively. Watch for cars and car doors opening into your path.
- Don't weave in and out of slow-moving or stopped traffic.
- Slow down and look out for oncoming and turning cars at all intersections.
- Sidewalks are for pedestrians, not bikers. You can be ticketed for riding on a sidewalk

Public Safety offers a variety of educational programs and services. For more information about these programs or to learn about additional offerings, visit the Public Safety website.

RAPE AGGRESSION DEFENSE (RAD) SYSTEM

The RAD System is a comprehensive course for women that teaches awareness, prevention, risk reduction and avoidance of various types of assault, and the basics of hands-on defense training. It is taught by RAD System-certified Public Safety Officers. For class dates and times, please email rad@cofc.edu or visit the Public Safety website.

SAFETY ESCORT SERVICE

A security escort is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to get you to or from locations on campus — including class, a residence hall or parking lot/garage — when you don't feel safe traveling alone. This program is staffed by our on-patrol officers and serves more than 11,000 students. Requests for a security escort are dispatched immediately. However, there may at times be a delay. If this occurs, please place your call again.

This program is not substitute transportation for errands, a means to get to your parttime job or to take the place of your designated driver. Abuse of this service dilutes the effectiveness of the program for individuals who truly need a security escort.

COUGAR SHUTTLE

The Cougar Shuttle operates seven nights a week from 11 p.m. to 3 a.m. during spring and fall semesters. This service is free to all students with a current Cougar Card. To arrange for pick-up, call 888.960.2227. The shuttle driver will provide an estimated time of arrival at the requested pick-up location, and will transport you to your destination on the Charleston peninsula.



EMERGENCY CALL BOXES

The College has emergency call boxes located throughout campus. The boxes are for direct emergency contact with Public Safety, but may also be used for assistance if you have a flat tire, have locked your keys in the car, etc.

To use the call box:

- Push in the call button and release. (An automated emergency alert is directed to the Public Safety dispatcher indicating your location. Public Safety officers will be sent to that location immediately.)
- A dispatcher will contact the caller.
- To talk with the dispatcher, hold button down. Release the button to listen.

For the locations of call boxes, please refer to the map on pages 16 and 17 or go to parkingservices. cofc.edu/information-for/parking-map.php or the Public Safety website.

CRIME ACTION LINE

The crime action line allows concerned community members to anonymously report any information they feel is critical to the safety or security of the College or Charleston area. By reporting suspicious behavior, safety hazards or illegal behavior, you can help law enforcement take a proactive approach to the safety and well-being of the community.

To access the Crime Action Line, dial 953.4998 and leave a message. Do not use this line in an emergency, as it is never answered. Call 911 if you have an emergency.







