

Your **CLERY COMPLIANCE** CHEAT SHEET: THE 4 ESSENTIALS TO LOOK FOR in Your Reporting Software

You're well aware of the importance of maintaining Clery compliance. U.S colleges and universities that participate in federal financial aid programs are required by law, under the Clery Act, to keep and disclose information about crimes on and near campuses.

Not complying with Clery Act requirements can lead to significant penalties upward of \$54,789 per violation for each infraction, and institutions can also be suspended from participating in federal student financial aid programs.

Your organization can't risk non-compliance, but it can be challenging to keep up with reporting requirements if you don't have a software solution that supports your specific needs. But what exactly should your software solution include?



1) The ability to effectively capture data

Capturing data from incidents at higher education institutions is paramount and the basis for a successful, proactive security presence on campus. Institutions must have an established system for effectively capturing data from incidents on campus and also develop campus-wide plans and procedures for Clery reporting.

If your system is confusing or inefficient, staff are generally more likely to forego policy or make mistakes. There are a number of departments that rely on reporting, including campus security, risk management, student affairs, faculty, health services, and residence life, so your software should be flexible enough to accommodate the needs of all involved in recording campus crime information.

Another important factor to consider when choosing the right incident management solution is the adaptability of the program. Because reporting regulations are subject to change with legislative updates, institutions should be wary of investing in a system doesn't automatically update according to the latest legislation.

2) Data organization


Capturing data efficiently and accurately is the first step. From there, information needs to be organized and easily accessible. Without a high level of organization and cross-referencing, campus security data loses its value.

High-quality incident reporting software should assist with data capture and organize detailed records and investigations in an easily searchable, secure database.

With the importance of meeting Clery compliance, it's also a smart idea to look for a reporting system with capabilities dedicated to Clery reporting and review. That way, when compliance officers and administrators are faced with putting together the ASR, they can easily compile the annual crime report and statistics – complete with newly added categories – in just a few clicks.

3) Easy access to policies to ensure they're being followed

In a controversial decision following the tragic shooting at Virginia Tech, the university was fined \$55,000 for non-compliance. While administrators and security officials at the institution were, in general, praised for their safety plans and response, non-compliance fines were issued because of a failure to follow the policy statements outlined in ASR “to the letter” (according to Christine L. Peterson, “The Clery Act: Costs of Noncompliance,” Education Law, November 2013). With this in mind, it's incredibly important that all colleges and universities make policy statements and response procedures readily available and widely distributed to all stakeholders.



The Campus SaVE Act's requisite education programs related to preventing sexual violence and intimate partner violence also require authoritative statements on campus policies and resources, and that documentation should be readily available to campus authorities. Your incident reporting system should provide a platform to upload any relevant policy documents so anyone who needs to can quickly access policies and response procedures to ensure compliance is being maintained.

4) Enhanced analytics for trend tracking

Software that allows users to run custom, in-depth statistical analyses on their data is an invaluable resource when it comes to Clery reporting and an excellent indicator of organizational performance and campus safety developments. Users can run reports to track incident trends and identify activity hot spots in order to take preventative action. Administrators can also perform system-wide departmental and individual audits to detect any causes for concern in reporting procedures or response processes.

Compliance Starts with Campus Culture

At its heart, Clery reporting is a litmus test for campus safety. In order to truly impact security and decrease crime, institutions of higher education must adopt a comprehensive, proactive security program. For administrators and security officials, good decision making thrives on detailed knowledge of their particular campus security conditions. With data to back up hunches and provide new insight, stakeholders can use their institution to guide policy statements and create safety initiatives.

The Clery Act presents particular challenges for institutions of higher education. The dynamic nature of compliance requirements demands a constant, dedicated commitment to safety and security personnel at all levels. Knowing that, a successful, comprehensive campus security program begins with a concerted effort from top-level campus officials who are responsible for establishing the institution's attitude toward safety and compliance. It's essential to convey the critical nature of Clery compliance and facilitate communication between the multiple departments and agencies involved in reducing criminal activity on campus. Most importantly, it's up to these officials to ensure that all parties have access to the resources they need for success.

Ready to learn more about what the right Clery-focused software solution can do for you? Contact us to learn more and request a demo, or check out our comprehensive suite of software solutions for education.

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