



TITLE IX COMMUNICATIONS GUIDE: SUPPORTING PREGNANT AND PARENTING STUDENTS



A communications guide and toolkit for campus administrators & staff to support pregnant and parenting students through the lens of Title IX.

About Us

The Pregnant Scholar Initiative at the Center for WorkLife Law, University of California College of the Law, San Francisco is a legal resource center dedicated to advancing opportunities for pregnant and parenting students in higher education.



The Pregnant Scholar Initiative provides know-your-rights information to pregnant and parenting students, and technical assistance, training, and policy implementation coaching to campus change-makers. Most services are available free of charge.

For more information

Visit www.thepregnantscholar.org

[Contact us online](#) or call (415) 565-4640

University of California College of the Law, San
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About this guide & how to use it

Many students and staff know that Title IX offers students protections related to sexual harassment and assault; few know that Title IX also offers protections for pregnant and parenting students. Similarly, many student parents report initially feeling as if Title IX coordinators are allies and/or a useful resource on their campus--although they often change their minds upon seeing their campus' Title IX website. The 2024 Title IX Regulations directly addressed this ongoing information gap by requiring educational programs to share information regarding Title IX rights to pregnant and postpartum students. While the regulations are no longer binding, they offer a best-practice template for insitutions to effectivley communicate to the campus community.

Communications that are timely and share information about students' rights are critical to student parent success. In fact, up-to-date communication is a cornerstone for educational equity.

This communications guide contains reflection questions, posters and social media graphics, model language, and a number of exemplars from campuses who are doing this work well. **Educational insitutions and their staff have permission to use, adapt, and build on these templates to meet the needs of their community.** Be sure to share this guide with additional student affairs offices and supports so they have this information too!

This guide will support Title IX coordinators and other administrators in ensuring all students and staff have access to the information that they need in a timely manner so that the new Title IX regulations can be seamlessly brought to life on your campus.

If you are a Title IX coordinator or administrator looking for additional resources and guidance regarding supporting pregnant and parenting students through Title IX, please review our [Title IX Toolkit](#) for the latest tools. For direct assistance drafting communications tools for your campus, [contact the Pregnant Scholar Team](#).

Title IX Notification Best Practice

The 2024 Title IX Rule offered useful best practice guidance to inform community members of their rights and obligations. Based on the rule, the chart below offers a summary of core notification channels impacting students who are pregnant or have related medical conditions. For sample language designed to accomplish this notification, see the rest of the toolkit.

Who should be responsible?	What should be shared and when/where?
Institution	Notice of non-discrimination must be included on the website and in each handbook, catalog, announcement, bulletin, and application form that the institution makes available to people entitled to notice, or is used in connection with the recruitment of students or employees.
All employees	Inform students who have disclosed their pregnancy (or their representative) of the Title IX Coordinator’s contact information and that the Coordinator can coordinate actions to prevent discrimination and ensure the student’s equal educational access.
Institution (with Title IX Coordinator responsible for coordinating)	Inform students who have disclosed their pregnancy (or their representative) of the institution’s obligation to not discriminate on the basis of pregnancy and related conditions; provide reasonable modifications based on the students’ needs; allow voluntary access to a separate and comparable portion of a program or activity (if any); allow a voluntary leave of absence and ensure the student is returned to the same status afterward; provide lactation space; and to treat students who are pregnant or have related conditions no less than others with temporary medical conditions. The institution’s non-discrimination notice must also be provided, as well as information about the limitations on documentation and certification to participate requirements.

Non-Discrimination Policy and Notices

All educational institutions covered by Title IX are required to adopt and publish a non-discrimination policy and to publish a non-discrimination notice on their website, in handbooks, and in other materials. The following templates are adapted from Department of education examples.

Compliant general non-discrimination policy statement:

[ABC School] does not discriminate on the basis of sex and prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates, as required by Title IX, including in admission and employment.

Non-discrimination notice:

[ABC School] does not discriminate on the basis of sex and prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates, as required by Title IX and its regulations, including in admission and employment.

Inquiries about Title IX may be referred to [ABC School's] Title IX Coordinator, the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights, or both. [ABC School's] Title IX Coordinator is [name or title, office address, email address, and telephone number].

[ABC School's] nondiscrimination policy and grievance procedures can be located at [include link to location(s) on website or otherwise describe location(s)]. To report information about conduct that may constitute sex discrimination or make a complaint of sex discrimination under Title IX, please refer to [include link to location(s) on website or otherwise describe location(s)].

For use in locations with limited space, consider this example:

[ABC School] prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates. Individuals may report concerns or questions to the Title IX Coordinator. The notice of nondiscrimination is located at [insert website address].

Non-Discrimination Policy and Notices

While the above examples inform students of the institution's commitment to non-discrimination, they do not specifically address the needs of pregnant, postpartum, and parenting students. The Pregnant Scholar recommends listing all protected classes under Title IX in conjunction with your official notice, to prevent bias and inform students/staff of their rights. See the best-practice examples, below.

Information provided to students who are pregnant or have related conditions should include the relevant Title IX non-discrimination standard:

[Institution] will not discriminate in any education program or activity against any student based on the student's current, potential, or past pregnancy or related conditions.

Institutions may wish to add language related to parenting students in order to prevent bias and create a welcoming environment for these students as well as the pregnant and postpartum students (§§ 106.4(a)-(b)(1):

As a part of our non-discrimination commitment, and as required by law, [Institution] will not adopt or implement any policy, practice, or procedure concerning a student's current, potential, or past parental, family, or marital status that treats students differently on the basis of sex. [Institution] will not discriminate in any education program or activity against any student based on the student's current, potential, or past pregnancy or related conditions.

Website

Many universities have a Title IX webpage that outlines protections against sexual harassment and sexual assault and shares contact information for Title IX Coordinators. When thinking about pregnant and parenting students, there are a few additional steps you can take:

1. Clearly and explicitly mention that pregnant and parenting students have rights and are protected by Title IX.
2. Share relevant contact information (e.g. Title IX office, Student Services, Disability office, etc.) so that student parents know who to reach out to for support.
3. List other on-campus supports, such as a student parent advisory group, caregiver support groups, and/ or childcare resources. If these supports exist on campus, you will want to share information on what they do, and how to join or access help. Check out [Los Angeles Valley College's Student Parent Support page](#) for some inspiration!
4. You can also share community-based organizations and resources that may be of use to pregnant students and student parents. This includes basic needs resources such as food banks and housing assistance programs (the [University of Oregon webpage](#) is a great example).
5. Think about creating a webpage explicitly for student parents. Listing all resources, supports, and rights in one place supports navigation and saves student parents valuable time and energy. Having one page also makes it easier for staff to keep resources updated.

Other sample webpages for student parents:

- [California State University East Bay](#)
- [Cornell University](#)
- [University of Hawai'i](#)
- [Cal Poly](#)
- As always, please use and share information from The Pregnant Scholar's website: www.thepregnantscholar.org

Syllabus Statements

Faculty serve a key role in informing students of their rights under Title IX, and facilitating access to Title IX supports. As a best practice, faculty (and other employees) should provide students who disclose their pregnancy with the Title IX Coordinator's contact information, and inform the student that the Title IX Coordinator can offer support.

While faculty can provide information on a case-by-case basis, many students are weary of the potential for bias and uncomfortable disclosing their pregnancies--even to get help. A syllabus statement can help ensure that students who are pregnant or have related conditions are referred to the help they need. This may mitigate risk by acting as a backup notification in addition to one-on-one conversations.

Example syllabus inserts:

1. As required by Title IX, [Institution] does not discriminate against any student on the basis of pregnancy or related conditions. Students who need changes to our policies, practices, or procedures due to their pregnancy or related condition(s) will be provided with reasonable modifications to protect their health or educational access. Absences will be excused for at least as long as deemed medically necessary by a student's healthcare provider and students will be given the opportunity to make up missed work. For assistance with modifications, time off, lactation breaks/space, discrimination issues, or other related needs, contact [*Insert Title IX Coordinator's contact information*].
2. I am eager to support students who are pregnant, postpartum, and/or parenting. Students who are pregnant or experiencing related conditions can get changes, when requested, to protect their health and educational access. These changes may include modified schedules, permission to record class or use a notetaker, break time to use the restroom or pump milk, and absences for medical appointments. Also, absences due to medical conditions relating to pregnancy will be excused for as long as deemed medically necessary by a student's healthcare provider and students will be given the opportunity to make up missed work. For help securing these Title IX protections, contact [*insert Title IX Coordinator's contact information*].

Social Media

Lactating Students

You're entitled to a clean and private lactation space, and the time to use it. We're here to support you!

For access to lactation space, contact:

Enter your contact info or website here

Does your campus or office have a BlueSky, X, Instagram, or Facebook page? We recommend sharing the rights that pregnant, parenting, and lactating students hold under Title IX through your social media pages, as well as resources and best practices for faculty and administrators to best support student parents. You may want to share your graphics with student groups for extra reach.

Feel free to use the [Pregnant Scholar's social media graphics](#), and this ['Know Your Rights' webpage](#) as a starting point to create your own social media posts.

Also feel free to Tweet us at [@PregnantScholar](#), and share our website: www.thepregnantscholar.org.

Posters and flyers

The Pregnant Scholar team is excited to share posters and flyers for college campuses sharing protections for pregnant and parenting students. These posters are editable so you may add resources or contact information for your campus.

[Access posters and flyers here.](#)

We also recommend using Canva or other similar platforms to create clear and brief flyers sharing 'Know Your Rights' information for pregnant and parenting students. Be sure to include relevant contact information, and make sure your materials are as inclusive and representative as possible. If you have additional needs, you can [contact us here.](#)

Where to post: The Pregnant Scholar team has heard from student parents that it is effective to post flyers and informational resources in restrooms, lactation rooms, student health centers, childcare facilities, and anywhere student parents may frequent.



Pregnant?
You have rights!

A nationwide law called Title IX bans discrimination and harassment against you because you are pregnant, were pregnant, or have a pregnancy-related condition.

We're committed to supporting your success and we follow Title IX's requirements to offer:

- Changes (such as breaks during exams or a larger desk) and supportive programming
- Time off—if you want it
- Private lactation space

To access these supports contact:

If you think you're being harassed or treated differently because of your pregnancy or a related condition, you can file a Title IX complaint.



Are you a student parent?
You have rights!

A nationwide law called Title IX bans discrimination and harassment against pregnant and parenting students on the basis of sex.

We're committed to supporting your success—you shouldn't have to choose between your family and your education.

For more information on support for student parents:

If you think you're being harassed or treated differently because of your pregnancy or a related condition, you can file a Title IX complaint.



Are you a lactating student?
You have rights!

A nationwide law called Title IX bans discrimination and harassment against you because you are pregnant, were pregnant, or have a pregnancy-related condition like lactation.

We're committed to supporting your success and will provide:

- A private and clean lactation space (Not a bathroom)
- Time to pump or nurse

To access these supports contact:

If you think you're being harassed or treated differently because of your pregnancy or a related condition, you can file a Title IX complaint.

Sample Handout and Email Text

To share information about the basic Title IX protections for pregnant and parenting students, campus administrators may want to prepare written documents that summarize key policies. These documents can help Title IX Coordinators notify students who disclose their pregnancy/related condition of their rights.

Sample handout text for students:

Based on the 2024 Title IX Rule, this handout informs students who are pregnant or have related conditions of the institution's commitments to not discriminate, and to provide accommodations and leave under Title IX. Feel free to adapt this language and insert branded design elements to meet the needs of your campus.

[Access handout sample text here.](#)

Sample email to students from faculty/staff:

This email informs students to contact the Title IX office for assistance and flags key protections. It can be used by faculty/staff when a student informs them of their pregnancy or related condition.

[Access sample student email here.](#)

Sample email to faculty:

You may want to remind faculty of their obligations to not discriminate, and to inform students of their rights. This sample email text reminds faculty of their obligations to pregnant, postpartum, and parenting students under Title IX and informs them to refer students who are pregnant or have related conditions.

[Access sample faculty email here.](#)

Other written materials

Other written materials might include your campus' handbook, brochures and more. Like your website, you will want to name that pregnant and parenting students are protected under Title IX and share any relevant contact information. It is important to share this information as widely as possible! It is also a great idea to include your student parent specific webpage and/or social media handles on any printed materials.

Potential communication channels (with links to campus examples):

1. **Handbook:** [University of Kansas virtual handbook](#). Consider sharing all family-responsive policies such as financial aid information (e.g. cost of living adjustment), childcare support and stipend information, and attendance information in one place. You can find additional family-responsive policy language in the [Back to Campus toolkit](#) (pp. 10- 11).
2. **Welcome letter:** [Sample welcome letter from Generation Hope](#) and [Welcome video from UH Manoa](#) to foster a student-parent friendly setting.
3. **Beginning of year anti-discrimination statement:** Please visit <https://teaching.berkeley.edu/resources/campus-policies#parenting> --> 'Student Support' --> 'Parenting and Pregnancy.' This anti-discrimination statement is sent campus-wide to all UC Berkeley students by email.
4. **Orientation materials**, including any presentations and flyers. Check out <https://slidesgo.com/> to find presentation templates with inclusive images.
5. **Campus map**, detailing family-responsive facilities such as lactation rooms, changing stations and kid-friendly spaces: [Child-friendly sites map at the University of Hawaii Manoa](#).

Other written materials

6. **Toolkits** for faculty and staff exploring Title IX implementation, gender equity, and educational access: [Know Your IX Campus Organizing Toolkit](#) and [Back to Campus 2021 Toolkit](#)

7. **Posters** with information directing students to your resources and sharing Title IX information: [Healthy Teen Network](#) and [Know Your IX](#) both have great posters and shareable graphics. And don't forget to [check out Pregnant Scholar's posters here!](#)

8. **Referral guide** and/or decision matrix for pregnant students in need of health or other accommodations. For example, if a student visits their advisor, it would be best practice for an advisor to have a list of contacts to make referrals and connect students across student support offices and campus departments. *As a reminder, be sure to ask students what they need before making decisions or revealing personal information on their behalf!*

Do you have sample materials you'd like to share with us and promote here?

[Please contact us!](#)

Communication Materials

Reflection Tool

An important step in ensuring student parents are well-supported on your campus is auditing your communication materials so that everyone (including students, faculty, and other administrators) knows that pregnant and parenting students are protected by and have rights under Title IX.

Below, find reflection questions to ask yourself, along with the rationale behind the questions, as you audit existing materials and create new ones.

You can [find a printable version of this reflection tool here](#).

Reflection question	Rationale
Anywhere Title IX is mentioned, is it made clear that pregnant and parenting students have rights and are protected under Title IX?	This is an easy fix that raises awareness and lets students and staff know that pregnant and parenting students have rights under Title IX. It also serves as a commitment to students and staff that your campus will support student parents. This is the first step in holding institutions accountable to creating and enforcing policies that support pregnant and parenting students.

Communication Materials

Reflection Tool

Reflection question	Rationale
<p>Are your communication platforms being updated regularly and sharing the most up-to-date information so that student parents can stay informed?</p>	<p>While this is always best practice, pregnant students and student parents often have limited time due to navigating many responsibilities and may have a greater need for more varied resources and up-to-date information. Being a student parent demands excellent time management skills and spending time following up on a resource that no longer exists, for example, takes away from the valuable time needed to be both a student and a parent.</p>
<p>Do all of your Title IX materials include information that is specific to your campus? For example, you might name that Title IX covers pregnant and parenting students nationwide, but what does that look like on your campus? Who are the relevant points of contact and who is responsible for ensuring both follow-up and follow-through occurs? Is that information made clear to student parents?</p>	<p>Title IX implementation and supports may look different from campus to campus. It is important to outline resources and relevant points of contact on your campus so that students know where to turn and who to contact to get their needs met. It is also important that both administrators and students know who is responsible for following up with students and following through on any asks or requests for support. Like the point above, it is essential to be as clear and specific as possible so that student parents do not have to spend additional time or energy tracking down resources or following up on requests for support.</p>

Communication Materials

Reflection Tool

Reflection question	Rationale
<p>Are your materials inclusive and representative?</p> <p>Do they use gender neutral language where appropriate? Do they use language such as ‘caregiver’ or ‘family’ rather than ‘mother’ or ‘husband and wife?’ Similarly, are you using ‘pregnant students,’ ‘lactating students,’ or ‘birthing parent’ rather than ‘pregnant mothers’ or ‘birth mother?’</p> <p>Are all images representative of students of different races, genders, sexualities, and ability? Are different familial structures represented?</p>	<p>It is essential to use representative materials so that all student parents know that they are a part of your campus’ community and that they have rights under Title IX. Student parents are not a monolith and hold many identities. Similarly, families look many different ways. Using inclusive materials is one way to begin to acknowledge this complexity. It also supports constructing an environment rooted in belonging for all student parents, and it is a way to avoid legal issues.</p> <p>It is important to note that word choice can create barriers. For example, if supports and resources for pregnant and parenting students are housed within your campus’ ‘Women’s Center,’ or another office that is geared toward one segment of the student population, it must be made explicitly clear that all student parents are welcome, inclusive of all identities.</p>

Consider this document that asks educators to reflect on the [seven forms of bias that exist in instructional materials](#) from Wellesley Public Schools. These points are also great to think about when creating communications materials.



Questions or need additional resources?

Contact us: thepregnantscholar.org/contactus/

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