

Effective Consent

Effective consent is informed, freely and actively given, mutually understandable words or actions which indicate a willingness to participate in mutually agreed upon current sexual activity.

Consent is not effective if it results from the use of fraud, physical force, threats, intimidation, or coercion.

Physical force exists, for example, when someone acts upon you physically, such as hitting, kicking, restraining or otherwise exerting their physical control over you through violence.

Threat exists where a reasonable person would have been compelled by the words or actions of another to give permission to sexual contact they would not otherwise have given, absent the threat. For example, threats to kill you, themselves, or to harm someone you care for are sufficient to constitute threats.

Intimidation exists where someone uses their physical presence to menace you, though no physical contact occurs, or where your knowledge of prior violent behavior by an assailant, coupled with menacing behavior, places you in fear as an implied threat.

Coercion exists when a sexual initiator engages in sexually pressuring and/or oppressive behavior that violates norms of respect in the community, such that the application of such pressure or oppression causes the object of the behavior to engage in unwanted sexual behavior. Coercion may be differentiated from seduction by the repetition of the coercive activity beyond what is reasonable, the degree of pressure applied, and the initiator's knowledge that the pressure is unwanted.

Effective Consent cannot be given by someone who is incapacitated (defined above). Furthermore, someone under the age of 16 cannot give Effective Consent to someone over the legal age of consent (18), absent a legally valid marriage or court order. A mentally disabled individual cannot give Effective Consent to a sexual activity if they cannot appreciate the fact, nature, or extent of the sexual situation in which they find themselves.

Past consent does not imply future consent; consent to engage in sexual activity with one person does not imply consent to engage in sexual activity with another; and consent can be withdrawn at any time.