UNM trying to prevent a Penn State-type scandal
By Tina Jensen, Reporter

ALBUQUERQUE (KRQE) - In the wake of the Penn State sexual abuse scandal, UNM is doing something to make sure something that big can never be covered up here.

“At Penn State, as indicated in the Louis Freeh report, there was really a culture of sweeping things under the rugs and people were uncomfortable with bringing information forward,” said Helen Gonzales, chief compliance officer for UNM.

UNM doesn’t want what happened there to happen here.

The Penn State report led UNM to create Gonzales’ position to make sure all the different departments not only know the law, but follow it.

That starts with things as basic as making sure the UNM community knows that there’s a hotline to report concerns.

“The hotline existed but as I talked to employees across campus most people don't know about it and it wasn't readily available on how to find it and where to call,” she said.

She’s also trying to determine to how enforce employees’ required sexual harassment training. Currently, only about 60 percent of staffers actually complete it.

As for consequences for employees’ not reporting something suspicious, Gonzales says it would depend on the situation.

She hopes creating a UNM Code of Ethics – right now, there isn’t one – will help the campus know that doing the right thing is not a choice.

Right now UNM is also taking inventory on exactly how many programs they have where minors are on campus.

The university does do background checks on anyone who works with children.