

VICTIM ADVOCATE SEXUAL ASSAULT RESPONSE PROTOCOLS

Initial Response

- Explain the role of Victim Advocate and the support services offered.
- Ensure that the victim understands that speaking with the victim advocate (VA) is voluntary.
- Assess for imminent danger of life-threatening or physical harm to the victim (suicidal) or another person (homicidal).
- When there is imminent danger of life-threatening or physical harm to the victim or another person, seek immediate consultation from a privileged healthcare provider.
- Ascertain the victim's immediate needs
- Ensure victims are aware of the actions available to promote their safety.
- Thoroughly explain to the victim each of the reporting options available to him or her, including the exceptions and/or limitations on use applicable to each,
- Review the Victim Reporting Preference Statement (VRPS) and:
 - Ensure the victim acknowledges his or her understanding of the explanation of each item by initialing on the space provided by each item.
 - Ensure the victim indicates the reporting option that he or she selects by initialing in the space that corresponds to his or her selection. Remind the victim that failing to do so will automatically result in an unrestricted report and notifications to the command and appropriate military criminal investigative organization.
 - Ensure signature and date by the VA and victim in the designated spaces.
- Offer the information, as appropriate, regarding: local resources for immediate safety and long-term protection and support, workplace safety, housing, childcare, legal services, clinical resources, medical services, chaplain resources, transitional compensation, and other military and civilian support services.
- Encourage the victim to seek medical attention and explain the purposes and importance of the forensic exam.
- If the victim has opted for unrestricted reporting, explain that law enforcement will be contacted and an investigator will begin the investigation.
- Facilitate victim's contact with military and civilian resources, as requested by the victim.
- Consult with the SARC on immediate assistance provided.

Ongoing Assistance

- Serve as a member of the case management group and attend all Sexual Assault Case Management group meetings involving the victim's case to represent the victim and to ensure that the victim's needs are being met.
- Maintain follow-up contact with the victim as requested by the victim until final disposition of the case.
- Support the victim in decision-making by providing relevant information and discussing available options.
- Assist the victim with prioritizing actions and establishing short- and long-term goals.
- Support the victim in advocating on her or his own behalf.
- Provide the victim comprehensive information and referral on relevant local military and civilian resources, the National Sexual Assault Hotline, and Military One Source and assist the victim in gaining access to service providers and victim support resources that can help the victim explore future options and prioritize actions.
- Assist the victim in contacting appropriate military and legal offices for personal legal advice and assistance specific to the victim's circumstances or case, including the filing for civilian or military protective orders. The victim advocate shall not provide legal advice, but can provide general information on the civil or criminal legal process.
- Advise the victim of sexual assault clinical resources.
- Refer the victim to information for family members.
- Accompany the victim to appointments and civilian and military court proceedings when asked by the victim.
- Consult regularly with your command SARC about ongoing assistance provided.