



HEADQUARTERS BATTALION
COMMANDING OFFICER'S POLICY STATEMENT ON
SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION AND RESPONSE (SAPR)



4 October 2023

POLICY. Sexual assault is a crime, incompatible with our values, and will not be tolerated. Sexual assault is intentional sexual contact characterized by the use of force, threat of force, or when the victim does not or cannot consent. A sleeping, unconscious or incompetent person cannot consent. Sexual assault includes a range of acts from unwelcomed sexual advances (e.g., groping) to rape.


PREVENTION. Sexual assaults can be isolated unforeseeable events characterized by violent and predatory behavior. These assaults are difficult to prevent and require our enduring vigilance. Sexual assaults can also occur on-duty and in the barracks, particularly if there is a climate of disrespect for fellow Marines, lackadaisical leadership, and alcohol abuse. These assaults can and must be attacked and defeated on our watch. We are gaining ground, but this is a long fight. Here is what we expect of you:

- **We are an elite warfighting organization characterized by professionalism and discipline. There are no “harmless” sexist jokes.**
- **Step up and intervene when you see a fellow Marine at risk – these are our brothers and sisters in arms – protect them as you would your own family or as you would on the battlefield.**
- **Recognize that irresponsible alcohol consumption places Marines at risk, and is frequently a factor in sexual assaults. Know when to call it a night and get everyone safely home.**
- **If you are on duty - take charge of your post and intervene when you see Marines abusing alcohol or unlawfully entering another Marine's room.**
- **SNCOs - you cannot lead from afar, be present in the barracks. Talk with your Marines where they live, eyeball to eyeball, about treating each other with decency and respect. Have frank discussions about what it means to have responsible and consensual sexual relationships.**
- **Officers - Ensure your Marines receive required annual training and include the subject of sexual assault prevention in your liberty briefs.**

RESPONSE. Marines who report being sexually assaulted are to be characterized as “victims” and treated accordingly. The veracity of the victim's report will not be judged for purposes of treatment and care, this will be determined through appropriate law enforcement investigation and the military justice process. Victims will be treated with dignity and impartiality. Victims may have confidential communications with Health Care Professionals, Chaplains and Victims Legal Counsel, but only Sexual Assault Response Coordinators (SARC) or SAPR Victim Advocates (SAPR VA) may receive a report of sexual assault. There are two reporting options:

- **Restricted:** Victims receive medical and other services, while keeping their identity confidential and without notification to law enforcement or the command.
- **Unrestricted:** Victims' identity is not confidential and an investigation will be conducted. Marines who make an unrestricted report should feel confident that their personal safety will be protected and their identity will only be released to those with a need to know.

The American people expect us to lead and win this fight – so let's get after it!


MARK. A. SMITH
Colonel, U.S. Marine Corps
Commanding Officer

DoD 24/7 Safe Helpline (877)995-5247 or MCB Quantico 24/7 Sexual Assault Support Line (703)432-9999