



Commanding Officer's Policy Statement on Sexual Assault Prevention and Response ***Professionalism – Flexibility – Reliability***

Per MCO 1752.5C, sexual assault is defined as intentional sexual contact characterized by the use of force, threats, intimidation, or abuse of authority, or when the victim does not or cannot consent. The term sexual assault includes a broad category of sexual offenses consisting of the following specific UCMJ offenses: rape, sexual assault, aggravated sexual contact, abusive sexual contact, forcible sodomy (force oral or anal sex), or attempts to commit these offenses.

Sexual assault is a criminal act that erodes unit cohesion and contradicts Marine Corps core values and will not be tolerated. Every Marine and Sailor within 9th Communication Battalion shall be aware of what constitutes sexual assault and the consequences of such behavior. All Marines and Sailors shall possess the tools to safely intervene when witnessing high-risk behaviors that may result in sexual assault. If a witness to an actual or attempted sexual assault upon another person, all Marines and Sailors shall attempt to intervene if possible and notify law enforcement immediately. Additionally, we all have the duty to connect victims of sexual assault to the Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC) or SAPR Victim Advocate (VA) for follow-on care and support. Allegations of sexual assault will be thoroughly investigated to ensure the rights of all parties involved are upheld.

We are committed to ensuring victims of sexual assault are protected, treated with dignity and respect, and provided support, advocacy, and care. There are two victim reporting options for sexual assault, Restricted and Unrestricted reporting. Restricted reporting allows for the victim to receive limited SAPR services without command knowledge. Unrestricted reports allow for the full support of the command. In the case of Unrestricted reports, care will be given to ensure the identity of a victim is released only to those who have an official need-to-know. Victim safety and confidentiality are paramount. Victims are encouraged to report any sexual assault, and those that do must feel confident that their personal safety will be protected and that they will not be re-victimized or experience any form of retaliation. Marines and Sailors who have been sexually assaulted must be treated with sensitivity and care.

Sexual assault can occur in any environment and is often preceded by a steady development of inappropriate behaviors by an aggressor. Having the integrity and courage to act is paramount in protecting our force. Look out for one another, and do not allow a fellow Marine to be victimized. Execute some of the many techniques and actions learned in your training that will ensure your safety as well as that of the person you are trying to protect. If you see a situation developing that causes you concern or encounter an assault in progress—INTERVENE! Reporting sexual assault takes a great deal of courage, and I encourage you to do so if you are ever a victim of sexual assault.

For further assistance, contact our battalion-level SAPR VAs, the Chaplain, any medical provider, or any of the following resources:

- **I MIG SARC: (442) 615-9274**
- **I MEF SARC: (760) 829-0965**
- **MCB Camp Pendleton 24/7 Sexual Assault Support Line: (760) 500-1707**
- **DoD 24/7 Safe Helpline: (877) 995-5247**

We must rid our Corps of sexual assault, and support victims of this serious crime. Every member of 9th Communication Battalion is responsible for ensuring an environment where every Marine, Sailor, and civilian is treated with dignity and respect at all times.

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