

Sexual Assault Response Team – Law Enforcement Response

We will:

- Respond to all reports of sexual offenses including third party and anonymous reports and investigate.
- Assist and support all victims/survivors of sexual assault in a sensitive manner, and recognizing that sexual assault is a crime that can have serious traumatic effects on the victim/survivor, make every effort to minimize additional trauma.
- Treat victims/survivors with courtesy, compassion, and respect for their personal dignity and privacy.

Procedures:

Communications

- Upon receipt of a report of sexual assault, communications will dispatch an officer to meet with the victim as soon as practical. When possible a SART Officer will be dispatched as the initial officer.
- If the assault has just occurred, the dispatcher will advise the person reporting the assault to not change his/her clothing or bathe prior to being examined by an SAE.
- Dispatch will determine from the reporting party if the suspect is at or around the scene of the assault and advise the responding officer(s) accordingly.

Officer Response/Investigation

- If a Patrol Officer is the first responding officer, he/she will speak with the victim to determine if a SART Officer needs to respond. The Patrol Officer should first attempt to directly contact Investigations. In the event that an investigator is not available, the Patrol Officer should contact the next available SART Officer.
- The SART Officer will advise dispatch to page the on-call Victim's Advocate to respond.
- The SART Officer(s) will respond to the scene and meet with the victim for further investigation. (NOTE: ALL interviews will be videotaped, or at minimum audio recorded.) The SART Officer will determine if an exam is required. The SART Officer may also decide to contact an additional SART Officer to assist, based on the totality of the circumstances. (Note: If the call involves an interfamilial case of sexual abuse, the SART Officer will contact DSS.)
 - If the victim requires an exam, the SART Officer will arrange for transportation of the victim to the SAE site.
- The SART Officer will request through dispatch to have a SAE paged and respond to SAE site.

- Prior to an exam, the SAE will meet with the SART Officer. The SART Officer will brief the SAE on the details of the case and any relevant information about the crime and/or evidence to collect.
- During the exam, the SART Officer shall not be present in the room. If the victim requests another person in the room, the Victim's Advocate may be present.
- The SART Officer will speak to the SAE prior to the victim leaving the site. The discussion should include evidence collected, statements of the victim, specific injuries (display pictures taken during exam) or any other relevant facts. At this time the SART Officer and the SAE should arrange for any follow-up exams or appointments for follow-up photographs.
- The SART Officer should double check that all necessary evidence has been collected, and receive the Sexual Assault kit from the SAE.
- The SART Officer will provide the SAE with the case number for the incident so the SAE can provide their report and pictures to the SART Officer within 48 hours.
- The SART Officer, along with the Victim's Advocate shall insure that safety is provided for the victim.
- The SART Officer will determine through the interview the location of the assault and process the scene accordingly.
- The SART Officer will complete follow-up interviews with outcry witness (the initial person contacted by the victim) and/or any other witnesses.
- The SART Officer will also interview the suspect in the case and the interview must be videotaped and/or audio taped.
- If the Officer is unable to complete the investigation, the appropriate Investigative Supervisor should be contacted to assign follow-up. It is encouraged that the initial SART Officer complete the entire investigation.

A monthly SART meeting will be held on the first Thursday of every month at 4:00pm at the PSC-Police Department Conference Room. The meeting will include all team members (Officers/Deputies, Examiners, Victim's Advocates, DA representative) to review all cases and procedures, as well as necessary training issues. All team members are strongly urged to attend.