



## SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION AND RESPONSE OFFICE



### Fact Sheet for Special Victims' Counsel/ Victims' Legal Counsel/ Victims' Counsel: About the Catch a Serial Offender (CATCH) Program

The CATCH Program allows adult sexual assault victims to anonymously submit suspect information into a database that is assessed by the Services' Military Criminal Investigation Organizations (MCIOs) at CATCH Headquarters (HQ). If there is a match, a specially trained CATCH Program representative from the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Program will contact the victim. The victim's identity will only be revealed to law enforcement if the victim decides to participate in the investigation after a match. For general information, visit [www.sapr.mil/catch](http://www.sapr.mil/catch).

To submit a CATCH entry, victims will contact a Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC) or SAPR Victim Advocate (VA), who will provide a username and password for the CATCH system. Victims are eligible to submit a CATCH entry if they filed Restricted Reports, certain Unrestricted Reports where the name of the suspect is not reported to law enforcement or uncovered by law enforcement, or no report.

#### Who is eligible to participate in the CATCH Program?

- Current Service members, including cadets and midshipmen at the Military Service Academies and the prep schools, Reservists, and National Guard members
- Adult military dependents
- Former Service members
- Department civilian employees, if the suspect is a Service member

#### Who are the key CATCH Program personnel?

- **CATCH HQ MCIO Lead and Team** – Each Service has specially trained MCIO investigators to assess entries for matches.
- **CATCH HQ SAPR Lead (Service/National Guard Admins)** – Each Service has specially trained SAPR personnel to manage CATCH data and procedures. The CATCH HQ SAPR Leads also enroll SARCs in the CATCH system to enable them to generate usernames and passwords for victims.
- **CATCH HQ Notification POC** – Each Service assigns notification responsibility to two CATCH HQ Notification POCs who are specially trained SARCs, SAPR VAs, CATCH HQ SAPR Leads, or SAPR Program Managers; have a D-SAACP certification and maintain MRE 514 confidentiality; and, have DSAID access.

**LEGAL:** To help answer legal questions about the CATCH Program, the SARC or SAPR VA will offer a referral to the Special Victims' Counsel/Victims' Legal Counsel/Victims' Counsel (SVC/VLC/VC), so the victim can discuss any issues before deciding to submit a CATCH entry.

#### Information in a CATCH Entry

Victims may also provide as much information as they remember and feel comfortable sharing. The top things for victims to provide, only if known already, include:



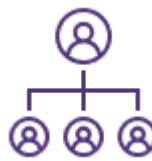
Suspect name



Suspect phone number



Suspect social media profile(s) and platform(s)



E-/O- Suspect rank



Date & location of the offense



Digital photos may be submitted

**CATCH entries are only assessed by investigators from the Services' MCIOs that have been specially assigned to CATCH Headquarters, not at the victim's installation.**

- CATCH HQ MCIOs assess entries against other entries and against Department Law Enforcement databases to detect matches and potentially identify serial offenders.
- SARCs, local law enforcement, and local MCIOs do not have access to CATCH data.
- Each entry is kept for 10 years. This means that victims could be contacted at any time over 10 years if there is a potential match, as long as victims did not opt out of the CATCH Program and their contact information does not change.
- If the victim had a Sexual Assault Forensic Examination (SAFE) Kit, it will also be retained for 10 years.

For more information about the CATCH Program, please visit [sapr.mil/catch](http://sapr.mil/catch).

For confidential victim assistance, call or visit the Safe Helpline at 877-995-5247 or [safehelpline.org](http://safehelpline.org).



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## Privacy Protections for Victims and Suspects

- CATCH entries do not trigger a safety exception for Restricted Reports.
- Victims can opt out of the CATCH Program at any time, even after they are contacted about a match.
- CATCH entry information about a suspect is not used by promotion boards or for any other administrative or disciplinary matters.
- No victim PII is collected in CATCH entries.
- FOIA Exception Section 550 of NDAA for FY2020: Victim disclosures under the Catch a Serial Offender Program shall be withheld from public disclosure under paragraph (b)(3) of section 552 of title 5, USC ("Freedom of Information Act").

**Question:** How is a victim contacted after a match if there is no victim identification information inside the CATCH system?

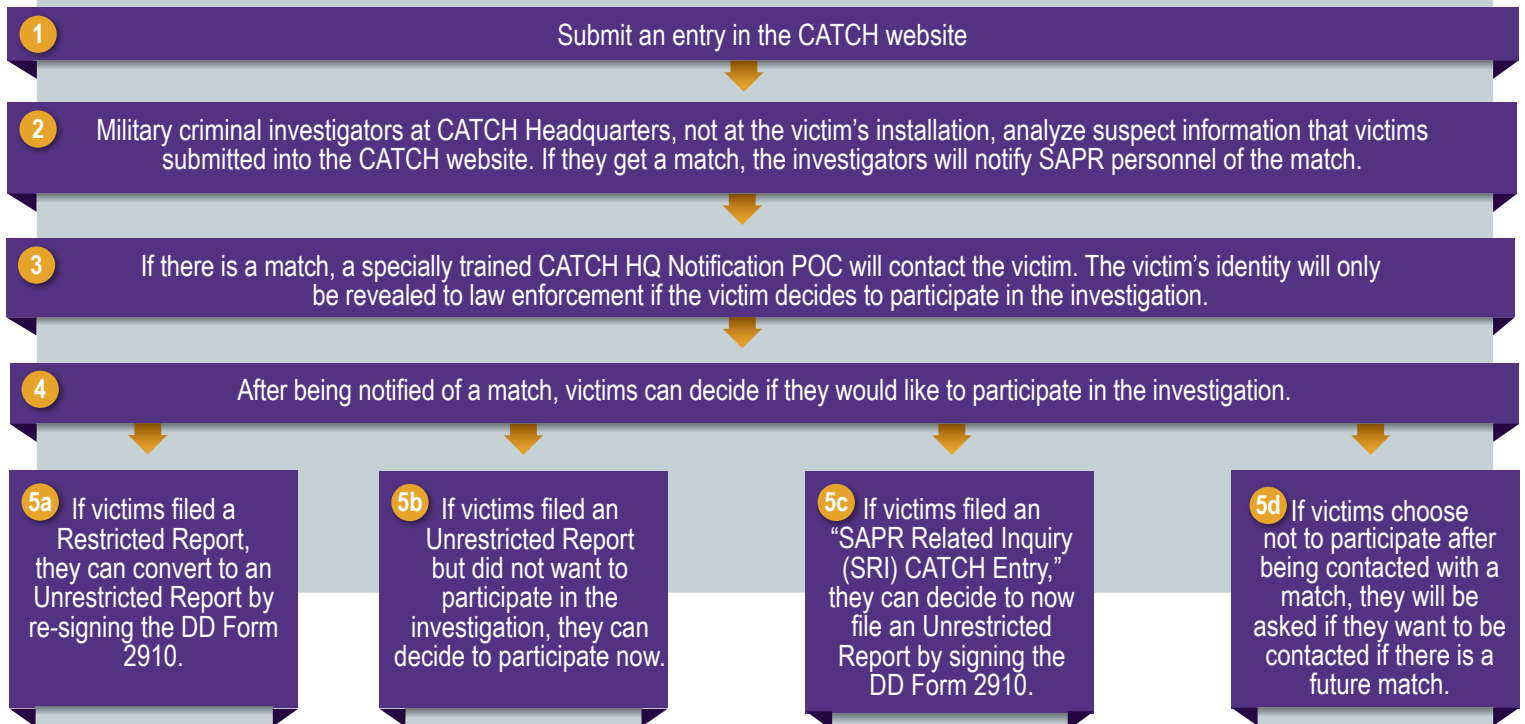
**Answer:** If there is a match, the SARC will locate the victim's contact information in DSAID, which is a separate SAPR database and not connected to the CATCH system.

## LEGAL: What do I advise victims who are not ready to report or do not want to officially report a sexual assault for personal reasons, because they fear retaliation or negative career impacts, or because they are concerned about discipline resulting from collateral misconduct?

If victims do not want to file a report of sexual assault, they may submit a SAPR-Related Inquiry (SRI) CATCH Entry.

- Victims will complete the DD Form 2910-4, "Catch a Serial Offender Program Explanation and Notification Form for SAPR-Related Inquiry (SRI) CATCH Entries" with a SARC or SAPR VA and provide their contact information on the DD Form 2910-4 in the event of a match.
- The DD Form 2910-4 is not a report of sexual assault. It is a CATCH form for victims who do not file a report. (The reporting form is the DD Form 2910.)
- SARCs will generate a corresponding DSAID Control Number for the SRI, which will be used by the SARC in the CATCH system to generate a CATCH username and password. The DSAID Control Number will also be used to upload the DD Form 2910-4 into DSAID, so the victim's contact information is secure and their PII protected.

### The CATCH Program Process



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## What Happens After a Victim is Notified of a Match?

### Participation in the CATCH Program is voluntary.

- If there is a match, the victim's name will not be automatically provided to law enforcement without the victim's permission.
- Victims may decline to participate in the process at any point, even after being notified that there was a potential match. By policy, there shall be no adverse consequences to victims if they do not agree to participate.

### In accordance with policy, the CATCH HQ Notification POC provides the victim with four pieces of information:

1. A copy of their own CATCH entry to confirm the suspect identity (if suspect name was provided), to refresh their recollection as to what was entered in CATCH, and to ensure that the victim knows which CATCH entry is in question (in the event that the victim has multiple CATCH entries or multiple sexual assault reports that the CATCH HQ Notification POC may not be aware of).
  - The CATCH HQ Notification POC will not provide the victim with any information from other sources.
  - The victim will be provided with a copy only of their own entry into the CATCH system, which is very limited in scope.
  - The CATCH HQ Notification POC will not provide the victim with the name of the suspect if it is not included in the victim's entry.
2. Whether the match was against one victim or multiple victims. The CATCH HQ Notification POC will indicate the number of victims and indicate whether they had CATCH entries or open/closed investigations.
3. Whether the victim's CATCH entry matched another CATCH entry.
4. Whether the victim's CATCH entry matched an open or closed MCIO investigation. To be considered a match, the investigation must involve an allegation of rape, sexual assault, aggravated sexual contact, abusive sexual contact, rape of a child, sexual assault of a child, or attempts of these offenses.

### Best Practice

In addition to the information above, the CATCH HQ Notification POC can provide the victim with the year and location of the other case to which the victim matched. This information is obtained from the CATCH HQ MCIO Lead. This is a best practice and not currently required by policy.

### LEGAL: Legal assistance after match notification: The victim may wish to have legal advice before deciding to participate in the investigation. The victim may want to know:

- If the other victim(s) will also participate in the investigation. The victim may ask the SVC/VLC/VC to reach out to the other victim's SVC/VLC/VC for information or to help facilitate both victims agreeing to participate.
- The jurisdiction of the trial (civilian/military and actual location)
- If their case will be tried together with the other victim's case, or if there will be two separate trials

### Once notification is made to the victim, the victim will be given 30 calendar days to decide whether to participate in the investigation.

- During that time, if the victim has questions, the CATCH HQ Notification POC will refer to an SVC/VLC/VC.
- The 30-day timeframe is only for recordkeeping to ensure that a victim is not forgotten and that a SARC reaches out to them within the month. If a victim has no decision at the 30-day day mark, they can always come back later, but the SARC will no longer track the decision for follow-up.
- If the victim decides to participate, the SARC will facilitate reporting within the SAPR Program and facilitate contact with an MCIO for purposes of a formal victim statement.
- If the victim notifies the CATCH HQ Notification POC that s/he does not want to participate in the investigation, the victim will be asked by the "CATCH HQ Notification POC" the following questions:
  - No Participation but staying in CATCH: If s/he wants to remain in the CATCH Program and potentially be contacted again.
  - Opting Out of CATCH: If the victim no longer wants to participate in the CATCH Program and wants to opt out. If the victim opts out, the CATCH Entry will become inactive until it is purged from the system at the 10-year mark.
  - Feedback from Victims After Notification: All victims who decide not to participate will be asked by the CATCH HQ Notification POC whether they would be interested in sharing their reason for not participating, so that this information can be used to improve the CATCH Program for other victims. This feedback is completely voluntary, and victims should never be encouraged or pressured to provide feedback.

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**LEGAL: Remember Discovery Responsibilities of Trial Counsel.** After a match, if the victim participates in the investigation and if the ensuing MCIO investigation results in criminal charges, the victim's original CATCH entry may be subject to the discovery process.

**Question:** How do I respond to a commander who states, "I am responsible for both victims and suspects. I am concerned with the victims' ability to file unsubstantiated reports in the CATCH system and the subsequent potential repercussions for individuals who have false reports filed on them"?

**Answer:** [DoDI 5505.18](#), "Investigation of Adult Sexual Assault in the Department of Defense," contains the following explicit protections for individuals who are identified by victims in CATCH entries:

1. The CATCH database is protected: *CATCH Program information received by an MCIO will be cataloged on a centralized, restricted, Naval Criminal Investigative Service server... The CATCH Program Website will be sequestered from unauthorized users in order to protect the integrity of the data.*
2. Presumption of innocence: *Website procedures developed to implement the CATCH Program will preserve the presumption of innocence for suspects... Information concerning the identity of a suspect may not be disclosed to the victim or suspect's chain of command, or any other individual, without a need to know. It may not be used for any purpose related to the suspect's assignment, training, or advancement unless the victim who submitted the CATCH Entry decides to participate in the investigation and an MCIO initiates an investigation.*
3. CATCH entries are not retained indefinitely: *Information will be retained for a period of 10 years from the date of the input or the last date of any query data.*