



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION AND RESPONSE OFFICE



TOPIC: “REPORTING” VS. “DISCLOSURE” AND SAFE HELPLINE REPORTING
JULY 2024

Topics from Deputy Secretary of Defense Memo, “Updates to Department of Defense Policies to Enhance Support for Adult Sexual Assault Victims,” signed May 2024. Available at www.sapr.mil/latest-policy-updates.

Paragraph 4, Policy, DoDI 6495.02, Volume 1, as follows:

Implements DoD Safe Helpline reporting, upon capability becoming operational.

Reports of Adult Sexual Assault to the DoD Safe Helpline

b. The goal is a DoD free of sexual assault, through an environment of prevention, education and training, response capability (see Glossary), victim support, reporting procedures, and appropriate accountability that enhances the safety and well-being of all persons covered by this DoDI 6495.01, volume 1, and [DoD Directive 6495.01, “Sexual Assault Prevention and Response \(SAPR\) Program”](#).

(1) While *an adult* sexual assault victim may “disclose” information to whomever *they* choose, *for purposes of the SAPR program* an official “report” *of adult sexual assault (not related to the Family Advocacy Program)* is made only when:

(a) *A [DD Form 2910, “Victim Reporting Preference Statement,”](#) or a [DD Form 2910-8, “Reporting Preference Statement for DoD Civilian Employees to Report Sexual Assault,”](#) is signed and filed with a SARC or SAPR VA,*

(b) *A Military Criminal Investigative Organization (MCIO) investigator initiates an investigation, or*

(c) *Reported to in the Safe Helpline, when that capability is fully operational as specifically authorized by the USD (P&R) to implement Section 549H of the [Fiscal Year 2022 National Defense Authorization Act \(NDAA\)](#).*

(2) For Restricted and Unrestricted Reporting purposes, a report can be made to *DoD* healthcare (*medical and mental health*) personnel, but healthcare personnel *must* then immediately contact the SARC or SAPR VA to fill out the [DD Form 2910](#). Chaplains and military attorneys cannot take official reports.

(3) State laws that require disclosure of personally identifiable information (PII) of the adult sexual assault victim or *suspect* to local or State law enforcement *by SARCs, SAPR VAs and healthcare personnel (see Glossary in DoDI 6495.02, vol. 1) of the Department of Defense* are preempted by *Section 536 of the [Fiscal Year 2016 NDAA](#) when a report is made on a DoD installation or in a military treatment facility, except when disclosure of PII is necessary to prevent or mitigate a serious and imminent threat to the health or safety of an individual.*

(4) Unless a [DD Form 2910](#) is filed with a SARC *or SAPR VA*, a *sexual assault disclosure* to a Chaplain or military attorney may not result in the rendering of SAPR services or investigative action because of the privileges associated with speaking to these individuals. A Chaplain or military attorney should advise the victim to consult with a SARC to understand the

full scope of services available or facilitate, with the victim's consent, *a warm handoff to a SARC or SAPR VA.*

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QUESTION 1: What is Safe Helpline?

Safe Helpline is a crisis support service for members of the DoD community affected by sexual assault. The DoD Safe Helpline:

- *Is available 24/7 worldwide with "click, call, or text" user options for anonymous and confidential support.*
- *Can be accessed by logging on to www.safehelpline.org or by calling 1-877-995-5247, and through the DoD Safe Helpline mobile application.*
- *Is to be utilized as the sole DoD hotline.*
- *Does not replace local base and installation SARC or SAPR VA contact information.*

For more information, visit www.sapr.mil/dod-safe-helpline.

QUESTION 2: What is Section 536?

Section 536 of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 preempts State laws that require disclosure of personally identifiable information (PII) of the adult sexual assault victim or suspect to local or State law enforcement, except when reporting is necessary to prevent or mitigate a serious and imminent threat to the health or safety of an individual an exception applies.