



DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION AND RESPONSE OFFICE



POLICY

The DoD Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office (SAPRO) administers sexual assault-related policy and standards for adoption across the Military to establish resources and protections for all Service members. SAPRO's policies are gender-responsive, culturally competent, and recovery-oriented, resulting in medical care and services that support those who have been victimized. In its policy oversight and advisory role, SAPRO aims to establish a comprehensive, trauma-informed response system that goes beyond traditional approaches and empowers victims during the reporting process.

Approach

SAPRO works closely with Service leaders to develop and apply common policies throughout the Military and advises the Secretary of Defense on recommended sexual assault prevention and response actions. To succeed in its mission, SAPRO convenes various forums, such as integrated decision teams and working groups, to collaborate with DoD stakeholders on new policy, updates to existing laws, and emerging issues. This approach allows the Department to effectively recommend and implement methods to prevent sexual assault and support victims when crimes occur. For example, DoD policy mandates that every sexual assault is treated as an emergency, which ensures survivors' psychological and physical health are the top priorities.

A Proven Policy Process

SAPRO issues policy to combat sexual assault in several forms: Leadership Memorandums, Directives, Instructions, and Federal Register Rules.

- >> **Leadership Memorandums** establish policy procedures directed by the Secretary of Defense prior to publishing a Departmental Directive or Instruction
- >> **DoD Directives (DoDD)** broadly establish policy for DoD programs, define missions, and delegate authority to specific DoD components
- >> **DoD Instructions (DoDI)** establish procedures for executing policy, operating programs, and assigning duty responsibilities
- >> **Federal Register Rules** provide other Federal Agencies and the public the opportunity to comment on DoDDs and DoDIs

Key Policies

DoDD 6495.01 Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program

Outlines the overarching Department policy on sexual assault prevention and response and standardizes guidance at all levels.

DoDI 6495.02 Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program Procedures

Details the procedures for responding to the crime of sexual assault within the Military, including requirements for victim advocacy, healthcare, training standards, and formal recommendations.

DoDI 6495.03 Defense Sexual Assault Advocate Certification Program (D-SAACP)

Issues guidance and procedures to ensure all personnel working directly with military victims of sexual assault hold professional credentials in victim advocacy.

STATISTICAL SNAPSHOT

- Over 50 Secretary of Defense-directed initiatives enacted since 2012 to improve prevention and response efforts
- 100+ Congressional provisions operationalized related to sexual assault, including the most comprehensive reforms to the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) since 1968
- 125 recommendations issued by the Congressionally-mandated Response Systems to Adult Sexual Assault Crimes Panel
- 43 Government Accountability Office sexual assault-related recommendations assessed over nine engagements to measure prevention and response efforts and inform future programming
- 91 Defense Task Force on Sexual Assault in the Military Services (DTF-SAMS) report recommendations analyzed to focus SAPRO's procedures and implementation processes

MAJOR POLICY PROGRESS

- Standardized certification requirements for Sexual Assault Response Coordinators (SARCs) and SAPR Victim Advocates (VAs) to ensure quality care for victims
- Worked with legal and investigative offices to establish Case Management Groups (CMGs) to review Unrestricted Reports of sexual assaults and deploy resources
- Partnered with Military Criminal Investigation Organizations (MCIOS), Judge Advocates and Victim/Witness Assistance Program (VWAP) to institute a Special Victim Investigation and Prosecution (SVIP) capability to investigate and prosecute offenses, enhance victim support, and facilitate offender accountability
- Issued the *Retaliation Prevention and Response Strategy* to guide future policies that support and protect individuals who experience retaliation after reporting
- Formed High-Risk Response Teams to proactively assess danger and activate response resources within 24 hours of a high risk assessment

For more information, please visit sapr.mil

For confidential victim assistance, call or visit the DoD Safe Helpline at 877-995-5247 or safehelpline.org