



**DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION
AND RESPONSE OFFICE**



**2019 SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS AND PREVENTION MONTH
"PROTECTING OUR PEOPLE PROTECTS OUR MISSION"**

SAPR Colleagues,

Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month provides us with the opportunity to reflect upon the progress we have made in establishing a response-focused infrastructure that supports Service members who report a sexual assault. It is important that our service members continue to understand existing processes, including how to contact a sexual assault response coordinator, how to make a report (whether restricted or unrestricted) if a sexual assault does occur, and the type of resources, and support available to sexual assault victims, to include the DoD Safe Helpline.

While promoting awareness of the crime and the resources available is important, we cannot stop there. Sexual assault is a horrendous crime that inflicts unimaginable pain on its victims. Preventing perpetration is the only guarantee to stop sexual assault before it occurs. Prevention must be part of a comprehensive approach and our first-line of effort to eliminate this abhorrent behavior from our ranks.

As you speak and engage during Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Month, you might consider using messages that draw your community together as partners in fighting this crime. We must also continue to provide knowledge- and skill-building activities that will further lasting behavioral change – not just during the month of April – but throughout the year.

As individuals we can all make a difference, but think of the power we could have if an entire community mobilizes behind this call to action! Protecting our people protects our mission. Together, we can advance our mission to provide a military culture where sexual assault and other negative behaviors are not tolerated, condoned, or ignored, and alleged offenders are held appropriately accountable.

Thank you for all your leadership and all you do. I appreciate your continued collaboration and commitment.

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