



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



# Sexual Assault-Prevention and Response Victim Advocacy Initial Skills Assessment Tool

May 2020

## What:

This tool is intended to help provide structured observation and feedback to Sexual Assault Response Coordinators (SARCs) and Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Victim Advocates (VAs) during their initial training. This tool is a way to identify areas of strength, remediation, and growth based on the Defense Sexual Assault Advocate Certification Program (D-SAACP) core competencies. This tool is not to be used as a replacement for any formal performance assessment and evaluation of SARCs and SAPR VAs.

## Who:

This tool can be used by course facilitators or instructors during initial SAPR training. Additionally, it can be used by SARCs to support the development of SARCs or SAPR VAs whom they supervise.

## How:

The following pages include checklists of critical behaviors to observe and provide feedback on during role-play scenarios. Each behavior item includes a yes/no response on the checklist to document if the behavior was observed, but there is no need to tabulate yes/no responses to evaluate performance. This tool should be used to foster discussion of the individual's skills and areas for growth, and should not be used in a punitive or negative way. Below are some recommendations for how to use this checklist in a training or group learning situation.

- >> *In a one-on-one role-play in front of the class, observe learners acting out a scenario. Fill out the tool while observing the role-play and provide it to the learner when they are finished so they can review their own performance.*
- >> *Engage learners in a fishbowl scenario where you act as either the victim or SAPR VA. Choose one learner to participate in the role-play with you. Depending on the size of the class, assign some or all the remaining learners to the peer observer role. Provide these learners with a copy of the tool and encourage them to take notes on the demonstration of the indicated behaviors in the scenario. Have peer observers discuss which behaviors they saw demonstrated, what could have been done differently, and allow them to ask questions about how they should handle the scenario on the job.*
- >> *Divide learners into groups of 4 to 6. Have learners self-assign roles: 2 people to act out the role play and 2 to 4 people to observe and provide feedback using the observation and feedback tool. Instruct groups to discuss what was demonstrated and what could have been done differently after they complete the role play. While groups are doing this, rotate through the groups and observe questions and areas where learners are experiencing challenges. Once all groups are done, reconvene and have each group share what they were able to demonstrate well and where they saw they need more practice.*



## SAPR Victim Advocacy Initial Skills Assessment Tool

1 Introduction			Y	N
1a	Introduction	Introduces self, general SAPR Program overview, victim advocacy role, etc.		
		Check in with victim to determine emotional state/ immediate concerns		
1b	Role within Unit	Describes victim advocacy role within unit (e.g., SARC, SAPR VA, UVA)		
		Communicates support provided by your role		
		Communicates limitations of your role		
		Communicates services are optional and may be declined (in whole or in part) at any time		
1c	Confidentiality	Describes the confidentiality of communications between a SARC, SAPR Victim Advocate and a victim		
		Describes a few of the key limits to confidentiality (harm to self or others; threats to safety)		
1d	Status of Individual	Confirms eligibility status of individual (e.g., Active Duty, Reservist, National Guard, Adult Dependent, Civilian, Contractor etc.)		
1e	Safety Assessment	Asks about location of suspect, suspect's access to the victim, and concerns about ongoing or future contact		
		Asks about immediate medical concerns		
		Asks about whether victim is having thoughts of self-harm or causing harm to others		
COMMENTS				



## SAPR Victim Advocacy Initial Skills Assessment Tool

2 Building Victim Rapport			Y	N
2a	Use of Verbal Communication	Provides victim time to express thoughts, feelings, and concerns		
		Demonstrates ability to capture and understand victim's concerns		
		Shares tailored information using clear language the victim can understand		
		Checks that the victim understands information provided		
2b	Use of Non-Verbal Communication (i.e. body language)	Displays open, receptive body posture		
		Displays appropriate eye contact and head nods		
		Displays focus and attention		
		Demonstrates active listening		
2c	Cultural Awareness/ Sensitivity	Displays non-judgmental attitudes about gender identification, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, religion or other cultural factors		
		Treats the victim with fairness and respects differences		
		Demonstrates empathy		
2d	Victim Empowerment	Respects and supports victim's choices		
		Demonstrates ability to earn trust		
		Respects impact of trauma and responds in a trauma-informed way		
		Recognizes range of responses to victimization, and social/psychological needs of victims		
		Facilitates victim understanding of available services but respects victim as the expert in their healing		
COMMENTS				



## SAPR Victim Advocacy Initial Skills Assessment Tool

3 Crisis Intervention Process			Y	N
3a	Define the Problem	Assesses and clarifies basic and immediate needs for referrals or additional support (medical, behavioral health, legal, spiritual, etc.)		
		Identifies issues that may require consultation with Legal Authority (nature of allegations, safety concerns)		
3b	Ensure Safety	Explains and communicates victim assistance options and resources for safety such as Military/ Civilian Protective Orders, Expedited Transfer, High Risk Response Team, Safety Plan		
		Assesses safety concerns of victim (both immediate and long-term)		
		Identifies those issues that may require High Risk Response Team		
3c	Provide Support/ Examine Alternatives	Discusses available providers for additional support (Safe Helpline, military/ civilian healthcare providers, Special Victims' Counsel/Victims' Legal Counsel, etc.)		
		Confirms understanding of what other providers can and cannot do		
		Offers to schedule and/or accompany victim to providers		
3d	Make Plans	Prepares victim for what comes next (possible or likely reactions, forensic exam, investigation, legal process, etc.)		
		Asks victim how they would like to proceed		
		Anticipates barriers and impediments victim may encounter		
		Helps victim identify ways to practice self-care		
3e	Obtain Commitment	Addresses all questions and concerns, and gathers final data for agreed-upon next steps		
		Offers to schedule a follow-up and provides contact information		
COMMENTS				



## SAPR Victim Advocacy Initial Skills Assessment Tool

4 Reporting Options/DD Form 2910			Y	N
4a	Explain Reporting Options	Communicates differences between Restricted and Unrestricted reporting		
		Communicates option to convert from Restricted to Unrestricted reporting		
		Advises on limitations of Restricted reporting		
		Recognizes duties associated with protection of information, safety concerns, data collection if victim chooses not to sign (DSAID, notification of SARC, etc)		
4b	Manage victim expectations of the administrative/military process			
4c	Review DD Form 2910	Explains how to complete all boxes on the DD Form 2910 with applicable examples and a focus on sections most relevant to each victim		
		Allows victim to select their own reporting option		
		Communicates block 11 (CATCH Program)		
4d	Ensure victim initialed all blocks and signed form (if elected)			
4e	Finalize DD Form 2910	Provides the victim a hard copy of the DD Form 2910 with their signature		
		Advises victim to keep copy of the DD Form 2910 in their personal records		
4f	Addresses Retaliation Concerns	Explains retaliatory behaviors (Reprisal, Ostracism, Maltreatment)		
		Addresses to whom the victim may disclose and report retaliatory behaviors (Inspector General, Equal Opportunity Advisor, Command Team, Sexual Assault Response Coordinator, etc.) via a DD Form 2910-2		
COMMENTS				