



# DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION AND RESPONSE OFFICE



## VICTIM ASSISTANCE

The Department of Defense (DoD) Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office (SAPRO) enacts policies and creates programs to provide high-quality services and support to military victims of sexual assault. These policies and programs are intended to strengthen resiliency of sexual assault survivors and instill confidence and trust in the reporting process, whether they choose to file a restricted or unrestricted report. DoD's approach ensures that survivors receive the protections to which they are entitled, the privacy they desire, and the care they deserve.

### Approach

SAPRO works closely with the Services to standardize victim response programs and resources across the Department. Core elements include:

- >> Certified cadre of **Sexual Assault Response Coordinators (SARCs)** and **Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Victim Advocates (SAPR VAs)** who help victims obtain services and offer trauma-informed care, referrals, and ongoing nonclinical support
- >> Rigorous **DoD Sexual Assault Advocate Certification Program (D-SAACP)** that requires approved credentials for all those who assist victims. The National Organization for Victim Assistance (NOVA) administers the program through a contract with DoD SAPRO
- >> **Restricted reporting** option that enables access to healthcare and advocacy support, but does not trigger an investigation
- >> Worldwide, anonymous, 24/7 crisis intervention support through the **DoD Safe Helpline**
- >> Professional **Special Victims' Counsel (SVC)** and **Victims' Legal Counsel (VLC)** who provide victims with legal representation, support in exercising their legal rights, and help while navigating the military justice system
- >> Specially-trained **military criminal investigators** utilizing cutting-edge forensic evidence collection tools
- >> Access to gender-responsive, culturally competent **medical and counseling services**
- >> Support and protections for individuals who experience **retaliation after reporting**

### Policy

The Department issued the *SAPR Program Procedures* (DoDI 6495.02) to formalize victim assistance programs and care. SAPRO developed two supplemental victim-centered policies – *D-SAACP* (DTM 14-001) and *DoD Standards for Victim Assistance Services in the Military Community* (DoDI 6400.07) – which set high standards for the way the Department responds to and supports victims throughout their path to recovery.

### DoD Safe Helpline

Since 2011, Safe Helpline has delivered confidential, one-on-one support to members of the DoD community who have been affected by sexual assault. The Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN) operates the Safe Helpline through a contract with DoD SAPRO.

## STATISTICAL SNAPSHOT

- 45,000 SARCs and SAPR VAs are trained and certified through D-SAACP
- 80,000 survivors, family members, colleagues, and others received support through DoD Safe Helpline since its launch
- Over 1.25 million people received information from SafeHelpline.org in the past five years
- 5,000 SARCs and SAPR VAs attended Advanced Military Sexual Assault Advocate Training (AMSAAT) since 2014

## MAJOR VICTIM ASSISTANCE EFFORTS

- Overseeing D-SAACP certification and Department-wide victim assistance standards
- Executing *DoD Plan to Prevent and Respond to Sexual Assault of Military Men*
- Introducing male-specific Safe Help Room sessions and follow-up support
- Deploying self-guided educational program for Service members, Midshipmen, and Cadets attending Military Service Academies
- Implementing *DoD Retaliation Prevention and Response Strategy*



[safehelpline.org](http://safehelpline.org) | 877-995-5247

- >> Telephone Helpline
- >> Self-care App
- >> Online Helpline
- >> Safe HelpRoom
- >> Info by Text
- >> Follow-up Support