



## TOPIC: SEXUAL ASSAULT RESPONSE WORKFORCE JULY 2024

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

### DSD Memo excerpt

OSD Principal Staff Assistants and DoD Component heads will ensure their policies and procedures align with these amended issuances, as applicable. The changes include moving Sexual Assault Response Coordinators (SARCs) and SAPR Victim Advocates (VAs) from the command reporting structure and significantly reducing reliance upon personnel performing SARC and SAPR VA duties as collateral duties (with very limited exceptions). I am approving the “Sexual Assault Response Workforce (SARW) Model,” which can be found on [www.sapr.mil](http://www.sapr.mil). I am directing the establishment of the SARW in accordance with the timeline set forth in this memorandum and top-level guidance in Volume 1 of DoDI 6495.02.

Additionally, I direct the Executive Director, Office of Force Resiliency, as the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) Functional Community Manager (OFCM) for the SARW, in accordance with the [February 23, 2024, P&R Memo](#), to expeditiously establish a governance structure to maintain the standard functions of the SARW as well as oversee workforce planning efforts and strategies.

In accordance with applicable laws and regulations, it is my intent that the Department undertake a comprehensive and standardized approach to professionalize, strengthen, and appropriately resource the SARW to deliver high quality victim assistance. Incumbent DoD civilian employees will be given the opportunity, tools, training, and reasonable time to upskill in order to meet the requirements for the new SARW positions, the details of which will appear in the SARW policy to be issued by the USD (P&R).

### **Paragraph 4, Policy, in DoDI 6495.02, Volume 1, as follows:**

Requires restructuring and elimination of collateral duty unless an exception applies, directs unimpeded access by the Lead SARC to the commander, and establishes the “Sexual Assault Response Workforce (SARW)” and resource requirements.

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*ed.* The SAPR Program shall:

(1) ~~Focus on the victim and on doing what is necessary and appropriate~~ *Apply a victim-centered response and advocacy approach*, to support victim recovery, *increase safety, reduce risk of revictimization*, and ~~also, if a~~ *ensure* Service member ~~s, to support that Service member to be~~ *are* fully mission-capable and engaged.

(2) Require that medical care and SAPR services are *trauma-informed*, gender-responsive, culturally competent, and recovery-oriented.

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(3) Not provide policy for legal processes within the responsibilities of the Judge Advocates General (JAG) *and the Offices of Special Trial Counsel (OSTCs)* of the Military Departments provided in sections 801-946 of Title 10, United States Code also known and referred to in this instruction as the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ); the Manual for Courts-Martial; or for criminal matters assigned to ~~the IG DoD~~ *OIG*.

*(4) Secretaries of the Military Departments and the Chief, NGB, establish and maintain a Sexual Assault Response Workforce (SARW) within their respective components in accordance with the Secretary of Defense Memorandum, [“Commencing DoD Actions and Implementation to Address Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment in the Military.”](#) September 22, 2021, and Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness Memorandum, [“Guidance for Implementing Tier 1 Recommendations of the Independent Review Commission on Sexual Assault in the Military.”](#) October 13, 2021. The Secretaries of the Army and Air Force will work with Chief, NGB, to implement the SARW consistent with DoD memoranda in Secretary of Defense Memorandum, [“Commencing DoD Actions and Implementation to Address Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment in the Military.”](#) September 22, 2021; Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness Memorandum, [“Guidance for Implementing Tier 1 Recommendations of the Independent Review Commission on Sexual Assault in the Military.”](#) October 13, 2021; Office of the Under Secretary of Defense, Comptroller, [“DoD Execution Guidance for FY 2023 Independent Review Commission on Sexual Assault in the Military.”](#) July 13, 2023; and the unique structure of the National Guard.*

*(a) The SARW will be established and executed in accordance with Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness Memorandum, [“Guidance for Implementing Tier 1 Recommendations of the Independent Review Commission on Sexual Assault in the Military.”](#) October 13, 2021; Office of the Under Secretary of Defense, Comptroller, [“DoD Execution Guidance for FY 2023 Independent Review Commission on Sexual Assault in the Military.”](#) July 13, 2023; and applicable DoD instructions.*

*(b) SARCs and SAPR VAs in the SARW are authorized to perform victim advocate duties as defined in this instruction.*

*(c) To restructure, professionalize, strengthen, and resource the SARW across the DoD, the Secretaries of the Military Departments and the Chief, NGB, in coordination with the Secretaries of the Army and Air Force, shall move SARCs and SAPR VAs from the command reporting structure, and significantly reduce reliance of collateral duty for full-time SARCs and SAPR VAs (with very limited exceptions).*

*(d) On SAPR-related matters and to expedite support for sexual assault victims, require that all SARCs will have direct, unimpeded access to commanders, including the installation commander.*

*(5) The terms “SAPR program manager,” “Lead SARC,” “SARC,” and “SAPR VA” will be standardized and used uniformly across the Department, or as modified by USD(P&R).*

*(6) The Secretaries of the Military Departments will confirm SAPR funding is explicitly designated as such in their respective financial systems.*

*(a) The Secretary of the Military Department will ensure SAPR funding is made available to the appropriate Service SAPR Program Managers for full execution, in accordance*

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*with their respective financial policies and process, unless an exception is approved by the Secretary of the Military Department concerned.*

*(b) Deviation from executing SAPR funding, including use of SAPR funding for non-SAPR items, will be reported to the Secretary of the Military Department concerned.*

*(7) The Lead SARC will provide independent SAPR advice and guidance to commanders, including installation commanders. General Officers/Flag Officers (GO/FOs) and commanders will NOT designate other personnel on their own staff to provide them guidance or information impacting SAPR Program matters and/or victim assistance. This does not include legal advice from judge advocates or the OSTCs, if applicable. In addition, the Combatant Commands, through their combatant command support agent in accordance with [DoDI 4000.19, "Support Agreements."](#) are authorized to have a Combatant Command SAPR Program Manager*