



THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY
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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY NO WRONG DOOR POLICY

The Department of the Navy (DON) must always support victims and survivors, including those who suffered sexual assault, sexual harassment or domestic abuse. While the DON offers support and services, we can do more to improve victim response and enhance access to these important resources. The responsibility for locating appropriate response services should not be placed upon victims and survivors of sexual assault, sexual harassment or domestic abuse. Navy Medicine reinforces that there is “no wrong door” for our Sailors and Marines to receive behavioral health support, which consists of accessing the full continuum of resources while aiming to utilize the right care, at the right level, at the right time.

To ensure that victims receive the appropriate care and support, and in accordance with Secretary of Defense Memorandum, “Commencing DoD Actions and Implementation to Address Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment in the Military,” dated September 20, 2021, I direct the following No Wrong Door Policy for victims of sexual assault, sexual harassment, and domestic abuse. Under this policy, a victim who contacts a helping professional from any DON victim care and support office must either receive services from that office or, with the victims permission, get a “warm hand-off” to the appropriate service provider which includes a direct connection, introduction to responsible staff at the appropriate on or off installation office, and follow-through to ensure the needs of the person seeking care were met.

Policy. A victim who discloses sexual assault, sexual harassment, or domestic abuse to DON personnel responsible for victim care and support for sexual assault, sexual harassment, or domestic abuse shall receive care and support from that person to the fullest extent practicable and shall not be denied or inappropriately delayed in getting care and support. If the victim cannot receive care and support from that organization because of programmatic eligibility criteria or other reasons, the person the victim contacts shall, with the victim’s permission, ensure the victim receives a warm hand-off with the appropriate service provider, as defined above, in accordance with applicable laws and policies regarding confidential or privileged communications.

A warm hand-off to the appropriate provider is completed by making a direct connection, introduction to responsible staff at the appropriate on or off installation office, and follow-through with the victim to ensure the needs of the person seeking care were met. The direct connection must be done in-person or virtually to the appropriate provider. The office or person who received the disclosure must accompany the victim to the correct location and introduce them to the appropriate point of contact who will be providing that service. If taking place virtually, the warm hand-off must take place by conference call or similar technology. Once a warm hand-off has been conducted, the office or person who received the initial disclosure shall make proper documentation of the warm hand-off and allow the appropriate office/program to assist that victim.

At each installation, the leads of all offices responsible for the care and support of victims of sexual assault, sexual harassment, or domestic abuse shall meet monthly for the first three months after the issuance of this policy, and as often as required thereafter, to foster liaisons, confirm warm hand-offs, and identify any challenges. Sexual Assault Response Coordinators will brief the installation commander at the quarterly Case Management Group meeting on issues and any identified solutions during such meetings.

Applicability. This policy applies to all DON personnel responsible for the care and support of victims of sexual assault, sexual harassment, or domestic abuse. This includes, but is not limited to, those helping professionals assigned or detailed to the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program, Family Advocacy Program, Military Equal Opportunity Program, Victim Witness Assistance Program, medical professionals, Warfighter and Family Services (non-medical counseling providers), Victims' Legal Counsel, or chaplains. Policy guidance for programs serving DON civilian employees, including the Equal Employment Opportunity program, will be promulgated at a later date.¹

Definitions. The term "victim" refers to individuals who disclose or report sexual assault, sexual harassment, or domestic abuse as defined by DON policy. It does not presume the guilt or innocence of an alleged offender. A determination by the Commanding Officer, a judge advocate, an investigator, or any other person that the victim's report is credible is not required under this policy.

The term "sexual assault" refers to alleged penetrative and non-penetrative violations of the applicable version of Article 120, Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ); alleged rape and sexual assault of a child under Article 120b, UCMJ; alleged violations of Article 125, UCMJ, for acts of forcible sodomy of a victim age 16 years old or older occurring before January 1, 2019; alleged attempts and conspiracies to commit the same; and any similar or comparable offense under federal, state, or local criminal law.

The term "sexual harassment" refers to unwelcome sexual advances, demands or requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when: (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's job, pay, career, benefits, or entitlements; (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for decisions affecting that person's job, pay, career, benefits, or entitlements; or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment. The term includes the offense of sexual harassment as defined by Department of Defense, DON or Service regulation and as defined by Article 134, UCMJ, as well as any attempts thereof in violation of Article 80, UCMJ.

¹ This policy is intended to improve the internal management of the DON. As such, it is for the use of DON personnel only and is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the United States, its departments, agencies, or entities, its officers, employees, or agents, or any other person.

The term “domestic abuse” refers to domestic violence, or a pattern of behavior resulting in emotional or psychological abuse, economic control or interference with personal liberty that is directed toward a person who is one or more of the following: current or former spouse; person with whom the alleged abuser shares a child in common; current or former intimate partner with whom the alleged abuser shares or has shared a common domicile; or person who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the accused and determined to be an intimate partner. Domestic abuse includes violations or attempts to commit domestic violence under Article 128b, UCMJ, and any similar or comparable offense under federal, state, or local criminal law.

Training. All personnel responsible for the care and support of victims of sexual assault, sexual harassment, or domestic abuse shall be trained to ensure that victims receive a warm hand-off to the appropriate point of contact under this policy. This training must include instruction on intent of policy, specific procedures for implementing this policy at the installation, and contact information for key stakeholders critical to successful implementation of this policy. OPNAV N17, Commander Navy Installations Command, and Headquarters USMC Marine and Family Division shall be responsible for oversight of training content and ensuring consistency of training across applicable victim service providers for the United States Navy and United States Marine Corps, respectively.

Rescission. This policy shall remain in effect until such time as its terms are incorporated into SECNAVINST 1752.4C, SECNAVINST 1752.3B, and SECNAVINST 5300.26E, at which time it shall be rescinded.



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