



MARINE WING SUPPORT SQUADRON 171
MARINE AIRCRAFT GROUP 12
1ST MARINE AIRCRAFT WING



**POLICY FOR SEXUAL ASSAULT
PREVENTION AND RESPONSE**

Sexual assault is first and foremost a crime, and as such is not tolerated in the Marine Corps. Sexual assault is defined as *intentional sexual contact when the victim does not or cannot consent, and is characterized by the use of force, threat of force, or abuse of authority*. Sexual assault is a crime that is extremely personal with potential for lasting physical and mental scars for the victim. As such, all reports of sexual assault involving Marines and Sailors of MWSS-171 will receive timely and professional response.

Leaders within MWSS-171 provide the foundation for prevention and response to sexual assault by actively educating their subordinates and creating an environment founded on dignity and respect. All Marines and Sailors must understand the differing processes between restricted and unrestricted reporting, to include the imperative to use a Uniformed Victim Advocate (UVA) for restricted reporting. Any Marine or Sailor who is witness to, or has information related to, a sexual assault shall support the victim appropriately. Additionally, any Marine or Sailor who is witness to or in the chain of authority of a victim and has knowledge of a sexual assault is required to report the incident to the chain of command. Ignoring or failing to report sexual assault incidents may have damaging consequences for victims, denies justice for the victim and possibly allows the perpetrator to commit further misconduct.

Victims of sexual assault will be treated with sensitivity, privacy, decency, and respect. Victims have the opportunity to report sexual assault via the restricted or unrestricted processes, with the most important factor being appropriate medical, emotional, psychological, and social service assistance. Victims who choose a restricted process in accordance with the reference will have that choice honored to the fullest extent. Victims must feel confident that they will be treated fairly, with dignity, respect, and with personal safety and privacy at the forefront.

Due to the severity of sexual assault, Naval Criminal Investigative Service (NCIS) will investigate each unrestricted report and the MAG-12 Commanding Officer will determine appropriate legal action. The adjudication of the sexual assault will incorporate collateral misconduct as appropriate.

While sexual assault is not limited by gender, race, or age, there are trends within our Marine Corps that are important for us to understand in order to prevent this crime. Alcohol use is frequently cited in sexual assault incidents. Our Marines and Sailors between the ages of 18 and 24 are often the victims and the perpetrators. Furthermore, personnel who are new to a unit, especially those reporting to their first unit, are statistically greater risk of being victims. These indicators are a harsh reality, yet they have been shown to be true across the Marine Corps. These are the indicators that are the focus of discussions across the unit in order to mitigate these risks and take care of our Marines and Sailors.

As a family, MWSS-171 must do our best to educate in order to prevent sexual assault. It is imperative that Marines and Sailors take care of each other and not allow fellow Marines and Sailors to be victimized, or to victimize another. While the accused is ultimately responsible for his or her individual actions, it is our job as leaders to do our best to prevent sexual assault from ever even happening.

Semper Fidelis,

J. B. Berg

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Reference: MCO 1752.5B, *Sexual Assault Prevention and Response*