



SEXUAL ASSAULT POLICY STATEMENT

HEADQUARTERS AND SERVICE BATTALION FLEET MARINE FORCE, ATLANTIC MARINE FORCES COMMAND, MARINE FORCES NORTHERN COMMAND

Sexual assault is a crime that goes against our Marine Corps ethos. Our motto, *Semper Fidelis*, means that we are always faithful to our Nation, Corps, and each other – a cohesive band of brothers and sisters who can meet any challenge. MCO 1752.5C defines sexual assault as intentional sexual contact characterized by use of force, threats, intimidation or abuse of authority, or when the victim does not or cannot consent. Sexual offenses per the Uniform Code of Military Justice consist of: rape, sexual assault, aggravated sexual contact, abusive sexual contact, or attempts to commit these offenses. Sexual assault is not restricted to any gender, race, or age.

I expect all members to know your responsibilities and available resources to prevent, identify, report, and otherwise address sexual assault. Ignoring indicators of sexual assault only increases damage to the victim, the unit, and our Marine Corps. If you are a victim of or a witness to sexual assault, immediately seek one of the many resources available to ensure the victim's wellbeing.

Sexual assault victims can make Restricted (confidential) or Unrestricted Reports. Victims can elect either the Restricted or Unrestricted Reporting option in writing via a Victim Reporting Preference Statement (VRPS), DD 2910.

A Restricted Report allows a victim to confidentially disclose a sexual assault to specified individuals without triggering command notification or a law enforcement investigation. A Restricted Report is only available if a victim elects the Restricted Report option, via DD 2910, to a person granted confidentiality. Only a Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC) or Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Victim Advocate (SAPR VA) may receive a Restricted Report. The victim will be informed of available services including medical treatment, counseling, chaplain services and the assignment of a Victim Advocate. A victim may elect to convert a Restricted Report to an Unrestricted Report at any time. Note: a victim may tell another person (e.g., roommate, friend, family member) that a sexual assault has occurred before considering whether to file a Restricted or Unrestricted Report, if the person is NOT in the victim's direct reporting chain of command/supervisor nor in law enforcement.

A sexual assault victim may also elect the Unrestricted Report option, via DD 2910, initiating an official law enforcement investigation. Once an Unrestricted Report is elected, the report cannot be converted to a Restricted Report. Any disclosure of sexual assault made outside of the SARC, SAPR VA, Chaplain, Victims' Legal Counsel, and/or Healthcare personnel is not confidential and may initiate a formal (independent) investigation. Regardless of reporting method, our first concern is the victim's wellbeing.

Dignity and respect will underpin every aspect of treatment, should a battalion member be sexually assaulted. Appropriate medical, emotional, legal, and social services support will also be provided – all without prejudice or fear of reprisal.

We all have a responsibility to set a command climate in which every Marine, Sailor and civilian feels like a valued member of the organization. No one should ever hesitate reporting evidence of sexual assault for fear of being ignored, ostracized, or re-victimized by those who are their most important source of support – members of their own unit and their leaders. Our core values of Honor, Courage and Commitment set us apart from others, they give us strength, regulate our behaviors, and bond us together as Marines. Sexual assault has no place in the Marine Corps; we must eradicate it. Join me in the fight!

For more information or to report a sexual assault, contact the Naval Support Activity Hampton Roads, 24/7 Sexual Assault Support Line, 757-402-2569, our Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Victim Advocates, our Sexual Assault Response Coordinator 757-836-2070, your health service providers, your chain of command, or Naval Criminal Investigative Service 757-444-7327. These professionals are available 24 hours a day. They are trained to assist victims in dealing with the command, law enforcement, and medical personnel and can advise victims of their reporting options.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. T. Celotto'.

D. T. CELOTTO
Colonel, U.S. Marine Corps