

Berkeley County
Sexual Assault Forensic Examination (SAFE) Commission
Service Plan

Local Board/SART Overview

To meet SAFE Commission standards, Berkeley County has formalized a coordinated response through the creation of a Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) convened specifically to meet the SAFE Commission's guidelines. Members of this local coordinated response collaboration include:

- Berkeley County Prosecuting Attorney's Office
- Berkeley County Prosecuting Attorney's Office Victim Advocates
- Eastern Panhandle Empowerment Center
- Martinsburg Police Department
- WVU Medicine
- Berkeley County Sheriff's Department
- WV State Police
- Victoria's House
- Berkeley County Emergency Communications

The local board/SART meets/plans to meet quarterly with the intent to:

- ☒ Share information and resources
- ☒ Identify gaps in the service delivery system
- ☒ Increase awareness on issues of sexual assault and stalking in the community
- ☒ Increase victim and community safety
- ☒ Develop professional relationships and an understanding of varying roles and responsibilities of first responders
- ☒ Develop, implement, and review county protocol to meet legislative requirements of the SAFE Commission

ADVOCACY PROTOCOL

OVERVIEW

The following seven advocacy services meet core service standards. The following services exist in our county:

- ☒ 24/7 advocacy, support, and accompaniment during the medical forensic exam, law enforcement investigations and court proceedings
- ☒ Information for victims about reporting/not reporting to law enforcement
- ☒ Crisis intervention and/or emotional support to victims and their families
- ☒ Referrals and coordinated services with other agencies
- ☒ Support for victims through the criminal justice system
- ☒ Replacement clothing for victims after medical forensic exams, if needed
- ☒ Protection of victim privacy and confidentiality

Advocacy services in our county are provided by Eastern Panhandle Empowerment Center (EPEC).

Services for adolescent/adult victims are provided by the Eastern Panhandle Empowerment Center (EPEC).

If a victim reports first to Law Enforcement or discloses to any other agency and advocacy services are desired, contact will be made to EPEC. The EPEC advocate will respond in-person within 60 minutes to speak with the victim.

If a victim reports to Berkeley Medical Center (BMC), the hospital will contact EPEC via their 24/7 Helpline as soon as the victim presents. EPEC will then dispatch an advocate at any time of day to respond to the hospital within 60 minutes to speak with the victim.

First responders will be informed of this Advocacy Protocol by:

An annual session in **February** will be held by the Prosecutor's Office with the SART Coordinator to discuss the SAFE Plan with the SART-designated representatives of each agency and department. Protocols and materials discussed will be provided to the SART-designated representatives who will be held responsible for disbursing such materials amongst their agency/department electronically as well as supply hard copies at an accessible location for staff. The SART Coordinator will be responsible to provide each SART-designated representative (whether present or absent for the information session) with these materials **within 7 days** of the annual session electronically and in hard copies. Each SART-designated representative will disburse these materials **annually within 30 days** of the annual session to account for refresher training. The SART will work with first responders to add the plan to all onboarding procedures.

The September SART Meeting will be held specifically to review the SAFE Service Plan,

Phone number of Rape Crisis Center to Activate Protocol:

Eastern Panhandle Empowerment Center
(Formerly Shenandoah Women's Center)
24/7 hotline: 304-263-8292

MEDICAL FORENSIC PROTOCOL

OVERVIEW

For medical forensic services for adolescent/adult victims within our county services are provided by a medical facility located in our county:

Berkeley Medical Center
2500 Hospital Drive
Martinsburg, WV 25401
(304) 264-1215 (ask for charge nurse)

Medical forensic exams are provided by SANES, which are available on-call 24/7.

First responders will be informed of this Medical Forensic Protocol by:

An annual session in **February** will be held by the Prosecutor's Office with the SART Coordinator to discuss the SAFE Plan with the SART-designated representatives of each agency and department. Protocols and materials discussed will be provided to the SART-designated representatives who will be held responsible for disbursing such materials amongst their agency/department electronically as well as supply hard copies at an accessible location for staff. The SART Coordinator will be responsible to provide each SART-designated representative (whether present or absent for the information session) with these materials **within 7 days** of the annual session electronically and in hard copies. Each SART-designated representative will disburse these materials annually **within 30 days** of the annual session to account for refresher training. The SART will work with first responders to add the plan to all onboarding procedures.

The September SART Meeting will be held specifically to review the SAFE Service Plan, identify service gaps, and adopt any modifications if necessary.

Phone number to Activate Medical Forensic Protocol: 304-264-1215

TRANSPORTATION PROTOCOL

OVERVIEW

- The SAFE Commission requires that this transportation protocol must include the following four core components:
 1. Accessible transportation, including the ability to transport victims with disabilities
 2. Transportation to and from the medical forensic exam regardless of the victim's ability to pay
 3. Plan for victim confidentiality
 4. Plan to return the victim to his or her point of origin (or an agreed upon safe place) after the medical forensic examination

This transportation protocol will be activated when a victim of sexual assault requires a medical forensic exam, does not have access to transportation, or cannot transport themselves to/from a facility that provides the exam. Berkeley County has a response team that has created a system with trained service providers who will ensure transportation is available to victims of sexual assault. As per the state *SAFE Commission* requirements, this protocol includes accessible transportation regardless of the victim's ability to pay and whether the victim wishes to report to law enforcement. The plan addresses victim confidentiality, notifying first responders' staff for implementing the protocol, and outlines the process to transport the victim to the medical forensic examination facility and return the victim to her/his/their point of origin or a safe location at no cost to the victim. This protocol response includes the medical facility of Berkeley Medical Center (JMC).

All victim information will be **CONFIDENTIAL** and will **ONLY** be used for medical treatment and/or Law Enforcement investigation, **IF** reported.

TRANSPORTATION FOR VICTIM ARRIVAL

1. Victim With Injuries

Presenting to an Emergency 911 Call

When a sexual assault victim in Berkeley County requires a medical forensic examination, has physical injuries needing immediate medical attention, and has no transportation to a facility providing such services, the following procedures will be activated when a sexual assault is reported:

If a sexual assault victim calls 911 needing emergency medical care, EMS and the appropriate law enforcement agency will both respond.

EMS will transport the victim to the appropriate medical facility (Berkeley Medical Center) where the victim will receive emergency medical attention to their injuries through the Emergency Department.

Upon planning discharge from the hospital, the Transportation for Victim Departure Protocol (See Below; **Sec. 3**) will then take place.

Call to Rape Crisis Center (EPEC)

If an adult sexual assault victim contacts the Rape Crisis Center (EPEC) after a recent assault and has emergent medical needs, the advocate will guide the victim to call 911 thereby activating the protocol outlined above.

The Rape Crisis Center (EPEC) will then dispatch the on-call advocate to respond to the applicable medical center.

The Advocacy Protocol will then take place.

2. Victim Without Injuries

Presenting to an Emergency 911 Call

When a sexual assault victim in Berkeley County requires a medical forensic examination, *does not* have physical injuries needing immediate medical attention, and has no transportation to a facility providing such services, the following procedures will be activated when a sexual assault is reported:

If a sexual assault victim calls 911 requesting assistance with no physical injury, the appropriate law enforcement agency will respond.

If the Victim chooses to report, Law Enforcement will then transport the victim with their consent to the appropriate medical facility (Berkeley Medical Center) where the victim will then be admitted through the Emergency Department at no cost to the victim.

If the Victim chooses not to report, does not wish to have Law Enforcement transport them, and wishes to have a medical forensic SANE Exam, the responding Law Enforcement officer will then contact EPEC's 24/7 Helpline where EPEC will dispatch their on-call advocate to transport the victim to the appropriate medical facility (Berkeley Medical Center) where the victim will then be admitted through the Emergency Department at no cost to the victim.

If the victim has a disability and requires transportation that is all-accessible for their physical accommodations, the advocate will contact the Eastern Panhandle Transportation Authority (EPTA) to pick up the victim at no cost to the victim.

Upon planning discharge from the hospital, the **Transportation for Victim Departure Protocol** (See Below; **Sec. 3**) will then take place.

Call to Rape Crisis Center (EPEC).

If a sexual assault victim contacts the Rape Crisis Center (EPEC) after a recent assault that does not have emergent medical needs, the on-call advocate will inform the victim of the medical forensic exam and Law Enforcement report/non-report options.

If the victim would like to have a medical forensic examination completed but has no access to transportation, the on-call advocate will discuss all options of transportation avenues with friends and/or family members. If the victim does not have any transportation available to them, the advocate will transport the victim to the Berkeley Medical Center after all avenues have been exhausted at no cost to the victim.

If the victim has a disability and requires transportation that is all-accessible for their physical accommodations and wishes to seek the SANE examination at Berkeley Medical Center, the advocate will contact the Eastern Panhandle Transportation Authority (EPTA) to pick up the victim at no cost to the victim.

TRANSPORTATION FOR VICTIM DEPARTURE

If the victim has no means of transportation to return to their Berkeley County residence or to a safe location, the victim advocate will activate the Transportation for Victim Departure portion of this Protocol.

The victim advocate will safety plan with the victim to inquire whether there are safe family and/or friends that may transport them to the victim's residence in Berkeley County or to a safe location.

If the victim is unable to contact any family and/or friends for any reason for their transportation needs, the victim advocate will attempt to provide the victim with a "Lyft" or "uber" (depending on available funds) to their residence in Berkeley County or to a safe location at no cost to the victim.

If the victim is unable to get a "Lyft" or "Uber" due to EPEC's current state of funds, the victim advocate will provide the victim transportation to their Berkeley County residence or to a safe location at no cost to the victim after all other avenues have been exhausted.

If the victim has a physical disability where accommodations needed would not be appropriate for a "Lyft", "Uber", or otherwise applicable personal vehicle driven by the victim advocate and has sought medical attention at Berkeley Medical Center after all other avenues have been exhausted, the advocate will then contact the Eastern Panhandle Transit Authority (EPTA) to dispatch a driver and all-accessible vehicle at no cost to the victim.

First responders will be informed of this Transportation Protocol by:

An annual session in **February** will be held by the Prosecutor's Office with the SART Coordinator to discuss the SAFE Plan with the SART-designated representatives of each agency and department. Protocols and materials discussed will be provided to the SART-designated representatives who will be held responsible for disbursing such materials amongst their agency/department electronically as well as supply hard copies at an accessible location for staff. The SART Coordinator will be responsible to provide each SART-designated representative (whether present or absent for the information session) with these materials **within 7 days** of the annual session electronically and in hard copies. Each SART-designated representative will disburse these materials annually **within 30 days** of the annual session to account for refresher training. The SART will work with first responders to add the plan to all onboarding procedures.

The September SART Meeting will be held specifically to review the SAFE Service Plan, identify service gaps, and adopt any modifications if necessary.

Phone number to Activate Transportation Protocol: EPEC (304) 263 8292