

Sexual Assault Forensic Examination (SAFE) Commission

Clay County Service Plan

Local Board/SART Overview

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

- o Prosecuting Attorney
- o Clay County Sheriff
- o REACH Victim Advocate
- o CAMC Hospital
- o West Virginia Department of Human Services
- o Clay County EMS

Please submit a sign-in sheet from a meeting.

The local board/SART meets 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
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ADVOCACY PROTOCOL

OVERVIEW

A victim advocate provides free, confidential and non-judgmental emotional support, information, social service referrals and guidance following a sexual assault. A victim advocate's involvement will begin at the time the victim reports the sexual assault and extend beyond the point when other agencies have terminated their involvement. A victim advocate offers the victim the support needed to understand what is happening and make informed decisions.

Services can only be provided by trained advocates who have received a minimum of 32 hours of specific sexual assault advocacy training that meets the training standards established by the West Virginia Foundation for Rape Information and Services <http://www.fris.org/>.¹

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 REACH (Rape Education, Advocacy, Counseling, and Healing).

- Law enforcement, service provider, or even the victim can contact the advocate. Anyone can make a referral to the advocate.
- The response time of the crisis center is approximately 30 minutes.

¹¹¹ In cases of child abuse perpetrated against an adolescent as defined by WV law, the local Child Advocacy Center may also be contacted for support and/or forensic services.

First responders will be informed of this protocol by:

- Members of the team and identified first responding agencies will receive copies (in both print and electronic format) and will incorporate the protocol into their new staff/officer orientation practices. This includes all law enforcement agencies in Clay County as well as Clay County EMS, REACH, and CAMC W&C Hospital. Agencies will be requested to share a copy with all employees who are or may be affected by the protocol.
- Clay County Prosecuting Attorney (CCPA) and REACH will work with representatives of the CCEMS to conduct training for paramedics, EMTs, and other medical first responders regarding the protocols. CCPA will also provide training to shift commanders with law enforcement agencies in the county regarding all protocols, including transportation.
- In addition to the trainings, the local board will meet quarterly as well as annually in January to review the plan and update as needed. CCPA will disseminate the protocol to affected agencies, including law enforcement, CCEMS, and CAMC W&C Hospital during the month of January on an annual basis with direction to each agency to share the protocol with all employees who are or may be affected by the protocol. Agencies will also be requested, per updated interagency agreements, to review the protocol with new employees who are or may be affected.

Phone number to activate advocacy protocol:

REACH: 304-340-3676

MEDICAL FORENSIC PROTOCOL

No medical forensic services for adolescent/adult victims are available within Clay County.

Victims will be referred to:

CAMC Women's and Children's
800 Pennsylvania Avenue North
Charleston, WV 25302
304-388-5432

Medical forensic exams are provided by physicians or SANEs available on-call 24/7.

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Phone number to activate Medical Forensic Protocol:

CAMC Women's and Children's: 304-388-5432

TRANSPORTATION PROTOCOL

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/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

If a sexual assault victim in Clay County requires a medical forensic exam and has no transportation to a facility providing such services, the following procedures will be activated:

1. 911 Call with Injuries:

- If a victim of sexual assault calls 911 to report a sexual assault with injuries that require medical care, both Clay County EMS and the appropriate law enforcement agency will be contacted and proceed to the requested location.
- If the victim requires emergency medical care, CCEMS will provide transportation to CAMC W&C Hospital at no cost after insurance is billed. If the victim chooses to initiate an investigation, the responding law enforcement officer will meet the victim at the medical facility. A law enforcement officer will return when the examination is completed and provide transportation for the victim to a safe location when necessary and requested.
- If the victim does not choose to report the incident to law enforcement, law enforcement will determine the immediate safety and security of the victim, give contact information should the victim decide to report later, and provide transportation to a safe location at the victim's request.
- Victims with disabilities will be transported to a safe location by EMS at no cost to the victim per interagency agreement.

2. 911 Call with No Injuries:

- If a victim of sexual assault calls 911 to report a sexual assault with no injuries that require medical care and Clay County EMS transport is not requested, the appropriate law enforcement agency will be contacted and proceed to the requested location. If the victim chooses to initiate an investigation and requests a medical forensic examination

but has no available transportation, the law enforcement officer will provide transportation to CAMC W&C Hospital, if requested.

- A law enforcement officer will return to the medical facility when the examination is complete to provide transportation for the victim to a safe location when necessary and requested by the victim.
- Victims with disabilities will be transported to a safe location by CCEMS at no cost to the victim per interagency Agreement.

3. Call to Rape Crisis Center with No Injuries:

- If a victim of sexual assault contacts REACH after a recent assault, the advocate will guide them through the various reporting options and inform them about the medical forensic examination.
- If the victim has emergent medical needs and/or requests to have a medical forensic exam but has no transportation, the advocate will guide the victim to call 911. This will then activate one of the protocols outlined in numbers 1 and 2 above.
- If the victim is unsure about reporting the crime and has no transportation, but requests a medical forensic examination, REACH will arrange for transportation to CAMC W&C Hospital through one of the following options:
 - Lyft
 - C&H Taxi
 - Clay County EMS

The transporting agency's driver will pick up the victim at the requested location and drive them to CAMC W&C Hospital and return them to their home or a safe place after completion of the examination. Victims will not be billed for any of these options.

The advocate will be at the medical facility when the victim arrives to arrange for billing for the trip to the hospital and/or to arrange for transportation services after the examination. Family Counseling Connection will be invoiced by Lyft or C&H Taxi for any services provided.

Lyft performs annual driver background checks and has strict community guidelines for drivers to adhere by to ensure the victim's safety. In addition to the safety precautions, all invoices and billing will be made under "Family Counseling Connection" to further protect victim confidentiality.

C&H has agreed to allow the advocate to sign the voucher rather than the victim, so that confidentiality is protected. In addition to the confidentiality agreement between C&H Taxi and REACH, all invoices and billing will be made under "Family Counseling Connection" to further protect victim confidentiality.

4. Victim Self-Reports to Hospital/Medical Facility

- If a victim of sexual assault presents to the medical facility and requests a medical forensic examination, hospital personnel are to contact REACH at (304) 340-3676 or 1-800-656-HOPE to reach an advocate. If advocacy is requested, a REACH advocate will respond to the medical facility. If the victim requests to report the assault to law enforcement, hospital personnel will contact 304-587-2019 or 911 to reach the appropriate law enforcement agency.
- If law enforcement involvement is requested, law enforcement shall meet the victim at the medical facility to commence investigation. Upon completion of the sexual assault examination, law enforcement shall transport the victim to a safe location, if needed and requested.
- If the victim does not wish to report to law enforcement and the victim has no other transportation options available to return to a safe location once she/he is discharged, the REACH advocate will facilitate transport to a safe location via one of the options listed above. If the victim denies law enforcement reporting and advocacy services and has no transportation options, the medical facility will provide bus and cab vouchers to take her/him to a safe location upon her/his request.

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Phone Numbers to activate Transportation Protocol:

**-If injuries or reporting the assault: 911 or 304-587-2019 for emergency services
-REACH: 304-340-3676**