

Sexual Assault Forensic Examination (SAFE) Commission

Gilmer County Service Plan

Local Board/SART Overview

To meet SAFE Commission standards, Gilmer County has formalized a coordinated response through the creation of a local board convened specifically to meet the SAFE Commission's guidelines. Members of this local coordinated response collaboration include:

- WV State Police
- Gilmer County Prosecuting Attorney
- Glenville State University Justice Department
- Gilmer County EMS
- WV Department of Human Services/Child Protective Services
- HOPE, Inc.

The local board/SART meets monthly on the second Tuesday, 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

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 for adolescent/adult victims are provided by HOPE, Inc.

When a victim presents to United Hospital Center (UHC), staff will contact HOPE via the hotline at 304-367-1100. The on-call advocate will be present at the hospital within one hour of the call for advocacy services at UHC. First responders may contact HOPE for additional assistance.

First responders will be informed of this Advocacy Protocol by:

The SAFE Commission Team will review and redistribute the Protocol every year in April. Any updates to the protocol will be finalized within 60 days prior to redistributing. Participating agencies will add the protocol to onboarding procedures.

First responders who will be provided the protocol are as follows, Gilmer County Sheriff's Department, WV State Police, Glenville City Police, United Hospital Center, HOPE Inc. supervisor, Lewis/Gilmer 911 Center, Child Protective Services, Adult Protective Services, and Gilmer County Emergency Services.

^[1] 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.

Phone number of Rape Crisis Center to activate Advocacy Protocol: 304-367-1100

MEDICAL FORENSIC PROTOCOL

OVERVIEW

For medical forensic services for adolescent/adult victims within Gilmer County, United Hospital Center (UHC) is the designated medical facility.

Services are provided via a letter of agreement with a medical facility from another county:

United Hospital Center
327 Medical Park Dr
Bridgeport, WV 26330
681-342-1100

Medical forensic exams are provided by SANEs who are not available on-call 24/7.

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

The SAFE Commission Team will review and redistribute the Protocol every year in April. Any updates to the protocol will be finalized within 60 days prior to redistributing. Participating agencies will add the protocol to onboarding procedures.

First responders who will be provided the protocol are as follows, Gilmer County Sheriff's Department, WV State Police, Glenville City Police, United Hospital Center, HOPE Inc. supervisor, Lewis/Gilmer 911 Center, Child Protective Services, Adult Protective Services, and Gilmer County Emergency Services.

Phone number to activate Medical Forensic Protocol: 681-342-1100

TRANSPORTATION PROTOCOL

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

1. **911 Call With Injuries.** If a sexual assault victim calls 911 needing emergent medical care, EMS and the appropriate law enforcement agency will both respond.
 - EMS will transport the victim to United Hospital Center (UHC) at 327 Medical Park Drive in Bridgeport.
 - IF the victim chooses to initiate a police investigation, the responding Law Enforcement Officer will document and report the incident. Law Enforcement (LE) may stay at the medical facility, if necessary for the safety of the victim. LE has procedures and policies that allow them to request coverage from Harrison County for a victim at UHC.
 - IF the victim chooses NOT to initiate a police investigation, LE will determine the immediate safety and security of the victim, provide contact information should the victim decide to make a report at a later date.
 - Victims with disabilities, or those who otherwise need transportation back, will be transported to a safe location by the Gilmer County Ambulance Service (GCAS), at no cost to the victim.
 - If GCAS deems it necessary to transport to a closer facility, or if injuries are life threatening and life flight is needed, an alternate location will be determined at that time by those on the scene.
2. **911 Call with No Injuries.** If a sexual assault victim calls 911 or contacts a Law Enforcement Agency to report a sexual assault, is safe and does NOT need emergent medical care, the appropriate law enforcement agency will be contacted and proceed to the identified location. The victim will be informed by the Law Enforcement officer of the medical forensic exam and Law Enforcement report/non-report options.
 - IF the victim chooses to have a medical forensic exam and to initiate a police investigation, but does not have transportation for the medical forensic exam, GCAS will provide transportation to and from the medical facility, at no cost to the victim. The responding Law Enforcement Officer will document and report the incident. LE may stay at the medical facility, if necessary, for the safety of the victim.
 - IF the victim chooses NOT to initiate a police investigation and does not have transportation for the medical forensic exam, the responding LE will determine the immediate safety and security of the victim and provide contact information should the victim decide to make a report at a later date. GCAS will transport the victim to the medical facility, and to a safe location when the medical forensic exam is complete.
 - Victims with disabilities will be transported to the medical facility, and back to a safe location by GCAS at NO cost to the victim.

3. **Call to Rape Crisis Center.** If a sexual assault victim contacts HOPE, Inc. after a recent assault, the advocate will inform them of the medical forensic exam and law enforcement report/non-report options. IF the victim has urgent 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.

First responders will be informed of this Transportation Protocol by:

The SAFE Commission Team will review and redistribute the Protocol every year in April. Any updates to the protocol will be finalized within 60 days prior to redistributing. Participating agencies will add the protocol to onboarding procedures.

First responders who will be provided the protocol are as follows, Gilmer County Sheriff's Department, WV State Police, Glenville City Police, United Hospital Center, HOPE Inc. supervisor, Lewis/Gilmer 911 Center, Child Protective Services, Adult Protective Services, and Gilmer County Emergency Services.

Phone number to activate Transportation Protocol: 911