

Sexual Assault Forensic Examination (SAFE) Commission Service Plan

MARION COUNTY

10/12/2022

Point of Contact:

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LOCAL BOARD/SEXUAL ASSAULT RESPONSE TEAM

OVERVIEW

The provision of a coordinated, multi-disciplinary approach in responding to victims of sexual assault improves access to comprehensive care, minimizes trauma, promotes healing and increases offender accountability.

The SAFE Commission has identified standards for responding to victims of sexual violence and has created a series of five victim-response flowcharts and templates for service protocols (advocacy services, medical forensic exams, transportation for exams) to assist counties in creating local service plans.

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

Dennis B. Kittle, Marion County Prosecutor's Office

Michele McCord, HOPE, Inc.

Cheri Wilson, HOPE, Inc., STOP Coordinator

Kim Nicholson, HOPE, Inc. SART Coordinator

Geno Guerrieri, White Hall PD

Steve Shine, Fairmont, PD

James C. Riffle, Marion County Sheriff

Stephanie Vandetta, Marion County Rescue Squad

The local SART plans to meet monthly 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 are provided by HOPE, Inc., which will provide the following services for adolescent/adult victims:

WHO:

Community based sexual assault advocates are employees, and/or volunteers, of a county's local nonprofit organization(s) whose primary purpose is to provide services to victims of sexual assault, regardless of whether the victim is involved in the criminal justice system. For the community-based advocate, it is the victim — not the needs of the system — that identifies the outcome sought through the advocacy process. There is no other discipline whose primary function is to advocate for the interests and wants of the victim.

WHEN:

When a victim goes to United Hospital Center (UHC) or to West Virginia University Ruby Memorial Hospital (WVU) the advocate will respond **as soon as possible**. When the victim goes to UHC on their own, the respective entity will automatically call the advocate with HOPE, INC.

When the victim does not want an advocate: an informational packet on HOPE's services will be provided.

HOW:

HOPE, INC: (304) 367-1100

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

All first responders will be provided a copy of this protocol via United States Mail. Protocol will be provided to each agency listed below. Each agency will be instructed to provide a copy of the Protocol to all employees of the agency and to make them available to any new employee during orientation.

The SART team will review the Protocol every year during its July meeting. Any modifications to the Protocol will be finalized within sixty (60) days. If there are modifications, an amended Protocol will be provided via the method described above.

First responders who will be provided the Protocol are as follows but not limited to:

- Fairmont Police Department,
- Grant Town Police Department,
- White Hall Police Department,
- Barrackville Police Department,
- Monongah Police Department,
- Farmington Police Department,
- Rivesville Police Department,
- Mannington Police Department,
- Fairview Police Department,
- Department of West Virginia State Police-Fairmont Detachment,
- 911 Communication Center – Marion County,
- United Hospital Center,
- WVU Ruby Memorial Hospital,
- Marion County Rescue Squad, and
- HOPE, Inc.

Name of rape crisis center to activate the advocacy protocol:

HOPE, INC.

Phone number:

304-367-1100

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.

Marion County Child Advocacy Center

Phone Number:

304-333-3936

MEDICAL FORENSIC PROTOCOL

OVERVIEW

It is important for all sexual assault victims to have access to specialized medical evaluation and crisis intervention. Ideally, every county in West Virginia would have an accessible and responsive criminal justice and service delivery system that includes local advocates and a medical facility that provides medical forensic exams by trained examiners.

The SAFE Commission has outlined the following Best Practice Training Recommendations for providing medical forensic examinations that should be used when determining an appropriate medical forensic exam resource:

1. It is required that nurses complete the 40-hour Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) coursework (training that meets International Association of Forensic Nurses (IAFN) guidelines OR WV Online SANE Training (24 Hours) and 2-day Classroom Training (16 hours) PLUS clinical requirements (25 hours) to practice as a SANE and provide care to patients reporting sexual assault.
2. It is recommended that Physicians, Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs), and Physician Assistants (PAs) complete, at a minimum, specific training modules (specifically Modules 7, 10, and 15) available through the WV Online SANE Training and accessed through www.fris.org when conducting medical forensic examinations on patients reporting sexual assault.

Medical forensic examinations meeting SAFE Commission Guidelines will be available through UHC and WVU. When victims of sexual violence in Marion County present to UHC or WVU, they will receive specialized medical care. A signed Memorandum of Understanding has been submitted for out of county services through the UHC in Harrison County and with WVU in Monongalia County to provide services. Sexual assault victims will receive treatment from professionals with training specific to sexual assault medical forensic examinations and related issues. Additionally, medical treatment will include compassionate care, and recognizing the acute psychological injury that victims face in addition to physical injury, which may or may not be present.

Medical forensic exams are provided by:

- SANEs **are** available or on-call 24/7 to conduct forensic exams
- Physicians **are** available or on-call 24/7 to conduct forensic exams

Medical forensic services for adolescent/adult victims of Marion County are provided by:

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

WVU-Ruby Memorial Hospital
1 Medical Center Dr.
Morgantown, WV 26506
Emergency Department 304-598-4000

Medical forensic services for adolescent/adult victims are NOT provided in Marion County at this time.

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- Fairview Police Department,
- Department of West Virginia State Police-Fairmont Detachment,
- 911 Communication Center – Marion County,
- United Hospital Center,
- WVU Ruby Memorial Hospital,
- Marion County Rescue Squad, and
- HOPE, Inc.

Phone number to Activate Medical Forensic Protocol:

**Marion County Emergency Services:
911**

TRANSPORTATION PROTOCOL

OVERVIEW

This protocol will be activated when a victim of sexual assault requires a medical forensic exam and cannot provide their own transportation to and from a facility that provides this care. Each county will have a responsive service system that will provide transportation services to victims of sexual assault.

If a sexual assault victim in Marion County requires a medical forensic examination the following procedures will be activated:

- 911 CALL WITH INJURIES

When a victim of a sexual assault calls 911 to report a sexual assault with injuries both the appropriate law enforcement agency and the Marion County Emergency Medical Services (EMS) will be contacted by 911 dispatcher. If the victim requires emergency medical care, EMS will provide transportation to the appropriate medical facility. If the victim chooses to initiate an investigation, the responding law enforcement officer will meet the victim at the appropriate medical facility.

Discharge:

A victim may take transportation to a safe location provided by an appropriate family member or friend after being discharged.

HOPE, Inc. will use funds to obtain transportation, such as share rides-uber, bus, or cabs, to transport the victim to a safe location if an appropriate family member or friend is not available.

If the victim does not have a safe place to go, the advocate will assess if the victim can stay at the HOPE, Inc. shelter and transport them to the shelter.

EMS will transport a victim back to a safe location if an appropriate family member or friend is not available and HOPE, Inc. is not able to obtain transportation as described above. EMS will be contacted at the request of the victim by UHC or WVU. The victim will be provided transportation when EMS vehicle is available.

Persons that are disabled:

Upon doctor filling out the medical necessity form, EMS will be contacted to transport the victim back to a safe location.

The preference and safety of the victim should be considered regarding the modes of transportation listed above.

- 911 CALL WITH NO INJURIES

When a victim of a sexual assault calls 911 to report a sexual assault without injuries the appropriate law enforcement agency will be contacted by 911 dispatcher. Law enforcement will make an additional inquiry of the victim if they require EMS services.

If EMS services are not requested but a victim wishes that a medical forensic examination be conducted, a victim may use transportation to UHC or WVU provided by an appropriate family member or friend.

Responding law enforcement officer will provide transportation to the appropriate medical facility if requested and if an appropriate family member or friend is not available unless exigent circumstances exist. If exigent circumstances exist, and law enforcement cannot transport the victim to the appropriate medical facility, the victim may choose to be transported by EMS at no charge to the victim even though the victim had previously turned down medical care by EMS.

Discharge:

A victim may take transportation to a safe location provided by an appropriate family member or friend after being discharged.

HOPE, Inc. will use funds to obtain transportation, such as share rides-uber, bus, or cabs, to transport the victim to a safe location if an appropriate family member or friend is not available.

If the victim does not have a safe place to go, the advocate will assess if the victim can stay at the HOPE, Inc. shelter and transport them to the shelter.

Responding law enforcement officer will provide transportation to an appropriate safe location if requested and if an appropriate family member or friend is not available and HOPE, Inc. is not able to obtain transportation as described above, unless exigent circumstances exist.

EMS will transport a victim back to a safe location if an appropriate family member or friend is not available; HOPE, Inc. is not able to obtain transportation as described above; and exigent circumstances preclude transportation by the responding law enforcement agency. EMS will be contacted at the request of the victim by UHC or WVU. The victim will be provided transportation when EMS vehicle is available.

Persons that are disabled:

Upon doctor filling out the medical necessity form, EMS will be contacted to transport the victim back to a safe location.

The preference and safety of the victim should be considered regarding the modes of transportation listed above.

- VICTIM CALLS RAPE CRISIS CENTER

When a victim of sexual assault contacts HOPE Inc., the advocate will guide the victim through the various reporting options and provide information to the victim about the medical forensic examination. If it is determined that the victim wants to report the crime, either the victim can call 911 or the victim can give the address to the HOPE Inc. advocate to call 911. The above protocols will then be activated.

- All members of the Marion County SAFE/SART agree to maintain victim confidentiality and privacy
- No payment for victim transport is required or requested by police, advocate transporters, or EMS.

First responders will be informed of this Transportation Protocol by:

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- Department of West Virginia State Police-Fairmont Detachment,
- 911 Communication Center – Marion County,
- United Hospital Center,
- WVU Ruby Memorial Hospital,
- Marion County Rescue Squad, and
- HOPE, Inc.

Phone number to Activate Transportation Protocol:

**Marion County Emergency Services:
911**

**HOPE, INC.
Phone number:
304-367-1100**