

Sexual Assault Forensic Examination (SAFE) Commission Service Plan

NICHOLAS COUNTY
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OVERVIEW

Nicholas 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:

Prosecutor's Office

Summersville Medical Center

AWAY

Summersville Police

WV State Police

Nicholas County Sheriff's Department

Seneca Health Services

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 are provided by AWAY/Women's Resource Center, which will provide the following services for adolescent/adult victims:

- Advocacy and support during the forensic medical exam, law enforcement investigations and court proceedings
- Providing information about non-reports to law enforcement
- Crisis intervention and/or emotional support to victims and their families
- Assisting with referrals and coordinating services with other agencies
- Explaining the process and supporting victims through the criminal justice system
- Ensuring that replacement clothing is provided for the victim, if needed

Services will be provided by trained advocates who have received a minimum of 32 hours of specific sexual assault advocacy training through the state sexual assault coalition.

Advocates are available 24/7, can be reached through AWAY's crisis hotline number at 304-255-2559, and will arrive at the hospital within the hour. The advocate is called immediately when a victim arrives at the hospital. Law enforcement will also follow this protocol in an initial contact with a victim of sexual assault who might need medical attention so the advocate can be at the hospital when the victim arrives.

First responders will be informed of this Advocacy Protocol by:

The listed Rape Crisis Center, medical facilities, law enforcement, first responders, domestic violence shelter, and child advocacy centers will be provided a copy of the medical forensic protocol in Nicholas County S.A.F.E. service Plan by email or mail, as well as in person at SART meetings. An annual meeting will be held to address any modifications or gaps in services in March, and all parties will be provided electronic and hard copies within 7 days of the annual meeting by the designated representative of the SAFE Team. The SAFE Team will work with the First Responders to add the plan to all onboarding procedures.

Phone numbers to activate the advocacy protocol:
AWAY/Women's Resource Center
Nicholas County Office 8:30 am – 4:30 pm: (304) 872-7875
24/7 Hotline and On Call Phone Number: (304) 255-2559

1[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.

MEDICAL FORENSIC PROTOCOL

OVERVIEW

Medical forensic services for adolescent/adult victims within our county are provided by:

Summersville Regional Medical Center
400 Fairview Heights Road
Summersville, WV 26651
(304) 872-8448

Medical forensic exams are provided by physicians available 24/7 and SANEs when available.

First responders will be informed of this Medical Protocol by:

The listed Rape Crisis Center, medical facilities, law enforcement, first responders, domestic violence shelter, and child advocacy centers will be provided a copy of the medical forensic protocol in Nicholas County S.A.F.E. service Plan by email or mail, as well as in person at SART meetings. An annual meeting will be held to address any modifications or gaps in services in March, and all parties will be provided electronic and hard copies within 7 days of the annual meeting by the designated representative of the SAFE Team. The SAFE Team will work with the First Responders to add the plan to all onboarding procedures.

Phone number to activate medical forensic protocol: 304-872-8448

TRANSPORTATION PROTOCOL

OVERVIEW

The SAFE Commission requires that the 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 their point of origin (or an agreed upon safe place) after the medical forensic examination

Protocol. When a sexual assault victim in Nicholas 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 Summersville Regional Medical Center.
 - IF the victim chooses to initiate a police investigation, the responding Law Enforcement Officer will document and report the incident. Law Enforcement (LE) will stay at the medical facility, if necessary, for the safety of the victim.
 - IF the victim chooses NOT to initiate a police investigation, 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.
 - For victims with no transportation to a safe place following the medical forensic exam, Seneca Health Services will be contacted to provide confidential transport at no direct cost to the victim.
2. **Victims with No Injuries.** If a sexual assault victim seeks to have a medical forensic examination within 96 hours of an assault but has no transportation, Seneca Health Services will be contacted to provide confidential transport to and from Summersville Regional Medical Center at no direct cost to the victim.
3. **Call to AWAY Rape Crisis Center.** If a sexual assault victim contacts AWAY Rape Crisis Center 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 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. If the victim has no emergent medical needs, requests a medical forensic exam and has no transportation, the advocate will contact Seneca Health Services to arrange transportation to/from Summersville Regional Medical Center.

First responders will be informed of this transportation protocol by:

The listed Rape Crisis Center, medical facilities, law enforcement, first responders, domestic violence shelter, and child advocacy centers will be provided a copy of the medical forensic protocol in Nicholas County S.A.F.E. service Plan by email or mail, as well as in person at SART meetings. An annual meeting will be held to address any modifications or gaps in services in March, and all parties will be provided electronic and hard copies within 7 days of the annual meeting by the designated representative of the SAFE Team. The SAFE Team will work with the First Responders to add the plan to all onboarding procedures.

Phone numbers to activate transportation protocol:
Emergent medical needs: 911
Lack of Transportation with No Emergent Medical Needs:
Seneca Health Services 888-SENECA9