

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

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Local Board/SART Overview

To meet SAFE Commission standards, Putnam 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:

- CAMC Teays Hospital
- Prosecutor
- Chief Investigator - Putnam County Prosecutor's Office
- Investigator Putnam County Prosecutor's Office
- Victim Advocate - Putnam County Prosecutor's Office
- Putnam County Sheriff's Department
- Victim Advocate - Putnam County Sheriff's Department
- Hurricane Police Department
- EMS Director - Putnam County
- REACH/The Counseling Connection

The local board/SART will meet quarterly, on the first Wednesday of the month in March, June, September, and December 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 are:

Services for adolescent/adult victims are provided by REACH Rape Crisis Center 304-340-3676, who will be providing services to our county.

^[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.

When an adult or adolescent (14 and over) victim of sexual violence presents to CAMC - Teays Valley Hospital, the advocate will be immediately contacted by the primary nurse or the social worker. The advocate will arrive at the medical facility within one hour. The nurse or social worker will advise the advocate of the medical facility where the victim has presented, the victim's room number, the name of the attending nurse, the victim's age, and clothing size for clothing kits, if applicable. For safety purposes, the victim will not be identified by name.

First responders will be informed of this Advocacy Protocol by:

The Putnam County SART team will review the SAFE plan every year during March's meeting (first meeting of the year) and hold an information session annually for all first responders in Putnam County during which representatives from the coordinating agencies, including REACH, will teach the advocacy protocol. The Prosecuting Attorney's Office will send out a memo to all first responders to invite them to the information session. The Prosecuting Attorney's Office will then follow up the session by sending the plan to all first responding agencies who were unable to send their staff to the information session. In-person conversations with first responders will be held quarterly or as needed to make sure they understand the plan and share it with the rest of their staff. SART will work with the first responders to add the plan to all onboarding procedures. The first responders who need to have access to the advocacy protocol are the Putnam County Prosecuting Attorney's Office, Putnam County Sheriff's Department, State Police - Winfield Detachment, Hurricane Police Department, Eleanor Police Department, Poca Police Department, Buffalo Police Department, Winfield Police Department, Nitro Police Department, CAMC Teays Valley, 911 Dispatch, Office of Emergency Services, Putnam County Schools and REACH.

Phone number to Activate Advocacy Protocol:

REACH Rape Crisis Center: (304) 340-3676

MEDICAL FORENSIC PROTOCOL

OVERVIEW

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

CAMC Teays Valley Hospital
1400 Hospital Drive, Hurricane, WV 25526
304-757-1700

Medical forensic exams are provided by: Physicians, SANEs, APRNs, PAs and Registered Nurses, which are all available on-call 24/7.

The Putnam County SART team will review the SAFE plan every year during March's meeting (first meeting of the year) and hold an information session annually for all first responders in Putnam County during which representatives from the coordinating agencies, including REACH, will teach the medical forensic protocol. The Prosecuting Attorney's Office will send out a memo to all first responders to invite them to the information session. The Prosecuting Attorney's Office will then follow up the session by sending the plan to all first responding agencies who were unable to send their staff to the information session. In-person conversations with first responders will be held quarterly or as needed to make sure they understand the plan and share it with the rest of their staff. SART will work with the first responders to add the plan to all onboarding procedures. The first responders who need to have access to the medical forensic protocol are the Putnam County Prosecuting Attorney's Office, Putnam County Sheriff's Department, State Police - Winfield Detachment, Hurricane Police Department, Eleanor Police Department, Poca Police Department, Buffalo Police Department, Winfield Police Department, Nitro Police Department, CAMC Teays Valley, 911 Dispatch, Office of Emergency Services, Putnam County Schools and REACH.

Phone number to Activate Medical Forensic Protocol:

CAMC Teays Valley Hospital: (304) 757-1700

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.

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

1. If a victim of sexual assault calls 911 to report a sexual assault with injuries that require medical care, both Putnam County EMS and the appropriate law enforcement agency will be contacted and proceed to the requested location.

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. When possible, the 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 chooses not to report the incident, law enforcement will determine the victim's immediate safety and security. The victim will be given contact information should they decide to report later, and law enforcement will transport the victim, if requested, to a safe location.

2. If a victim of sexual assault calls 911 to report a sexual assault with no injuries requiring medical care and no EMS transport is requested, the appropriate law enforcement agency will be contacted and proceed to the requested location.

If the victim chooses to initiate an investigation, requests a medical forensic examination, but has no available transportation, the law enforcement officer will provide transportation to the appropriate medical facility if requested. The law enforcement officer will return to the medical facility (when the examination is completed) to provide transportation for the victim to a safe location when necessary and requested by the victim.

3. If a victim of sexual assault who has disabilities calls 911 to report a sexual assault with no injuries requiring medical care and no EMS transport is requested, the appropriate law enforcement agency will be contacted and proceed to the requested location.

If the victim chooses to initiate an investigation, requests a medical forensic examination, but has no available transportation, the law enforcement officer will provide transportation to the appropriate medical facility if requested. The law enforcement officer will return to the medical facility (when the examination is completed) to provide transportation for the victim to a safe location when necessary and requested by the victim.

If due to the victim's disabilities, law enforcement cannot safely transport the victim, EMS will provide transportation to the appropriate medical facility. EMS will return to the medical facility (when the examination is completed) to provide transportation for the victim to a safe location when necessary and requested by the victim at no cost to the victim. It should be noted that this will be triaged as low priority nonemergent meaning the PCEMS response may be delayed if the system is overwhelmed with higher priority needs.

4. If a victim of sexual assault contacts REACH Rape Crisis Center with no injuries:

If a victim of sexual assault contacts REACH Rape Crisis Center 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 through one of the following options:

- Lyft
- C&H Taxi
- Putnam County EMS

The transporting agency's driver will pick up the victim at the requested location and drive them to CAMC 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.

5. If a 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 911 or 304-586-0246 (Putnam County's non-emergency management) 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 necessary 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 they are discharged, the REACH advocate will facilitate transport to a safe location via one of the options listed above. If the victim declines law enforcement reporting and advocacy services and has no transportation options, the medical facility will provide bus and cab vouchers to take them to a safe location upon request.

Agreement For the Transportation for Medical Forensic Examination Services Between Putnam County Prosecuting Attorney and Putnam County Emergency Medical Services is on file with Prosecuting Attorney's Office

First responders will be informed of this Transportation Protocol by:

The Putnam County SART team will review the SAFE plan every year during March's meeting (first meeting of the year) and hold an information session annually for all first responders in Putnam County during which representatives from the coordinating agencies, including REACH, will teach the transportation protocol. The Prosecuting Attorney's Office will send out a memo to all first responders to invite them to the information session. The Prosecuting Attorney's Office will then follow up the session by sending the plan to all first responding agencies who were unable to send their staff to the information session. In-person conversations with first responders will be held quarterly or as needed to make sure they understand the plan and share it with the rest of their staff. SART will work with the first responders to add the plan to all onboarding procedures. The first responders who need to have access to the transportation protocol are the Putnam County Prosecuting Attorney's Office, Putnam County Sheriff's Department, State Police - Winfield Detachment, Hurricane Police Department, Eleanor Police Department, Poca Police Department, Buffalo Police Department, Winfield Police Department, Nitro Police Department, CAMC Teays Valley, 911 Dispatch, Office of Emergency Services, Putnam County Schools and REACH.

Phone number to Activate Transportation Protocol:

REACH Rape Crisis Center: (304) 340-3676

Putnam County: 911 or the non-emergency number at 304-586-0246