

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

Local Board/SART 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, Tucker 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:

- Tucker County Prosecuting Attorney
- St. George Medical Clinic
- Tucker County Sheriff Department
- West Virginia State Police
- Centers Against Violence
- Family Resource Network
- Tucker Day Report Center

The local board/SART meets/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 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 Centers Against Violence which will be providing services to our county.

The Tucker County 911 Center will dispatch the Centers Against Violence to activate the protocol by calling 304-478-3338. The Centers Against Violence advocate will respond to the victim's location as soon as possible, but within 2 hours.

^[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.

The Centers Against Violence provide a worker on-call twenty-four hours a day. A worker is available in the office during normal business hours at 304-478-3338. After hours, the on-call worker is reached by calling 1-800-339-1185.

If law enforcement has the first contact with the victim, the law enforcement officer will contact the Tucker County 911 center to dispatch the Centers Against Violence advocate within the first sixty (60) minutes of making contact with the victim. The law enforcement officer will make this referral wherever contact is being made, including at the hospital, agency office, or any other location in which the officer is responding.

If Davis Memorial hospital/St. George Medical Clinic has first contact with the victim, the emergency room personnel will contact the Tucker County 911 center to dispatch the Centers Against Violence advocate within the first sixty (60) minutes of making contact with the victim to make a referral and/or request the on-call advocate's presence in the hospital.

Phone number of Rape Crisis Center to Activate Protocol:

304-478-3338 and 1-800-339-1185

First responders will be informed of this Transportation Protocol by the Tucker County SART team reviewing the SAFE plan every year during April's meeting (Sexual Assault Awareness Month) and holding an information session during April for all first responders in Tucker County. 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 are sharing it with the rest of their staff. The SART will work with first responders to add the plan to all onboarding procedures. The first responders who need to have access to this plan are the Parsons Police, Tucker County Sheriff's Department, State Police - Parsons Detachment, St. George Medical Center, 911 Dispatch, Tucker County Schools, Randolph/Tucker CAC, Tucker County EMS, the Health Department, Centers Against Violence, and the Tucker County Prosecuting Attorney's Office.

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 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.
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For medical forensic services for adolescent/adult victims within our county services are **not** currently provided by a medical facility located in Tucker County.

- ✓ Services are provided via a letter of agreement with a medical facility from another county.
 - Ruby Memorial Hospital, Monongalia County
 - (304) 598-4000
- Forensic Exam Services at Ruby Memorial are provided 24/7 by on-call SANEs.

First responders will be informed of this Medical Forensic Protocol as follows:

The Tucker County SART team will review the SAFE plan every year during January's meeting (First meeting of the year) and hold an information session during April for all first responders in Tucker County. 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 are sharing it with the rest of their staff. The SART will work with first responders to add the plan to all onboarding procedures. The first responders who need to have access to this plan are the Parsons Police, Tucker County Sheriff's Department, State Police - Parsons Detachment, St. George Medical Center, 911 Dispatch, Tucker County Schools, Randolph/Tucker CAC, Tucker County EMS, the Health Department, the Center Against Violence, and the Tucker County Prosecuting Attorney's Office.

Phone number to Activate Medical Forensic Protocol:

304-478-3338 and 1-800-339-1185

TRANSPORTATION PROTOCOL

OVERVIEW

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

- 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

Overview

This Transportation Protocol will be activated when a victim of a sexual assault requires a medical forensic exam and cannot transport themselves to a facility that provides the exam. Tucker County has created a responsive service system with trained service providers who will provide transportation services to victims of sexual assault. As per the state SAFE Commission requirements, this protocol includes accessible transportation regardless of the victim's ability to pay and whether or not the victim is reporting to Law Enforcement. The plan addresses victim confidentiality and outlines the process to return the victim to their point of origin or a safe location after the medical forensic examination.

All victim information will be **CONFIDENTIAL** and will only be used for medical treatment and/or Law Enforcement investigation, if reported.

Protocol

When a sexual assault victim in Tucker County requires a 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 or Victims with disabilities**

If a sexual assault victim calls 911 to report a sexual assault with injuries that requires medical care, EMS, Law Enforcement (LE), and the Victim Advocate with Centers Against Violence will be dispatched by 911. Tucker County EMS will transport the victim, at no cost to the victim as per an Interagency Agreement, to Ruby Memorial Hospital. If adequate staff is not available for EMS to transport to Ruby Memorial Hospital, the victim will be transported by EMS to Davis Memorial Hospital and await transport to Ruby.

If the victim chooses to initiate a police investigation, the responding LE will meet with the victim at the medical facility, if necessary, or will arrange to meet with the victim once the victim is released from the medical facility. The Victim Advocate will attend the forensic examination and will transport the victim to a safe location, if needed, following the examination. Victims with disabilities will be transported to a safe location following the medical examination by Tucker County EMS, at no cost to the victim.

If the victim chooses NOT to initiate a police investigation, LE will ensure that the victim is safe and provide contact information should the victim decide to make report at a later date. The Victim Advocate will attend the forensic examination and will transport the victim to a safe location, if needed, following the examination. Victims with disabilities will be transported to a safe location following the medical examination by Tucker County EMS, at no cost to the victim.

2. **911 Call with No Injuries**

If a sexual assault victim calls 911 to report a sexual assault, is safe and does not need emergent medical care, LE will be contacted. The victim will be informed by LE of the option for a forensic examination, report/non-report options and will be provided with contact information for the Victim Advocate with Centers Against Violence.

If the victim chooses to initiate a police investigation and does not have transportation, LE will respond to the victim's location and the responding LE will ensure that the victim is safe. LE will notify 911 to contact the Victim Advocate with Centers Against Violence who will transport the victim to Ruby Memorial Hospital. The Victim Advocate will attend the

forensic examination and will transport the victim to a safe location, if needed, following the forensic examination.

If the victim chooses NOT to initiate a police investigation and does not have transportation, LE will notify 911 to contact the Victim Advocate who will transport the victim to Ruby Memorial Hospital. The responding LE will ensure that the victim is safe and will provide contact information should the victim decide to make a report at a later date. If the victim calls 911 directly, 911 will contact the Victim Advocate who will transport the victim to Ruby Memorial Hospital. The Victim Advocate will attend the forensic examination and will transport the victim to a safe location, if needed, following the forensic examination.

3. Call to the Rape Crisis Center

If a sexual assault victim contacts Centers Against Violence after a recent assault, the Victim Advocate will inform them of the medical forensic examination and LE report/non-report options. If the victim has emergent medical needs and /or requests to have a medical forensic examination and has no transportation, the Victim Advocate will arrange for the victim to be transported to Ruby Memorial Hospital by activating one of the protocols outlined in numbers 1 and 2 above.

First responders will be informed of this Transportation Protocol by the Tucker County SART team reviewing the SAFE plan every year during April's meeting (Sexual Assault Awareness Month) and holding an information session during April for all first responders in Tucker County. 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 are sharing it with the rest of their staff. The SART will work with first responders to add the plan to all onboarding procedures. The first responders who need to have access to this plan are the Parsons Police, Tucker County Sheriff's Department, State Police - Parsons Detachment, St. George Medical Center, 911 Dispatch, Tucker County Schools, Randolph/Tucker CAC, Tucker County EMS, the Health Department, Centers Against Violence, and the Tucker County Prosecuting Attorney's Office.

Phone number to Activate Transportation Protocol:

304-478-3338 and 1-800-339-1185