



## COMMANDING OFFICER'S SEXUAL ASSAULT STATEMENT

Sexual assault is a criminal act that differs from sexual harassment and falls outside the purview of equal opportunity. Sexual assault is defined as intentional sexual contact, characterized by the use of force, physical threat of force or abuse of authority, or when the victim does not or cannot consent. Sexual assault includes rape, nonconsensual sodomy (oral or anal sex), indecent assault (unwanted, inappropriate sexual contact or fondling of any bodily part perceived by the victim to as inappropriate), or attempts to commit these acts. Sexual assault can occur without regard to gender or spousal relationship or age of victim.

**“Consent shall not be deemed or construed to mean the failure by the victim to offer physical resistance. Consent is not given when a person uses force, coercion, or when the victim is asleep, incapacitated, or unconscious.”**

Sexual assault will not be tolerated. Failure to report or ignoring sexual assault incidents will have damaging consequences for both victims and their organizations. Where cause exists, appropriate legal or administrative action will be taken against violators. Victims will be treated with sensitivity, decency and respect, and will receive appropriate medical, emotional, psychological, and social services. Care will be given to ensure the identity of a victim is released only to those who have a need-to-know. Victim safety and rights are paramount at all times. Victims who have the courage to report must feel confident their personal safety will be protected and they will not be re-victimized by the organization. Marines and Sailors who are sexually assaulted are physically, mentally, and emotionally traumatized. They deserved to be treated with sensitivity and care.

Leadership, education, training, awareness and intervention are the keys to eliminating sexual assault. It is the responsibility of every member of this Regiment who witnesses physical, sexual, or verbal assault to take appropriate action to stop the activity and to immediately report it to the chain of command.

Additional information and assistance are available through the command's Uniformed Victim Advocates (UVA), the Group's Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC), and the *Marine Corps Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program* (MCO 1752.5A).

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