

Marine Wing Support Squadron 273 Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Policy Statement

Here are some facts about sexual assault:

1. Sexual assault is a crime. It is one of the most heinous and despicable crimes a Marine can commit.
2. The majority of sexual assaults in the military are servicemember on servicemember. Most assaults are committed by peers or near-peers (one rank higher or lower) and most victims know their assailants.
3. The majority of sexual assaults involving a service member occur on a military installation or ship.
4. Sexual assault goes against what we stand for as Marines and it is not in line with our core values of honor, courage, and commitment.



Marines should feel safe around other Marines. Marines should assume other Marines will care for them and protect them when in need. Sadly, we have Marines who intentionally prey on others and think it is okay to sexually violate or defile another human being. *Those individuals who commit sexual assault are criminals and have no place in our Corps.*

If you are the victim or witness of a sexual assault, please come forward. You have the option of filing a restricted or unrestricted report. Regardless of how you report, we will care for you, protect you, and get you any help you need. *We will vigorously investigate all unrestricted reports and punish those found guilty of this crime.*

We all play a role in the unit's Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Program.

For our NCOs, SNCOs, and officers – we must *foster a climate where there is an unequivocal understanding across the unit that sexual misconduct of any kind will not be tolerated.* We must sit down with our Marines and Sailors and make sure they understand what acceptable behavior is and is not. We must also highlight each Marine's responsibility in stopping or intervening in any situation before it leads to a sexual assault. Leaders need to set the tone here. Prevention starts with you.

For all our Marines and Sailors – I need you to protect one another. See something, say something. Most offenses that occur could have been prevented had someone exercised a little moral courage. Let us also *remind ourselves every day that we are held to a higher standard of conduct and that our Nation expects us to be exceptional warriors and citizens.* Again, sexual assault is not in-line with our core values.

Leverage our SAPR Victim Advocates (VAs) if you need help. Their main focus is assisting victims 24/7 and they can be reached at (843) 321-6009. SAPR VAs are also a good resource for leaders who need help with prevention focused training and discussions. Our goal is to stop sexual assaults, assist victims, and punish those found guilty of this crime. *Again, we do this by caring for each other and living our core values – Honor, Courage, and Commitment.*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'J. W. Britain', written in a cursive style.

J. W. BRITAIN
LIEUTENANT COLONEL, UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
COMMANDING OFFICER, MARINE WING SUPPORT SQUADRON 273