

Commander's Policy Statement on SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION AND RESPONSE (SAPR)



Sexual assault is a crime and a stain upon our honor as Marines and Sailors. It corrodes and tears at the fabric of trust and teamwork so critical to our success on the battlefield and is incompatible with our Core Values. We shall not tolerate the act and further, we must strive to prevent it from occurring at all.

Marine Corps Order (MCO) 1752.5C defines sexual assault as intentional sexual contact characterized by use of force, threats, intimidation, or abuse of authority, or when the victim does not or cannot consent. Sexual assault includes a broad category of sexual offenses consisting of the following specific UCMJ offenses: rape, sexual assault, aggravated sexual contact, abusive sexual contact, forcible sodomy (forced oral or anal sex), or attempts to commit these offenses.

As Marines and Sailors in "Lucky 13," we will be aware of what constitutes sexual assault and the consequences of such behavior. Through training and team building we will possess the tools to safely intervene when witnessing high-risk behaviors that may result in a sexual assault. The use of alcohol is a prominent risk factor in sexual assault incidents, but alcohol will never be an excuse for unwanted sexual behavior. Remember, a *lack* of verbal or physical resistance does NOT constitute consent. Whether it is providing covering fire, preventing a teammate from being sexually assaulted, carrying a wounded buddy to safety, or keeping someone from senselessly ending their career as a convicted sex offender, Marines and Sailors take care of one another, on and off the battlefield, on and off duty.

If you are the victim of sexual assault, you are not to blame. I encourage you to report it, whether restricted or unrestricted, so that we can rally resources to help. As a victim, you have the right to be treated with fairness and with respect for your dignity and privacy. You are empowered to make the choices on what support, assistance, and resources you need. The SAPR program is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

For immediate assistance, contact:
A CLB-13 SAPR Victim Advocate (SAPR VA) (760) 500-1707
1st MLG Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC) at (760) 716-0669
Camp Pendleton 24/7 Hotline at (760) 500-1707
<http://www.mccscp.com/sapr/>

Leaders at all levels and individuals will familiarize themselves with the MCO 1752.5C, the Marine Corps' Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program. As professionals, I expect the focus to be on prevention and developing a climate of mutual trust and respect. Train and educate your teams. Immediately address and correct inappropriate behaviors. Have frank and candid discussions about high-risk behaviors, what does and does not constitute consent, and about having the moral courage to take a stand and do what is right. Sexual assault is contradictory to the values we embrace. I challenge all hands to join me and dedicate themselves to eliminating this crime within our ranks.

Semper Fidelis!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Melendez'.

Lieutenant Colonel Marcos A. Melendez
Commanding Officer, Combat Logistics Battalion 13