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## **SART/SAFE call-out protocol**

### **603.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE**

The Shasta County Sexual Assault Response Team is a coordinated, multi-agency, multi-disciplinary approach to investigating reports of known or suspected sexual abuse, sexual assault and sexual exploitation committed against children, adults, dependent adults and elders. The team has four components: law enforcement, protective services, sexual assault medical examiners and advocacy groups. Each of these groups has clearly defined roles and responsibilities for the purpose of minimizing victim trauma and enhancing the quality of evidence collection for prosecution. The following county-wide protocol is directed to law enforcement officers whose initial response has proven to be critical in enhancing the prosecution of sexual assault cases.

#### **603.1.1 INITIAL RESPONSE**

Officers need to respond and make contact with the reporting party. If the R/P is also the victim the officer should interview the victim for a general statement and advise the victim that an investigator will need to conduct an in-depth interview with the victim in the near future. If possible, record the initial interview. In general, do not interview juvenile victims (under 12) or suspects. The scope of the initial interview should consist of questions to determine what occurred, the victim's safety, if medical aid, the identity of suspect/s, and whether BOLO's need to be broadcast. Also determine if evidence needs to be collected from the location of occurrence and/or additional crime scenes and general information to establish what happened. The victim's demeanor (crying, emotional, etc.) is also important. Note the condition of the clothing the victim was wearing during the incident (tears, stains, etc.). Keep in mind that you have the option to have a victim's advocate respond to the scene.

Take photographs of the victim's external injuries. It is preferred that the photos be taken prior to the medical examination. If the victim is uncomfortable with the officer taking the photos or the location of the injuries is an issue, the photos can be taken at the hospital by medical staff. This is in addition to the photos taken during the SART/SAFE exam by medical staff. Provide the victim with the case number and phone number for the I.D. Lab so the victim can make an appointment for additional photos to be taken at a later date (bruising appears, darkens) or tell the victim to call dispatch for officer follow-up.

If the R/P is not the victim, get a detailed statement from the R/P as to how they received the information and what the victim told them. This information can be extremely important in the case of juvenile investigations. If possible identify the first person the victim reported the offense to, as their hearsay statement is admissible in court. A law enforcement crime report with narrative needs to be completed.

Evaluation of the children's (victim and siblings) safety is important to prevent further acts by the perpetrator. Law Enforcement and CPS will conduct a joint investigation of the children's safety. If the children's safety cannot be guaranteed, place the children into protective custody per 300 W&I. When in doubt and reasonable suspicion exists, remove children. It is acceptable to leave the

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children with the non-offending parent as long as you believe that the parent had no reasonable knowledge or suspicion that the abuse was occurring and will keep the children safe 24/7 from the suspect. The non-offending parent must agree to no contact between the victim and suspect. The suspect cannot stay in the same household as the victim.

When required, victim confidentiality and 11166 P.C. forms need to be completed. In some cases of juvenile victims, it is possible the victim's siblings will also be victims. Please refer to the siblings as V-2, V-3, etc. and fill out confidentiality forms for them as well. Do not put their names in the report, as they cannot be removed for confidentiality purposes later if discovered they are also victims in the same case. Cross report to CPS all cases in which the victim is under 18.

### 603.1.2 NOTIFICATIONS

The officer should have dispatch make the following notifications:

Hospital or Shasta Community Health Center (see below for determining location)

Victim Assistance Center " the victim is under 12

One SAFE Place " the victim is 12 or older

### 603.1.3 EXAMINATIONS

Consideration should be given in deciding whether the sexual assault exam is appropriate for the reported crime. If there are any questions/concerns regarding this, obtain supervisory approval. SART/SAFE exams are conducted at hospital emergency rooms or at Shasta Community Health Center depending upon the physical maturity of the victim and time frame of the assault. Pediatric exams are appropriate for juveniles under 12 and older female juveniles who have not yet started menstruation. If possible, determine (by asking the victim or victim's guardian) if the female juvenile victim has reached puberty (as defined by having started menstruation cycles). Explain that the onset of puberty for female juveniles is a determining factor as to whether the victim will have a pediatric exam or not. For a general guideline refer to the following to determine the appropriate facility to refer victims. In all cases, obtain any evidence and the sexual assault examination kit.

### 603.1.4 12 YEARS AND OLDER WITHIN PAST 5 DAYS

Advise the victim that Shasta Regional Medical Center has SART/SAFE staff available 24/7 and can more readily accommodate victims than Mercy Medical Center. However, it is the victim's choice of where he/she is to be treated. Accompany victim to the hospital or refer the victim to the hospital and contact hospital staff in person or by phone to give authorization for the exam. Per 264.2(b)(1) PC, have dispatch contact a One SAFE Place advocate to respond and meet the victim at the hospital.

### 603.1.5 UNDER 12 YEARS WITHIN 72 HOURS

Contact a sex crime investigator if necessary to determine whether a pediatric sexual assault exam is necessary and appropriate. Shasta Community Health Center Pediatric Department does pediatric SART/SAFE exams during business hours. A day shift officer, investigator or CPS representative will have to make the appointment for the victim and deliver an OES 930

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form (complete pages 1 and 2 prior to delivery) to Shasta Community Health Center Pediatric Department prior to or at the time of the appointment. The officer does not need to be present for the exam but should advise the victim/guardian that an advocate is available for support and to make necessary arrangements.

In cases that occur **after 1700 hrs. or on weekends** and there is a possibility that evidence will be lost if the victim is not examined immediately, direct the victim's guardian to SRMC for a minimal exam for evidence collection, visual examination and photographs. A follow-up exam at Shasta Community Health Center's Pediatric Dept. will need to be scheduled by law enforcement or CPS as soon as possible during business hours.

### 603.1.6 UNDER 12 YEARS BEYOND 72 HOURS

Complete a written report and submit it to Investigations for further investigation. In some cases an exam may also be appropriate after the incident if there is a possibility that physical evidence may still be present. If an exam is appropriate, an OES 925 needs to be submitted to Shasta Community Health Center prior to the exam. When in doubt, consult with the Investigations Unit during business hours or on-call Investigator after hours.

### 603.1.7 EVIDENCE COLLECTION

Collect and separately bag the victim's clothing and note whether the clothing is from the incident or if the victim has changed clothes. Make an effort to collect the clothing worn at the time of the assault if not worn to the exam. If the clothing is delivered in a bag commingled, separate and note their condition when you received them. Log the clothing into evidence for submission to DOJ.

The hospital will make notification that the SART/SAFE kit/ evidence is available for pickup. Due to chain of custody, officers are to **PROMPTLY** respond and collect the evidence. When picking up the SART/SAFE kit make sure a SART/SAFE exam report is included with the SART/SAFE kit and log both into evidence. Refrigerate the SART/SAFE kit. Attach the original or a copy of the SART/SAFE exam with the crime report.

### 603.1.8 RESOURCES

(SHASCOM can make the calls if necessary)

CHILD & FAMILY SERVICES 225-5144

ONE SAFE PLACE- 244-0118 (adult SART/SAFE exams " 12 and up)

VICTIM ASSISTANCE CENTER - 225-5220, pager 229-2353, cell 945-5235 (pediatric SART/SAFE exams " under 12)

SHASTA REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER 1100 Butte St., Redding 244-5400

SHASTA COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER (Pediatric Dept.) 1035 Placer ST., Redding 246-5802

MERCY MEDICAL CENTER 2175 Rosaline Ave., Redding 225-6000