

Palm Beach County Sexual Assault Response Team (SART)

Protocol for Dispatch and First Responders

The primary objectives of the SART are to improve the treatment of survivors, case outcomes, efficiency and protection of the community by creating a victim centered response.

The primary objectives for First Responders in any sexual assault case are to: determine if emergency medical treatment is needed, determine if victim is in a safe environment, provide assessment to determine immediate needs of victim and provide contact number for the rape crisis hotline.

Since many sexual assault victims will experience their first contact after the assault with Fire Rescue and/or EMS, these first responders should be mindful that they are one component of a Multidisciplinary Team, and that the team concept is crucial in ensuring a victim centered approach to the investigation. The victim centered approach means that the needs and interests of survivors are of central concern to system personnel as they respond.

A. Dispatch

It is understood that there are more than one established procedures in our county.

1. PSAP's should follow their established procedures.
2. Provide rape crisis hotline as a contact number, 833-7273 or 1-866-891-7273.

B. First Responders

1. Follow established agency response procedures:
 - a. Initial Assessment
 - b. Scene Safety
 - c. Assessment, treatment and transport according to local agency Medical Protocols.
 - i. Victims not requiring medical transport, follow local procedure (TOT LE).
 - ii. Limit personnel access into any crime scene unless needed due to patient condition.
 - iii. Limit moving patient unless patient condition requires (if time permits, consult with LE).
 - d. Evidence Preservation

- e. Maintain scene security and evidence preservation until turned over to LE.
- f. Scene Documentation
 - i. Responders should document any items that were moved or altered during their scene work.
 - ii. Responders should document any items that were left on scene during their scene work.
 - iii. Responders should document any comments or statements made by patient that pertain to situation.
- g. Emotional Support (consider assigning one crew member to facilitate.)
 - i. Patient refusals – consult with LE
 - ii. Forensic Exams/Procedures – provide basic information if asked including that he or she may contact the PBC Rape Crisis Center for services.