

## **Palm Beach County Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) General Order Summary**

**Palm Beach County Victim Services & Certified Rape Crisis Center (PBCVS), law enforcement, fire rescue, health care providers and prosecutors have formed a Sexual Assault Response Team (SART). This multidisciplinary team creates a “victim centered” response to sex crimes allegations and improves the treatment of victims, conviction rates, efficiency and protection of the community.**

**The primary objectives for law enforcement officers in sexual assault cases include: protect victims of sexual violence, by identifying information that supports the facts of the case, identifying and preserving evidence, identifying the offender, developing probable cause to support the arrest and prosecution of the offender, providing victims with support through a combination of law enforcement and community services and promoting officer safety. The general order is attached- this is a summary of what you need to know now concerning the SART protocol:**

- A facility exclusively designed for forensic sexual assault examinations opened January 13, 2012 adjacent to Wellington Regional Medical Center Emergency Room, 10101 West Forest Hill Blvd.
- The site is called “The Butterfly House” and is operated by PBCVS. It provides a safe and supportive environment for victims of sexual assault. Interview equipment is also available for law enforcement. The facility is un-manned.
- A Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE trained) is available, on-call, 24-hours a day. SANE nurses have special training to interact with victims of sexual assault, collect evidence through the forensic examination and provide courtroom testimony.
- When Victim Services is notified by law enforcement via the helpline number 833-RAPE (7273) of a sexual battery allegation, they will notify the on-call SANE nurse who will respond with the Advocate to The Butterfly House or hospital within 60 minutes.
- The Butterfly House does not provide emergency medical care and will only accept victims for sexual assault examinations. If the victim is in need of medical attention they must first be transported to the closest hospital.
- When a sexual assault victim is at a Palm Beach County Hospital, and unable to be transported to the Butterfly House, a SANE nurse will respond to the hospital where the victim is located and perform the sexual assault examination.
- The SART protocol is for adult victims only (male and female) and some adolescents-determined on a case by case basis. Child victims will still be examined at the Child Protection Team (CPT) 5305 Greenwood Avenue WPB.
- Per FSS 794.052, law enforcement shall provide or arrange for transportation to the appropriate forensic examination facility (Butterfly House).
- The Butterfly House will accept “Non-Reporting” victims of sexual assault. Law enforcement will respond, take custody of the sexual assault kit, and complete a non-crime report.
- A countywide SART protocol has been created and endorsed by the Palm Beach County Law Enforcement Planning Council and the Palm Beach County Chiefs of Police Association. Ongoing training is available through SART.