

## Prison Rape Elimination

### 903.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy provides guidance for compliance with the Prison Rape Elimination Act of 2003 (PREA) and the implementing regulation that establishes standards (PREA Rule) to prevent, detect and respond to sexual abuse and sexual harassment (28 CFR 115.111).

#### 903.1.1 DEFINITIONS

Definitions related to this policy include:

**Intersex** - A person whose sexual or reproductive anatomy or chromosomal pattern does not seem to fit typical definitions of male or female. Intersex medical conditions are sometimes referred to as disorders of sex development (28 CFR 115.5).

**Sexual abuse** - Any of the following acts, if the individual in custody does not consent, is coerced into such act by overt or implied threats of violence, or is unable to consent or refuse:

- Contact between the penis and the vulva or the penis and the anus, including penetration, however slight
- Contact between the mouth and the penis, vulva or anus
- Penetration of the anal or genital opening of another person, however slight, by a hand, finger, object or other instrument
- Any other intentional touching, either directly or through the clothing, of the genitalia, anus, groin, breast, inner thigh or the buttocks of another person, excluding contact incidental to a physical altercation

Sexual abuse also includes abuse by a member of the Office or a contractor, with or without consent of the individual in custody, as follows:

- Contact between the penis and the vulva or the penis and the anus, including penetration, however slight
- Contact between the mouth and the penis, vulva or anus
- Contact between the mouth and any body part where the office member or contractor has the intent to abuse, arouse or gratify sexual desire
- Penetration of the anal or genital opening, however slight, by a hand, finger, object or other instrument, that is unrelated to official duties, or where the office member or contractor has the intent to abuse, arouse or gratify sexual desire
- Any other intentional contact, either directly or through the clothing, of or with the genitalia, anus, groin, breast, inner thigh or the buttocks, that is unrelated to official duties, or where the member or contractor has the intent to abuse, arouse or gratify sexual desire

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- Any attempt, threat or request by the office member or contractor to engage in the activities described above
- Any display by the office member or contractor of his/her uncovered genitalia, buttocks or breast in the presence of an individual in custody
- Voyeurism by the office member or contractor (28 CFR 115.6)

**Sexual harassment** - Repeated and unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; verbal comments, gestures or actions of a derogatory or offensive sexual nature by one individual in custody that are directed toward another; repeated verbal comments or gestures of a sexual nature to an individual in custody by a member of the Office or contractor, including demeaning references to gender, sexually suggestive or derogatory comments about body or clothing, or obscene language or gestures (28 CFR 115.6).

**Transgender** - A person whose gender identity (i.e., internal sense of feeling male or female) is different from the person's assigned sex at birth (28 CFR 115.5).

### **903.2 POLICY**

The Talbot County Sheriff's Office has zero tolerance with regard to all forms of sexual abuse and sexual harassment (28 CFR 115.111). The Office will not tolerate retaliation against any person who reports sexual abuse or sexual harassment, or who cooperates with a sexual abuse or sexual harassment investigation.

The Talbot County Sheriff's Office will take immediate action to protect those in its custody who are reasonably believed to be subject to a substantial risk of imminent sexual abuse (28 CFR 115.162).

### **903.3 PREA COORDINATOR**

The Sheriff shall delegate certain responsibilities to a PREA coordinator. The coordinator shall be an upper-level manager appointed by and directly responsible to the Operations Commander or the authorized designee. The coordinator must have sufficient time and authority to develop, implement and oversee office efforts to comply with PREA standards (28 CFR 115.111).

The responsibilities of the coordinator shall include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Developing and maintaining procedures to comply with the PREA Rule.
- (b) Ensuring that any contract for the confinement of individuals in custody includes the requirement to adopt and comply with applicable provisions in PREA and the implementing regulations, including the obligation to provide incident-based and aggregated data, as required in 28 CFR 115.187 (28 CFR 115.112).
- (c) Developing a staffing plan to provide adequate levels of staffing and video monitoring, where applicable, in order to protect those in custody from sexual abuse (28 CFR 115.113).

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1. This includes documenting deviations and the reasons for deviations from the staffing plan, as well as reviewing the staffing plan a minimum of once per year.
- (d) Developing methods for office members to privately report sexual abuse and sexual harassment of individuals in custody (28 CFR 115.151).
- (e) Developing a written plan to coordinate response among office members, medical and mental health practitioners, investigators, command staff and other first responders to an incident of sexual abuse (28 CFR 115.165).
- (f) Ensuring a protocol is developed for investigating allegations of sexual abuse. The protocol shall include (28 CFR 115.121; 28 CFR 115.122):
  1. Evidence collection practices that maximize the potential for obtaining usable physical evidence based on the most recent edition of the U.S. Department of Justice's (DOJ) Office on Violence Against Women publication, "A National Protocol for Sexual Assault Medical Forensic Examinations, Adults/Adolescents" or a similarly comprehensive and authoritative protocol.
  2. A process to ensure a criminal or administrative investigation is completed on all allegations of sexual abuse or sexual harassment.
  3. A process to document all referrals to other law enforcement agencies.
  4. Access to forensic medical examinations, without financial cost, for all victims of sexual abuse where appropriate. Such examinations shall be performed by Sexual Assault Forensic Examiners (SAFEs) or Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANEs) where possible. If SAFEs or SANEs cannot be made available, the examination can be performed by other qualified medical practitioners. The efforts to provide SAFEs or SANEs shall be documented.
  5. In accordance with security needs, provisions to give, to the extent available, individuals in custody access to victim advocacy services if the individual is transported for a forensic examination to an outside hospital that offers such services.
- (g) Ensuring that individuals with limited English proficiency and disabilities have an equal opportunity to understand and benefit from efforts to prevent, detect and respond to sexual abuse and sexual harassment. This includes access to appropriate interpreters and written materials in formats or through methods that provide effective communication to those with disabilities (e.g., limited reading skills, intellectual, hearing, speech or vision disabilities) (see the Limited English Proficiency Services and Communications with Persons with Disabilities policies) (28 CFR 115.116).
  1. The Office shall not rely on other individuals in custody for assistance except in limited circumstances where an extended delay in obtaining an appropriate interpreter could compromise the individual's safety, the performance of first-

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response duties under this policy, or the investigation of an individual's allegations of sexual abuse, harassment or retaliation.

- (h) Publishing on the office website:
  - 1. Information on how to report sexual abuse and sexual harassment on behalf of an individual in custody (28 CFR 115.154).
  - 2. A protocol describing the responsibilities of the Office and any other investigating agency responsible for conducting sexual abuse or sexual harassment investigations (28 CFR 115.122).
- (i) Establishing a process that includes the use of a standardized form and set of definitions to ensure accurate, uniform data is collected for every allegation of sexual abuse at facilities under the direct control of this office (28 CFR 115.187).
  - 1. The data collected shall include, at a minimum, the data necessary to answer all questions from the most recent version of the Survey of Sexual Violence, conducted by DOJ, or any subsequent form developed by DOJ and designated for lockups.
  - 2. The data shall be aggregated at least annually.
- (j) Ensuring audits are conducted pursuant to 28 CFR 115.401 through 28 CFR 115.405 for all office facilities used to house individuals in custody overnight (28 CFR 115.193).
- (k) Ensuring those who work in office facilities where individuals are held in custody are informed of the office zero-tolerance policy regarding sexual abuse and sexual harassment of individuals in custody (28 CFR 115.132).

### **903.4 REPORTING SEXUAL ABUSE AND HARASSMENT**

Individuals in custody may make reports verbally, in writing, privately or anonymously of any of the following (28 CFR 115.151):

- Sexual abuse
- Sexual harassment
- Retaliation by other individuals in custody or office members for reporting sexual abuse or sexual harassment
- Office member neglect or violation of responsibilities that may have contributed to sexual abuse or sexual harassment

Individuals in custody shall be notified of the office zero-tolerance policy regarding sexual abuse and sexual harassment, and of at least one way to report abuse or harassment to a public or private entity that is not part of the Office and that is able to receive and immediately forward a

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report of sexual abuse or sexual harassment to office supervisors and command staff. This allows the individual to remain anonymous (28 CFR 115.132; 28 CFR 115.151).

#### 903.4.1 MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

Office members shall accept reports from individuals in custody and third parties, and shall promptly document all reports (28 CFR 115.151).

All members shall report immediately to the Shift Sergeant any knowledge, suspicion or information regarding:

- (a) An incident of sexual abuse or sexual harassment.
- (b) Retaliation against the individual or the member who reports any such incident.
- (c) Any neglect or violation of responsibilities on the part of any office member that may have contributed to an incident or retaliation (28 CFR 115.161).

No member shall reveal any information related to a sexual abuse report to anyone other than to the extent necessary to make treatment and investigation decisions.

#### 903.4.2 SHIFT SERGEANT RESPONSIBILITIES

The Shift Sergeant shall report to Talbot County Sheriff's Office designated investigators all allegations of sexual abuse, harassment, retaliation, neglect or violations leading to sexual abuse, harassment or retaliation. This includes third-party and anonymous reports (28 CFR 115.161).

If the alleged victim is under the age of 18 or considered a dependent adult, the Shift Sergeant shall also report the allegation as required under mandatory reporting laws and office policy.

Upon receiving an allegation that an individual in custody was sexually abused while confined at another facility, the Shift Sergeant shall notify the head of that facility or the appropriate office of the agency where the alleged abuse occurred. The notification shall be made as soon as possible but no later than 72 hours after receiving the allegation. The Shift Sergeant shall document such notification (28 CFR 115.163).

If an alleged victim is transferred from the Office to a jail, prison or medical facility, the Shift Sergeant shall, as permitted by law, inform the receiving facility of the incident and the individual's potential need for medical or social services, unless the individual requests otherwise (28 CFR 115.165).

### **903.5 INVESTIGATIONS**

The Office shall promptly, thoroughly and objectively investigate all allegations, including third-party and anonymous reports, of sexual abuse or sexual harassment. Only investigators who have received office-approved special training shall conduct sexual abuse investigations (28 CFR 115.171).

#### 903.5.1 FIRST RESPONDER RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibilities of the first deputy to respond to a report of sexual abuse or sexual assault shall include, but not be limited to (28 CFR 115.164):

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- (a) Separating the parties.
- (b) Establishing a crime scene to preserve and protect any evidence.
- (c) Identifying and securing witnesses until steps can be taken to collect any evidence.
- (d) Requesting that the alleged victim and suspect not take any actions that could destroy physical evidence, including, as appropriate, washing, brushing teeth, changing clothes, urinating, defecating, smoking, drinking or eating if the abuse occurred within a time period that still allows for the collection of physical evidence.

If the first responder is not a deputy, he/she shall request that the alleged victim not take any actions that could destroy physical evidence and should then notify a deputy (28 CFR 115.164).

### 903.5.2 INVESTIGATOR RESPONSIBILITIES

The responsibilities of investigators shall include, but not be limited to (28 CFR 115.171):

- (a) Gathering and preserving direct and circumstantial evidence, including any available physical and biological evidence and any available electronic monitoring data.
- (b) Interviewing alleged victims, suspects and witnesses.
- (c) Reviewing any prior complaints and reports of sexual abuse involving the suspect.
- (d) Conducting compelled interviews only after consulting with prosecutors as to whether compelled interviews may be an obstacle for subsequent criminal prosecution.
- (e) Assessing the credibility of the alleged victim, suspect or witness on an individual basis and not by the person's status as an individual in custody or a member of the Talbot County Sheriff's Office.
- (f) Documenting in written reports a description of physical, testimonial, documentary and other evidence, the reasoning behind any credibility assessments, and investigative facts and findings.
- (g) Referring allegations of conduct that may be criminal to the State's Attorney for possible prosecution, including any time there is probable cause to believe an individual in custody sexually abused another individual in custody at the office facility (28 CFR 115.178).
- (h) Cooperating with outside investigators and remaining informed about the progress of any outside investigation.

### 903.5.3 ADMINISTRATIVE INVESTIGATIONS

Administrative investigations shall include an effort to determine whether office member actions or failures to act contributed to the abuse. The departure of the alleged abuser or victim from the employment or control of this office shall not be used as a basis for terminating an investigation (28 CFR 115.171).

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### **903.6 SEXUAL ASSAULT AND SEXUAL ABUSE VICTIMS**

No individual in custody who alleges sexual abuse shall be required to submit to a polygraph examination or other truth-telling device as a condition for proceeding with the investigation of such an allegation (28 CFR 115.171(e)).

Victims of sexual abuse shall receive timely, unimpeded access to emergency medical treatment. Treatment services shall be provided to the victim without financial cost and regardless of whether the victim names the abuser or cooperates with any investigation arising out of the incident (28 CFR 115.182).

#### **903.6.1 CONCLUSIONS AND FINDINGS**

All completed investigations shall be forwarded to the Sheriff, or if the allegations may reasonably involve the Sheriff, to the County Manager. The Sheriff or County Manager shall review the investigation and determine whether any allegations of sexual abuse or sexual harassment have been substantiated by a preponderance of the evidence (28 CFR 115.172).

All office members shall be subject to disciplinary sanctions up to and including termination for violating this policy. Termination shall be the presumptive disciplinary sanction for members who have engaged in sexual abuse. All discipline shall be commensurate with the nature and circumstances of the acts committed, the member's disciplinary history and the sanctions imposed for comparable offenses by other members with similar histories (28 CFR 115.176).

All terminations for violations of this policy, or resignations by members who would have been terminated if not for their resignation, shall be criminally investigated unless the activity was clearly not criminal and reported to any relevant licensing body (28 CFR 115.176).

Any contractor who engages in sexual abuse shall be prohibited from contact with individuals in custody and reported to any relevant licensing bodies (28 CFR 115.177). The Sheriff shall take appropriate remedial measures and consider whether to prohibit further contact with individuals in custody by a contractor.

### **903.7 RETALIATION PROHIBITED**

All individuals in custody and office members who report sexual abuse or sexual harassment or who cooperate with sexual abuse or sexual harassment investigations shall be protected from retaliation (28 CFR 115.167). If any other person who cooperates with an investigation expresses a fear of retaliation, appropriate measures shall be taken to protect that person.

The Shift Sergeant or the authorized designee shall employ multiple protection measures, such as housing changes or transfers for victims or abusers, removal of alleged abusers from contact with victims, and emotional support services for individuals in custody or members who fear retaliation for reporting sexual abuse or sexual harassment or for cooperating with investigations.

A member of the Office shall be identified by the Shift Sergeant or the authorized designee to monitor the conduct and treatment of individuals in custody or members who have reported sexual abuse, and of those who were reported to have suffered sexual abuse. The member shall act

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promptly to remedy any such retaliation. In the case of individuals in custody, such monitoring shall also include periodic safety checks.

### **903.8 REVIEWS AND AUDITS**

#### **903.8.1 INCIDENT REVIEWS**

An incident review shall be conducted at the conclusion of every sexual abuse investigation, unless the allegation has been determined to be unfounded. The review should occur within 30 days of the conclusion of the investigation. The review team shall include command staff and seek input from supervisors and investigators (28 CFR 115.186).

The review shall (28 CFR 115.186):

- (a) Consider whether the allegation or investigation indicates a need to change policy or practice to better prevent, detect or respond to sexual abuse.
- (b) Consider whether the incident or allegation was motivated by race; ethnicity; gender identity; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex identification, status or perceived status; gang affiliation; or was motivated or otherwise caused by other group dynamics at the office facility.
- (c) Examine the area in the facility where the incident allegedly occurred to assess whether physical barriers in the area may enable abuse.
- (d) Assess the adequacy of staffing levels in that area during different shifts.
- (e) Assess whether monitoring technology should be deployed or augmented to supplement supervision by office members.

The review team shall prepare a report of its findings, including any determinations made pursuant to this section and any recommendations for improvement. The report shall be submitted to the Sheriff and the PREA coordinator. The Sheriff or the authorized designee shall implement the recommendations for improvement or shall document the reasons for not doing so (28 CFR 115.186).

#### **903.8.2 DATA REVIEWS**

The PREA coordinator shall conduct an annual review of collected and aggregated incident-based sexual abuse data. The review should include, as needed, data from incident-based documents, including reports, investigation files and sexual abuse incident reviews (28 CFR 115.187).

The purpose of these reviews is to assess and improve the effectiveness of sexual abuse prevention, detection and response policies, practices and training. An annual report shall be prepared that includes (28 CFR 115.188):

- (a) Identification of any potential problem areas.
- (b) Identification of any corrective actions taken.
- (c) Recommendations for any additional corrective actions.



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- (d) A comparison of the current year's data and corrective actions with those from prior years.
- (e) An assessment of the progress in addressing sexual abuse.

The report shall be approved by the Sheriff and made readily available to the public through the office website. Material may be redacted from the reports when publication would present a clear and specific threat to the safety and security of the facility. However, the nature of the redacted material shall be indicated.

All aggregated sexual abuse data from office facilities and private facilities with which it contracts shall be made readily available to the public at least annually. Before making aggregated sexual abuse data publicly available, all personal identifiers shall be removed (28 CFR 115.189).

### **903.9 RECORDS**

The Talbot County Sheriff's Office shall retain all written reports from administrative and criminal investigations pursuant to this policy for as long as the alleged abuser is in custody or is a member of the Office, plus five years (28 CFR 115.171).

All other data collected pursuant to this policy shall be securely retained for at least 10 years after the date of the initial collection unless federal, state or local law requires otherwise (28 CFR 115.189).

### **903.10 TRAINING**

All office members and contractors who may have contact with individuals in custody shall receive office-approved training on the prevention and detection of sexual abuse and sexual harassment within the office facility.

- (a) The Training Supervisor shall be responsible for developing and administering this training as appropriate, covering at a minimum (28 CFR 115.131):
  1. The office zero-tolerance policy and the right of individuals in custody to be free from sexual abuse and sexual harassment, and from retaliation for reporting sexual abuse or harassment.
  2. The dynamics of sexual abuse and harassment in confinement settings, including which individuals in custody are most vulnerable.
  3. The right of individuals in custody and office members to be free from sexual abuse and sexual harassment, and from retaliation for reporting sexual abuse or harassment.
  4. Detecting and responding to signs of threatened and actual abuse.
  5. Communicating effectively and professionally with all individuals in custody.

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6. Compliance with relevant laws related to mandatory reporting of sexual abuse to outside authorities.
- (b) Investigators assigned to sexual abuse investigations shall also receive training in conducting such investigations in confinement settings. Training should include (28 CFR 115.134):
1. Techniques for interviewing sexual abuse victims.
  2. Proper use of *Miranda* and *Garrity* warnings.
  3. Sexual abuse evidence collection in confinement settings.
  4. Criteria and evidence required to substantiate a case for administrative action or prosecution referral.

The Training Supervisor shall maintain documentation that office members, contractors and investigators have completed required training and that they understand the training. This understanding shall be documented through individual signature or electronic verification.

All current office members who may have contact with individuals in custody shall be trained within one year of the effective date of the PREA standards. The Office shall provide annual refresher information to all such members to ensure that they understand the current sexual abuse and sexual harassment policies and procedures.