

“Sexual assault is a clear threat to the lives and the well being of the women and men who serve our country in uniform.”

US Secretary of Defense Chuck Hagel

HELP FOR SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL TRAUMA

If you or someone you know are currently serving or have served in the military, and are a survivor of sexual assault or harassment, help is available.

In addition to the resources on the back of this brochure, please call toll free 1-844-SERV-VET to be connected to the County Veteran Service Office nearest you — these offices can not only help connect you with the MST services you need, but also assist you with ALL veteran benefits.

RESOURCES

DOD — 24/7 Safe Helpline
877-955-5247

Veterans Crisis Line
1-800-273-8255 (press 1)
www.veteranscrisisline.net

County Veterans Service Officers
1-844-SERV-VET
(assistance with all state and federal benefits)

CalVet Website
www.CalVet.ca.gov
(state benefit information, resources, forms, links)

USDVA Website
www.mentalhealth.va.gov/msthome
(federal MST information)

USDVA MST Coordinator/Women Veteran Program Manager
http://www.vetcenter.va.gov/Military_Sexual_Trauma.asp

California National Guard, Sexual Assault Response Coordinator
[REDACTED]
Office 916-854-3448, [REDACTED]

California Coalition Against Sexual Assault (CALCASA)
916-446-2520, www.calcasa.org

The National Domestic Violence Hotline
800-799-SAFE (7233)

National Intimate Partner Violence Hotline
800-897-LINK (5465)

National Sexual Violence Resource Center
www.nsvrc.org

Service Women’s Action Network (SWAN)
www.servicewomen.org

Protect Our Defenders
www.protectourdefenders.com

California Victims Compensation Program
www.vcgcb.ca.gov/victims/

Military Sexual Assault & Trauma

Education and Assistance



A Service of the California Association of County Veterans Service Officers

Sexual assault is a crime punishable under the Uniform Code of Military Justice and violates Military Core Values

What is Military Sexual Assault?

Military sexual assault, as defined by the Department of Veterans Affairs, refers to sexual assault or repeated, threatening sexual harassment that occurred while an individual was serving in the military.

What is Military Sexual Trauma?

The definition of Military Sexual Trauma (MST) given by federal law (U.S. Code 1720D of Title 38) and used by the VA is: Psychological trauma, which in the judgment of a VA mental health professional, results from a physical assault of a sexual nature, battery of a sexual nature, or sexual harassment which occurred while the Veteran was serving on active duty or active duty for training.

Who can receive help?

All active duty service members — including National Guard and Reservists — as well as military veterans, regardless of gender, era of service, discharge status, or whether the crime was ever reported.

Symptoms of Military Sexual Trauma (MST)

MST can affect survivors differently, and long after the traumatic incident occurs. Following are just *some* signs to watch for — in yourself and others:

- Strong emotions
- Feelings of numbness
- Trouble sleeping
- Trouble with attention, concentration or memory
- Problems with alcohol or other drugs
- Trouble with reminders of the sexual trauma
- Troubles in relationships
- Physical health problems

If you or someone you know is experiencing any of these symptoms, help is available. Please see the back of this brochure for a list of resources.

Other Facts About MST

- Veterans can apply for disability compensation for any current difficulties related to their service, including those related to personal assault or MST
- To apply for disability compensation, contact an MST specialist and/or Women Veterans Coordinator at your local VA Regional Office
- You do not need a VA service-connected disability rating to be eligible for free MST-related treatment through VA — and no documentation is required
- Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is the most common mental health diagnosis related to experiencing a personal assault or MST
- There are a wide variety of free services available to MST survivors — through the military, as well as non-profit organizations and other state programs, such as the California Victims Compensation Program (see resources on the back of this brochure).