

## Understanding DoD's Confidentiality Policy

DoD's Confidentiality policy permits victims of sexual assault to report the crime to specified individuals who can then ensure the victim receives medical care, treatment and counseling without notifying command or law enforcement officials. Covered individuals include the Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC); Uniformed Victim Advocates (UVA) and Victim Advocates (VA); Healthcare Providers; and Chaplains. For purposes of public safety and command responsibility, the SARC will notify the installation commander that an assault has occurred and provide details that will not identify the victim. See the [Department of Defense Directive 6495.01, Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program](#) for complete details.

This policy provides victims some personal space and time, and increased control over the release and management of their personal information. This hopefully empowers them to seek relevant information and support to make more informed decisions about participating in the criminal investigation. Jurisdictions with similar policies have found that confidentiality actually leads to increased reporting rates. Even if the victim chooses not to pursue an official investigation, this additional reporting avenue gives commanders a clearer picture of the sexual violence within their command, and enhances a commander's ability to provide an environment which is safe and contributes to the well-being and mission-readiness of all of its members.