



III MEF Support Battalion Commanding Officer's Policy Statement on *Sexual Assault*



As Marines, we hold to our core values in respecting the dignity of others and take care of our own. In order to preserve unit cohesion, we must treat each other with respect and dignity. Any attack on the dignity of another Marine goes against these values and will not be tolerated. My sexual assault policy is based upon three cornerstones: **Choices, Consequences, and Courage.**

Sexual assault is a crime and defined as intentional sexual contact, characterized by use of force, physical threat of force, or abuse of authority or when the victim does not or cannot consent. Sexual assault can occur without regard to gender, spousal relationship or age of the victim. **"Consent" shall not be deemed or construed to mean the failure by the victim to offer physical resistance. Consent is not given when a person uses force, threat of force, coercion or when the victim is asleep, incapacitated, or unconscious.** Irresponsible consumption of alcohol is frequently cited in sexual assault incidents and can place a Marine at increased risk. Therefore, all leaders will stress the need for the responsible consumption of alcohol and not allow any Marine to be victimized as a result of intoxication.

Any attack or assault of a sexual nature will be investigated as a criminal act and is punishable under the Uniform Code of Military Justice. Ignoring or failing to report sexual assault incidents degrades trust and may have damaging consequences for victims and the battalion. Where cause exists, appropriate legal or administrative action will be taken against violators.

All members of this battalion must seek to prevent sexual assault and be prepared to respond immediately to the needs of the victim. Victims of a sexual assault will be treated with sensitivity, decency and respect. Victims will receive appropriate medical, emotional, psychological, and social services. Care will be given to ensure that the identity of a victim of a sexual assault is released only to those who have a need to know (i.e., the Commanding Officer, Provost Marshal's Office, or Naval Criminal Investigative Service).

If you are a victim of sexual assault, you have two methods of reporting the assault: **unrestricted** and **restricted** reporting. Victim safety is paramount at all times!

- Victims who have the courage to make an unrestricted report must feel confident that their personal safety will be protected.
- Victims who choose to make a restricted report per MCO 1725.5A will have that choice honored to the fullest extent.

In the event of a sexual assault, contact the MSB Uniformed Victim Advocate (UVA) at cell 098-970-4673. You may also contact the sexual assault hotline at 645-HOPE (on base) or 098-970-HOPE (off base). Information is also available on the MSB website at <https://www.iiimef.marines.mil/Units/III-MIG/Commands/III-MEF-Support-Battalion/>

I view each and every member of MSB, (Marines, Sailors and civilians) as members of my family. I will not tolerate an attack on any one of you – like I would not tolerate an attack on my wife or my children. If someone harms a member of my team, my family, I will take it personally. Sexual assault is a complete and total contradiction to the core values that we hold so dear. Eliminating sexual assaults will take a dedicated team effort. In the case of a sexual assault, everyone loses. What I need is for our Marines and Sailors, regardless of rank, to step up and be good leaders and better friends. I challenge each leader and individual to accept responsibility for achieving this goal. Our Marines, Sailors, and family members deserve nothing less than our complete dedication to this cause.

Semper Fidelis

Douglas J Cobb Jr
Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Marine Corps
Commanding Officer
III MEF Support Battalion