

SEXUAL ASSAULT PROTOCOL
SUPERIOR COURTS
APPALACHIAN JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
STATE OF GEORGIA

ORDER

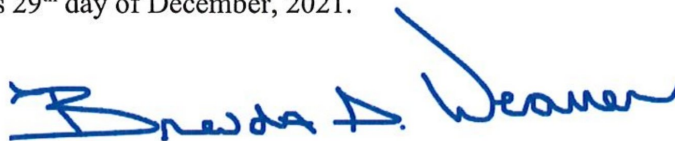
WHEREAS, the Legislature of the State of Georgia enacted O.C.G.A. Section 15-24-2 requiring the establishment of a Sexual Assault Protocol; and

WHEREAS, the undersigned established a Sexual Assault Protocol Committee pursuant to O.C.G.A § 15-24-2; and

WHEREAS, the Committee has met on December 20, 2021, and discussed the Protocol, which was approved by a majority vote on December 29, 2021, and which is attached hereto, as the protocol for cases of sexual assault in the Appalachian Judicial Circuit, which is comprised of Pickens, Gilmer, and Fannin Counties, State of Georgia.

NOW THEREFORE IT IS HEREBY ORDERED, this document is accepted by the Court as the protocol to be used in responding to, investigating and prosecuting cases arising from an alleged sexual assault and shall be spread upon the minutes and filed with the Clerks of the Superior Court of the Appalachian Judicial Circuit.

SO ORDERED, this 29th day of December, 2021.



HONORABLE BRENDA S. WEAVER, CHIEF JUDGE
APPALACHIAN JUDICIAL CIRCUIT

This Sexual Assault Protocol (“Protocol”) is adopted pursuant to O.C.G.A § 15-24-2 for the purpose of outlining the procedures to be used in responding to, investigating and prosecuting cases of sexual assault. The purpose of this Protocol shall be to ensure coordination and cooperation between all agencies involved in sexual assault cases so as to increase the efficiency of all agencies handling such cases and to minimize the stress created for the alleged sexual assault victim by the legal and investigatory process¹.

The mission of the Appalachian Circuit Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) is to:

- o Promote consistent, comprehensive, sensitive, and non-judgmental treatment of victims of sexual assault as they progress through the victim services, health and criminal justice system;
- o Standardize the collection of evidence in order to aid in the prosecution of cases;
- o Develop a coordinated effort among health providers, law enforcement personnel, prosecutors and victim advocates to ensure that victims efficient and comprehensive medical care, evidentiary examination, emotional support and referral information; and
- o Facilitate the prosecution of the accused through the standardized of collection evidence.

For purposes of this Protocol, the term *victim* shall refer to victims age 18 and older. Every sexual assault case involving victims under 18 shall refer to the Appalachian Circuit Child Abuse Protocol in identifying appropriate services and resources. Every sexual assault case involving victims under 18 shall refer to the Appalachian Circuit Child Abuse Protocol in identifying appropriate services and resources. Per the state model Child Abuse protocol, those services and resources should include the Appalachian Children’s Center in providing a range of services, including forensic interviews, advocacy, therapy, etc. An agreement between North Georgia Mountain Crisis Center and the Appalachian Children’s Advocacy Center shall define access to and sharing of client records. In providing services to anyone under the age of 18, DFACS and/or law enforcement shall be notified pursuant to O.C.G. A § 19-7-5.

- Medical and forensic exams may be offered in all cases of sexual abuse, regardless of the length of time that may have elapsed between the most-recently reported sexual contact and the examination. Clinical providers will contact an appropriate medical expert if a consultation is needed.
- Forensic medical examinations (FMEs) and sexual assault examinations can help to: 1) screen for injuries and medical conditions and initiate medical treatment; and 2) answer questions and reassure victims and parents about the child’s physical well-being; and 3) identify medical evidence to prosecute the offender(s).

¹ O.C.G.A. § 15-24-2; provided, however that a failure by an agency to follow the protocol shall not constitute an affirmative or other defense to prosecution of a sexual assault, preclude the admissibility of evidence, nor shall a failure by an agency to follow the protocol give rise to a civil cause of action.

- o Forensic medical examinations^[1] and sexual assault exams will be conducted using a trauma-informed, culturally sensitive, rights-based approach. Options include the local Child Advocacy Center (CAC) or Sexual Assault Center (SAC) that has a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) and a Sexual Assault Victim Advocate (SAVA). Some CACs also have an on-site medical examination room. Other places that conduct these exams are SafePath (for children 13 or younger (736 Whitlock Ave., Suite 600, Marietta, AG 30064, 770-801-3465) and Children's Scottish Rite (CHOA) (1001 Johnson Ferry Rd NE, Atlanta, GA 30342, ph# 404-785-5437). and LiveSafe (48 Henderson St., Marietta, GA 30064, ph# 770-427-2902). Consult the child advocacy for appropriate medical services. Hospital emergency rooms are able to conduct medical evaluations for the health of the child. Some hospitals may have a pediatric SANE who can conduct the sexual assault examination. If the child is taken to the Receiving Hope Center (RHC), this exam may be conducted there.
- o Payment for these exams is available and supported through the Georgia Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC); victims should not be asked for payment.
- o Victim advocacy services^[2] during the exam process will be offered. The National Protocol for Sexual Assault Medical Forensic Examinations – Pediatric recommends the provision of timely access to victim advocacy services during the exam process. Victim advocates typically function to aid victims and their families in getting help to cope with the impact of sexual abuse in their lives and to promote healing. Advocates also encourage coordination and collaboration among responders so that interventions are child-focused and trauma-informed.
- o The evidence collection kit will be sent to the GBI Crime Lab by the appropriate law enforcement agency. Victims of sexual assault may come to a hospital located outside of their county or state of residence or outside of the jurisdiction where the assault took place. The law enforcement agency in the jurisdiction where the assault occurred is the law enforcement agency charged with investigating the assault and facilitating transfer of the evidence collected from the hospital to the appropriate forensic lab in the jurisdiction where the assault took place.
- o A debrief with the doctor, nurse, or SANE who conducted the exam is an integral part of the investigation.

If the victims are under the age of 16 years, statutory rape may be applicable and a parent/legal guardian may bring the victim for the examination and collection of evidence. In this situation, the victim's cooperation to report may not be required. In these cases, law enforcement may have the parent/guardian consent for the examination and collection of evidence.

ADVOCACY

The role of the Sexual Assault Victim Advocate² is to provide services to the victims of sexual assault regardless of whether or not the victim chooses to participate in the criminal justice process. They play a very important role in providing a response that keeps the victim central in the process, allowing the investigation and prosecution to be offender focused. Advocacy also has a critical role in promoting the healing process for the victim. Sexual assault victim advocates provide crisis intervention, support, family advocacy, information and referral and other ancillary services to assist the victim through the criminal justice process. The support provided by the sexual assault victim advocate also benefits the criminal justice process, because supported, well-informed victims are more likely to continue through the process. Advocates will operate under the guidelines established by *The Georgia Crime Victim's Bill of Rights* (O.C.G.A. § 17-17-1) and

² Defined as a trained sexual assault victim advocate working with a Georgia certified sexual assault center.

will adhere to best practices as outlined in the *Georgia Sexual Assault Response Team Guide and the Georgia Sexual Assault Certification Standards*.

Responsibilities of the sexual assault victim advocate include:

- Being available to victims and families 24 hours a day, 7 days a week via a 24-hour crisis line staffed by trained community advocates;
- Providing services to victims and families that are sensitive to the unique barriers and special considerations that diverse victims encounter in reporting sexual assault crimes;
- Providing options to victims so that they may make informed decisions;
- Supporting victims who choose to report to law enforcement by providing a link to eliminate barriers effecting the victim's participation in the criminal justice process;
- Maintaining victim confidentiality; and
- Offering services to non-reporting victims and assisting if and when the victim decides to report.

Victims may also work with systems-based victim advocates if the case progresses through the criminal justice system to the point of prosecution. *See Appendix A for more information.*

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Fannin County

Fannin County Sheriff's Office
Blue Ridge City Police Department
McCaysville City Police Department

Gilmer County

Gilmer County Sheriff's Office
East Ellijay City Police Department
Ellijay City Police Department

Pickens County

Pickens County Sheriff's Office
Jasper City Police Department

The role of the investigating officer is to ensure the safety of the victim and the community and to ascertain if the report of sexual assault meets the elements of a crime under Georgia law. Within their jurisdictions, law enforcement will investigate sexual assault crimes. Investigative responsibilities include:

- Identification, apprehension and interrogation of suspect(s);
- Interview of victim with an offender focused and trauma informed approach;
- Interview of witnesses;

- Collection and preservation of evidence;
- Maintenance of chain of custody;
- Timely submitting sexual assault evidence collection kits to GBI crime laboratory regardless of whether a suspect has been identified, per GBI recommendations;
- Review of GBI Crime lab reports as soon as possible after they are released to investigating agency, per GBI recommendations;
- Determination of probable cause and arrest;
- Preparation of case reports with investigative summaries;
- Assistance to District Attorney's office in prosecution of case; and
- Testimony and presentation of evidence in court.

Investigating officers will work with victim advocates to ensure a victim centered response to the investigation and proper notification of case updates to victims. Additionally, law enforcement officers will operate under the guidelines established by *The Georgia Crime Victim's Bill of Rights* (O.C.G.A. § 15-17-1) and adhere to best practices as outlined in the *Georgia Sexual Assault Team Guide*.

MEDICAL FORENSIC EXAMINATION PROCEDURES

The role of the medical forensic personnel is to provide a timely, high-quality medical forensic examination that can potentially validate and address sexual assault patients' concerns, minimize the trauma they may experience, and promote their healing. At the same time, it can increase the likelihood that evidence collected will aid in criminal case investigation, resulting in perpetrators being held accountable and further sexual violence prevented.

Medical forensic examinations may be performed at the North Georgia Mountain Crisis Network Sexual Assault Center, 3640 East First Street, Suite 203, Blue Ridge, Georgia, 30513, or to the most appropriate and/or expedient facility available. Medical forensic exams should be made available if patient chooses to report, chooses not to report, or chooses to report anonymously.

Medical forensic examinations shall be performed by a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner ("SANE"), physician, nurse practitioner or physician's assistant ("PA") trained in performing such exams.

Medical forensic responsibilities include:

- Obtaining informed consent from the patient for the medical forensic examination, documentation and evidence collection;
- Gathering the medical forensic history;
- Conducting a physical examination;

- Coordinating treatment of injuries;
- Documentation of biologic and physical findings;
- Collection of evidence from the patient;
- Documentation of findings;
- Providing information, treatment, and referrals for STIs, pregnancy;
- Follow-up as needed for additional treatment and/or collection of evidence; and
- Providing testimony at trial.

See Appendix B for more information.

BIOLOGIC EVIDENCE COLLECTION

The SANE, physician, nurse practitioner or PA will collect biologic samples at the request of a patient, in accordance with currently accepted protocol (defined as the *National Protocol for Sexual Assault Medical Forensic Examinations Adults/Adolescents*), to obtain timely biologic reference samples for possible analysis at the GBI Crime Lab. At the conclusion of the sexual assault medical forensic examination, any evidence collected will be packaged and protected in a manner to ensure the integrity of specimens and the appropriate chain of custody of the evidence.

All biologic evidence will be collected up to a minimum of 120 hours after assault. In addition, cases should be evaluated on an individual basis as the medical forensic examination may be completed beyond 120 hours.

All biologic samples, fluids, hairs and other evidence requiring GBI analysis will be given directly to the case investigator or law enforcement designee for processing using a proper chain of evidence.

Pursuant to SB 304/O.C.G.A. § 35-1-2, it shall be the duty of every law enforcement officer who takes possession of the evidence collected during a sexual assault forensic medical examination to ensure that such evidence is submitted to the division within 30 days of it being collected.

Urine collected for analysis can be collected up to 120 hours and may be submitted to the Georgia Bureau of Investigations Crime Lab, the Federal Bureau of Investigations Crime Lab or other private lab for toxicology drug screen.

All biologic evidence collected at the request of a patient who chooses not to initiate and participate in and/or cooperate with a law enforcement investigation shall be given directly to the case investigator or law enforcement designee for processing using a proper chain of evidence and said case investigator shall notify the District Attorney's Office in making a determination as to pursuing prosecution in said matter.

REQUESTS FOR MEDICAL FORENSIC EXAMINATION

With the consent of the patient, medical forensic examinations can be performed at the request of (1) a law enforcement agency, (2) the District Attorney's Office, (3) the medical examiner or coroner's office, (4) a hospital, (5) pursuant to a court order, or at the patient's request pursuant to O.C.G.A. 17-5-72.

Medical forensic examinations may be requested 24 hours a day by using the following procedure: Medical forensic examinations may be performed at the North Georgia Mountain Crisis Network Sexual Assault Center, 3640 East First Street, Suite 203, Blue Ridge, Georgia, 30513. If said examination is not performed at the North Georgia Mountain Crisis Network Sexual Assault Center, the facility or entity providing said medical forensic examinations shall be performed by a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner ("SANE"), physician, nurse practitioner or physician's assistant ("PA") trained in performing such exams. Additionally, options for forensic medical exams include, but are not limited to, LiveSafe (48 Henderson St., Marietta, GA 30064, 770-427-2902), Green House (101 East Crawford Street, Suite 2, Dalton, GA 30702, ph #706-278-4769), or Union General Hospital (35 Hospital Rd, Blairsville, GA 30512, ph#706-745-2111.)

For juveniles, referrals may be made to the Appalachian Children's Center (293 Progress Rd., East Ellijay, Georgia 30540, ph #706-273-2225). Other places that conduct these exams include, but are not limited to, SafePath (for children 13 or younger: 736 Whitlock Ave., Suite 600, Marietta, GA 30064, 770-801-3465), Children's Scottish Rite (CHOA) (1001 Johnson Ferry Rd NE, Atlanta, GA 30342, ph# 404-785-5437). and LiveSafe (48 Henderson St., Marietta, GA 30064, ph# 770-427-2902). Consult the Appalachian Children's Center for appropriate medical services. Hospital emergency rooms are able to conduct medical evaluations for the health of the child. Some hospitals may have a pediatric SANE who can conduct the sexual assault examination. If the child is taken to the Receiving Hope Center (RHC), this exam may be conducted there.

COSTS OF THE MEDICAL FORENSIC EXAMINATIONS

The cost of examinations shall be paid pursuant to O.C.G.A § 16-6-1(c), O.C.G.A § 17-5-72. Patients shall not be responsible for the payment of medical forensic examination costs.

CONDUCT OF THE MEDICAL FORENSIC EXAMINATION

A SANE, physician, nurse practitioner or PA will perform the examination and assessment.

Medical forensic examinations and biologic evidence collection should be completed as quickly as possible after a report is received.

Medical forensic examinations and biologic evidence collection shall be conducted in accordance with Georgia Bureau of Investigation (GBI) procedures using a GBI Sexual Assault Evidence Kit. It is also recommended that medical forensic exams be conducted in accordance with the *National Protocol for Sexual Assault Medical Forensic Examinations*.

A trained victim advocate will be available to accompany the patient and offer emotional support during the examination. The advocate will at no time ask the patient questions related to the details of the assault.

The SANE, physician, nurse practitioner or PA will complete appropriate authorizations relating to the examination.

The SANE, physician, nurse practitioner or PA will photograph and document injuries and prepare a report.

The SANE, physician, nurse practitioner or PA will maintain and document the chain of custody of any evidence collected during the examination and assessment.

The SANE, physician, nurse practitioner or PA will adhere to best practices as outlined in the *Georgia Sexual Assault Response Team Guide*.

See Appendix B for more information.

PROCEDURES FOR HOSPITALS RECEIVING WALK-IN REPORTS OF SEXUAL ASSAULTS

Hospitals receiving patients reporting incidents of sexual assault shall immediately contact law enforcement in accordance with O.C.G.A § 31-7-9 mandating all non-accidental injuries be reported. Patients will retain the right not to initiate, participate in, and/or cooperate with any law enforcement investigation of such assault.

Forensic Medical Examination Forms Available Upon Request
Please contact the North Georgia Mountain Crisis Network, Inc.
706-632-8400 or crisishelter@etcmail.com.

PROSECUTION

The role of the District Attorney's office is to protect the rights of the victim while holding the offender accountable. Prosecutors should work in a collaborative fashion with law enforcement, medical forensic and victim advocates. Prosecutors will operate under the guidelines established by *The Georgia Crime Victim's Bill of Rights* (O.C.G.A. § 15-17-1) that state, for example, that victims have the right:

- To be treated fairly and with dignity by all criminal justice agencies involved in the case;
- To proceedings free from unreasonable delay;
- To reasonable, accurate and timely notice of a court proceeding where the release of the accused will be considered;
- To reasonable, accurate and timely notice of court proceedings or any changes to such proceedings, including restitution hearings;
- To reasonable, accurate and timely notice of the accused's release and/or monitoring program;
- To be present at all criminal proceedings in which the accused has a right to be present;
- To NOT be excluded from any scheduled court proceedings, except as provided in O.C.G.A. § 17-17-1 or otherwise provided by law;
- To a waiting area, during judicial proceedings, that is separate from the accused and his or her relatives, friends and witnesses;
- To be reasonably heard at any scheduled court proceedings involving the release, plea or sentencing of the accused;
- To complete a Victim Impact Statement and have it presented to the court prior to the trial or plea of the accused (O.C.G.A. § 17-10-11);
- To refuse to submit to an interview by the accused, accused's attorney or agent of the accused; and
- To a requirement by the court that defense counsel not disclose victim information to the accused (O.C.G.A. § 17-17-10).

If a victim attends any court proceeding, a victim advocate from the District Attorney's Office will accompany the victim.

Prosecutors and prosecution-based advocates will adhere to best practices as outlined in the *Georgia Sexual Assault Response Team Guide*.

LOCAL SART COORDINATED RESPONSE

All members of the Appalachian Circuit Sexual Assault Response Team will adhere to best practices as outlined in the *Georgia Sexual Assault Response Team Guide (available summer 2017)*.

Members of the Appalachian Judicial Circuit SART agree to meet annually for discussion and evaluation to assure the coordination and cooperation between all agencies responding to sexual assault cases in the Appalachian Judicial Circuit. An email list has been created of all active members. The meeting may be in-person or virtually. Members may call for a special meeting to discuss a particular issue by requesting the same.

Local SART should meet to discuss local protocol topics such as the following:

- a. Identification of local resources;
- b. 911 response and procedure;
- c. Local investigative response and procedure;
- d. EMS transport;
- e. Advocate response time;
- f. Drug facilitated sexual assaults;
- g. Victim interviews;
- h. False reporting and recantation;
- i. Response to victims of human trafficking;
- j. Use of interpreters;
- k. Medical forensic response; and
- l. Child and adult protective services.

Pursuant to O.C.G.A § 15-24-2, members of the Appalachian Judicial Circuit Sexual Assault Protocol Committee agree to meet annually to review, update and evaluate this Sexual Assault Protocol.

The foregoing Appalachian Judicial Circuit Sexual Assault Protocol is hereby adopted and replaces any previously adopted protocol and remains in effect until such time as said protocol is amended and adopted.

Appendix A

Victim Support Services

Victim services can be provided by North Georgia Mountain Crisis Network, Inc.'s Sexual Assault Program, Victim-Witness Assistance Programs and other community agencies. These programs may be non-profit or governmental. A combination of services from various agencies may be needed to serve the victim and will be evaluated on an individual basis. Victim services may provide some or all of the following services:

- Maintaining frequent communication with victims regarding the status of the criminal investigation and court proceedings;
- Advising victims of procedures for payment of forensic portion of medical examination by law enforcement;
- Helping victims complete compensation applications for non-reimbursed expenses caused by the crime (such as medical, counseling, prescriptions and lost wages);
- Notifying victims of all available services, such as support groups, counseling and education;
- Explaining the Victims Bill of Rights, OCGA § 17-17-1, how to request the various notifications (notices of bond hearings, release of defendant from incarceration and case status);
- Encouraging victims to be active participants in their case; and
- Protecting victim's privacy.

The Sexual Assault Program of the North Georgia Mountain Crisis Network, Inc. works to form a continuum of care for victims. To request the assistance of a SAVA (Sexual Assault Victim Advocate) who can provide services and advocacy for the victim, their family and cooperation with law enforcement, including access and transportation to receive a Forensic Medical Examination by a qualified SANE call 706-632-8400 24/7 and request to speak with the on call Sexual Assault Victim Advocate.

The following section addresses the sexual assault office's involvement in responding to sexual assault victims:

NORTH GEORGIA MOUNTAIN CRISIS NETWORK, INC.
Sexual Assault Response Protocol:

RESPONSE TO CALLS:

Sexual Assault Advocate's Response:

1. Caller (could be a survivor, family, friend, 911 operator, law enforcement or hospital) calls the 24-hr crisis line at 706-632-8400 or 800-334-2836.
2. The hotline is always answered by a staff person.
3. The call is referred to the on-call Sexual Assault Advocate or Volunteer Advocate. If there are any problems with advocate response or questions, please call the Sexual Assault Office at 706-632-8400.

If the caller is a minor (17 years of age and younger):

1. Advocate will explain that they are a mandated reporter and Advocate will notify law enforcement and DFCS.
2. Refers he/she, ages 3 to 17 years of age, to law enforcement and/or DFCS and explains Sexual Assault Center Services.

If the caller is an adult (18 years of age and older):

1. Advocate will determine if the survivor is in immediate danger.
2. Help identify and addresses immediate concerns of the survivor.
3. Asks if he/she wants to report the crime to the police.

If adult DOES NOT want to report:

1. Advocate will provide support, advocacy, and complete a formal intake in person.
2. No report to Law Enforcement is required.
3. The victim shall sign a form which states the evidence is held, not reported, and only released to law enforcement if the victim decides to report within a 1 year.

If adult DOES want to report:

1. The Sexual Assault Victim Advocate [hereinafter referred to as "SAVA" where appropriate] is responsible for calling the SANE and law enforcement, if they have not already been called.
2. The SAVA will respond to the NGMCN Sexual Assault Center [hereinafter referred to as "SAC" where appropriate] or a Medical Facility upon request.
4. If reporting to a Medical Facility, check in with the Medical Facility staff upon arrival.
5. Check in with investigating law enforcement on site.
6. If victim is 15 years old or younger, the SAVA will ask if DFCS and law enforcement have been notified and if a family member is present and follow proper protocol for victims 15 years of age and younger.
7. Provide a Sexual Assault Evidence Collection Kit and Victim Care Kit.
8. Provide emotional support and advocacy to the victim and his/her family.
9. Explain the services provided by NGMCN's Sexual Assault program and give the survivor brochures, victim's bill of rights, and follow-up materials including Victim Compensation Information.
10. Explain the evidence collection procedures.
11. Accompany victim during the examination and interview process with the victim's permission.
12. Discuss the Pregnancy and STI Prophylaxis.
13. Complete all necessary Sexual Assault Program's paperwork.

FOLLOW-UP ADVOCACY:

1. Assist the survivor with completing applications for victim compensation.
2. Follow-up on application to ensure timely processing.
3. Facilitate transportation from SAC or Medical Facility.
4. Accompany survivor to District Attorney's office or any judicial proceedings upon request.
5. Provide the survivor with a written, concise explanation of the Criminal Justice System.
6. Assist law enforcement, SANE and the District Attorney's office at any point during the investigation.
7. Provide follow-up information and referrals for counseling.
8. Ensures that the survivor was able to obtain pregnancy and STI prophylaxis.
9. Anticipating the need to contact mental health or crisis counseling. Local resources include:
 - a. North Georgia Mountain Crisis Network 24-hr. Crisis Line #1-706-632-8400;
 - b. Appalachian Children's Center: (Ages 2-17) # 706-273-2225; and

c. Highlands Rivers Mental Health Center: #706-635-2739.

10. Encourage referral to Mental Health Agency/Rape Crisis Center/Safe Shelters including:

- a. North Georgia Mountain Crisis Network - 24-hr. Crisis Line: #1-706-632-8400 or 1-800-334-2836;
- b. Highlands Rivers Mental Health Center: 706-635-2739;
- c. Rape Response: 24-hr. Crisis line: 1-800-721-1999;
- d. Georgia Help Line: 24-hr. telephone line: 1-800-338-6745;
- e. Appalachian Domestic Violence Task Force: 706-636-7233; and
- f. Georgia Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-334-2836.

Appendix B

MEDICAL RESPONSE TO SEXUAL ASSAULT

Evidence Collection

This section addresses the response and the collection of evidence for sexual assault by a physician or Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner.

NGMCN Sexual Assault Center (SAC)

The NGMCN SAC is the preferred facility for a sexual assault forensic medical exam and collection of evidence when no immediate medical attention is required.

SAC's Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner's Response:

1. Respond to on-call SAVA within 15 minutes to the call from NGMCN.
2. Receive case information from crisis hotline staff member or the NGMCN SAVA.
3. Respond to the exam location within 30 minutes, if possible.
4. Upon arrival to NGMCN Sexual Assault Center(SAC) or other Medical Facility, SANE nurse will meet with investigator for initial information regarding the case.
5. Conduct the forensic examination and follow protocol for chain-of custody in obtaining evidence and releasing to law enforcement.
6. Give a copy of the forensic record to the Medical Facility staff for their record, law enforcement and sexual assault program director if patient signs release.

Other local facilities include, but are not limited to:

Hospitals

1. Fannin Regional Hospital
Fannin County
2. Piedmont Mountainside
Hospital
Pickens County
3. Piedmont Mountainside,
Ellijay Emergency Room
Gilmer
4. CHOA (Scottish Rite)
Fulton County
5. SafePath,
Cobb County

6. LiveSAFE
Cobb County
7. GreenHouse
Whitfield County
8. Union General Hospital
Union County

Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE)

A SANE is a specially trained nurse in the forensic-medical examination and collection of evidence from victims of sexual assault. The role of the SANE is that of an independent consultant/expert who provides a medical assessment of victims of sexual assault. In addition, they collect forensic evidence from the victim, in way of body fluids and samples. A SANE provides evidence identification, recovery and documentation. **A Sexual Assault Examination will be performed by a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner, unless one is not available. In the event that a SANE is not available, the exam will be performed by a physician from one of the county hospitals.**

Forensic Nurses bridge the gap between the health care system where victims go for medical treatment and the law enforcement system where perpetrators are brought to justice. Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANEs) are forensic nurses specifically trained to give quality forensic nursing care to victims of sexual assault.

Forensic Nurses, in addition to treating the victim's emotional trauma and physical injuries, also provide quality forensic care which includes the careful collection of the forensic evidence needed to convict or exonerate alleged perpetrators of violence. Certification is obtained at both State and National Levels.

SANE SCOPE OF PRACTICE:

- Examining the sexual assault survivor to assess, document and collect forensic evidence.
- Offering prophylactic treatment of sexually transmitted diseases and prevention of pregnancy under a pre-established medical protocol or as approved by a consulting physician or advance practice nurse.
- Referring care of major physical trauma and treatment of minor injuries to the ED (Emergency Department).
- Explaining to the client that the SANE does only a limited medical examination.
- Providing the rape survivor with information to ensure that the survivor can anticipate what may happen next, make choices about reporting and deciding who to tell, and obtain the support that will be needed when he or she leaves the facility.
- Providing emotional support, crisis intervention, and working with the rape crisis center advocate when one is available.
- Training other healthcare and community agency professionals to provide services to sexual assault victims.
- Testifying as an expert witness.

Pursuant to OCGA Section 15-24-2, members of the Appalachian Judicial Circuit Sexual Assault Protocol Committee agree to meet annually to review, update and evaluate this Sexual Assault Protocol. The foregoing Appalachian Judicial Circuit Sexual Assault Protocol is hereby adopted and replaces any previously adopted protocol and remains in effect until such time as said protocol is amended and adopted.



B. Alison Sosebee

District Attorney

Appalachian Judicial Circuit

Sign and Type Name

List Title, Department, and County


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Bryan D. Jones
Chief Magistrate Judge
Fannin County.

Sign and Type Name

List Title, Department, and County

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 Kevin Johnson

Chief Magistrate Judge Gilmer County

Sign and Type Name

List Title, Department, and County

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Alan Morris

Chief Magistrate Judge

Pickens County

Sign and Type Name

List Title, Department, and County

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T. Stanfield #090

Treavor Stanfield

Investigator, Criminal Investigations Division,

Gilmer Sheriff Office

Sign and Type Name

List Title, Department, and County

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Andrea Flagg

Andrea Flagg

Detective

Pickens Sheriff's Office, Pickens County, GA

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DANE KIRBY

Dane Kirby

SHERIFF FANNIN CO

Dane Kirby, Sheriff Fannin County

Pursuant to OCGA Section 15-24-2, members of the Appalachian Judicial Circuit Sexual Assault Protocol Committee agree to meet annually to review, update and evaluate this Sexual Assault Protocol. The foregoing Appalachian Judicial Circuit Sexual Assault Protocol is hereby adopted and replaces any previously adopted protocol and remains in effect until such time as said protocol is amended and adopted.



Edward D. Lacey III

Chief of Police, City of Ellijay

Gilmer County

Sign and Type Name

List Title, Department, and County

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Matt Dawkins', written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized and cursive.

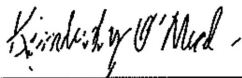
Chief Matt Dawkins

City of Jasper Police

55 GG Lovell Street, Suite: A

Jasper, GA 30143 (Pickens)

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Kimberly O'Neal

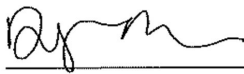
Executive Director

North Georgia Mountain Crisis Network, Inc.

Sign and Type Name

List Title, Department, and County

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Doug Moore, RN, SANE

North Georgia Mountain Crisis Network, Inc.

Sign and Type Name

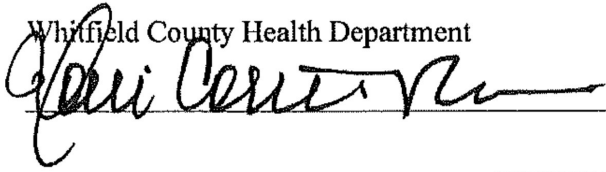
List Title, Department, and County

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Holli Collier, RN

North Georgia Health District

Whitfield County Health Department

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Holli Collier", is written over a horizontal line. Below this line are two more horizontal lines, which are currently blank.

Sign and Type Name

List Title, Department, and County

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Andrea C. Gibby
Andrea C. Gibby
Executive Director
Appalachian Children's Center, Inc.

Sign and Type Name

List Title, Department, and County

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Cami Fowler

Local Citizen, Pickens County, GA

Sign and Type Name

List Title, Department, and County

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Chief Larry H. Callahan

East Ellijay Police Department

Gilmer County