



DoD

Safe Helpline

Sexual Assault Support for the DoD Community

SAAPM Outreach Toolkit 2018

Frequently Asked Questions about Safe Helpline

General Questions:

Safe Helpline has a number of services to help augment the work you do to support survivors in your community. If you've ever felt stuck talking about Safe Helpline, here are the answers to some commonly asked questions. If we didn't answer one of your questions below, don't hesitate to reach out to us at outreach@safehelpline.org. We're always happy to help!

1. What is DoD Safe Helpline?

Safe Helpline launched in February 2011 in support of the Department's Sexual Assault Prevention and Response programs and is operated by RAINN (Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network), the nation's largest anti-sexual violence organization, through a contract with the Department of Defense (DoD) Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office. Safe Helpline provides anonymous, live, one-on-one specialized support, information, and resources to help empower sexual assault survivors in the Department of Defense community as they take the next steps in their healing process. Safe Helpline services are available worldwide, 24/7—ensuring access to help, anytime, anywhere.

2. Why is Safe Helpline needed?

Safe Helpline was created to meet the unique needs of survivors in the Department of Defense, who may have challenges accessing support due to operational, geographic and other constraints. Safe Helpline has proven to be a reliable and trusted resource for members of the Department of Defense community to reach out for help, and for Sexual Assault Response Coordinators and SAPR Victim Advocates wishing to connect survivors with additional resources at their request.

3. How can someone access Safe Helpline?

There are six easy ways to get help from DoD Safe Helpline:

Telephone Helpline



Speak directly with a Safe Helpline staff member over the phone, 24/7, for confidential support, information and resources by calling **877-995-5247**.

Online Helpline



Access one-on-one, anonymous, and secure support through Safe Helpline's online chat portal at www.safehelpline.org/online.

Safe HelpRoom



Connect with and support other survivors of sexual assault anonymously through Safe Helpline's group chat service, in a moderated, secure online environment 24/7 at www.safehelproom.org. Sessions just for men are also available every Sunday from 1300-1500 ET.

Safe Helpline App



Create a personalized self-care plan and access self-care exercises as well as the other Safe Helpline services with an easy-to-use mobile app. Download the app for free on the App Store and Google Play.

Responders Near Me



Find information about military and civilian responders and resources near you with the Safe Helpline Responder Database, as well as resources for Transitioning Service Members, anytime, anywhere through the website at www.safehelpline.org/search, via text, and on the Safe Helpline app. You can text your zip code or installation to 55-247 (in the U.S.) or 202-470 5546 (outside the U.S.) to receive a responder's contact information. Message and data rates may apply.

Self-paced Educational Programs



Learn more about issues related to sexual assault, the services Safe Helpline offers, and how to support a friend or loved one with Safe Helpline's guided educational programs. The programs can be completed anonymously or for D-SAACP credit and can be found at www.safehelpline.org

4. Who does Safe Helpline help?

The services provided by Safe Helpline are available to the DoD community consistent with DoD SAPR Policy:

- Adult Service members in the Active Duty, National Guard, and Reserve Components, the Coast Guard, and their dependents 18 years of age and older.
- DoD civilian employees and their family dependents 18 years of age and older when they are stationed or performing duties outside of the United States.
- U.S. citizen DoD contractor personnel when they are authorized to accompany Armed Forces in a contingency operation outside of the continental United States (OCONUS) and their U.S. citizen employees.
- Safe Helpline can provide specialized support and resources for Transitioning service members.
- Safe Helpline also operates as the DoD's PREA Hotline for all Military Correctional Facilities

User Safety and Anonymity

1. Does Safe Helpline ask any prerequisite or screening questions before using its services?

No, we do not screen users who access our services. We'll never ask questions about Service or rank, or any ask during every session is to go through a few initial safety checks and review some basic protocol including:

- Checking in around physical safety
- Reviewing what to do if the chat/call is disconnected
- Addressing any computer safety or privacy concerns

2. What will happen if a user shares personal information with Safe Helpline staff?

To maintain anonymity, we have put processes in place to ensure that if a user starts to share PII with staff, they'll kindly be reminded that we do not require any personal information to support your needs. No personally identifying information shared this way will ever be documented or recorded. However, if, despite the reminder, a user share information that fall as under one of the exceptions to confidentiality, a Safe Helpline staff member may be required by law to file a mandatory report.

Staff is trained to explain what that means and will support you through this process. Safe Helpline staff members are still mandatory reporters, if users disclose one of the following situations:

- Threats to harm others.
- Exhibits suicidal ideation.
- Neglect and abuse of a child, disabled individual, or the elderly

3. How does Safe Helpline remain anonymous?

All of the Safe Helpline services are completely anonymous and confidential. We have taken a number of steps in the building of our technology platforms to the policies we follow to remain a completely anonymous service for our users. Please read below for important information about how we maintain anonymity:

- We never log a user's IP address (which is similar to the computer's mailing address): By not using or storing this information, RAINN's technology platform ensures that sessions cannot be traced back to users.
- We do not save session transcripts: Unlike email, call center, or instant messaging platforms, which are designed to save information that can be accessed later, RAINN's technology platform never writes the transcript of a session to disk. Thus, there is no way to access past conversations between users and staff.
- All data is encrypted in both directions: All messages are encrypted using 256-bit SSL, a data encryption protocol that guarantees security while maintaining rapid data exchange, ensuring that the content of the messages cannot be intercepted and read in transit.
- Users are anonymous: RAINN's technology platform relies on routing methods that anonymize the connection between users and the staff member via the use of unique codes, making all communication anonymous.

Safe Helpline Staff

1. How are Safe Helpline staff trained?

All Safe Helpline staff complete more than 60 hours of extensive, trauma-informed training according to National Organization for Victim Advocacy (NOVA) guidelines.

The training includes:

- Active listening & empathy
- Crisis intervention
- How to talk to survivors
- Neurobiology of trauma
- Military culture & traditions
- Reporting options and military specifics resources

The training consists of the following components:

- Self-paced online training
- Four full days of in-person training (including in-depth review of the material, scenarios and role-plays)
- Shadowing and careful supervision
- Monthly in-services to stay current on emerging information from the field, changes in policies and procedures, and any other topics that may be relevant to providing high-quality service.

Important Note: Before a Safe Helpline staff member is able to officially begin taking calls and chats they must be approved by a licensed clinician.

2. Are Safe Helpline staff trained to support military personnel?

Safe Helpline staff are specialized to provide support and resources to the military community. The training curriculum was developed with oversight and information from DoD SAPRO and all of the individual Service Sexual Assault Prevention and Response offices. The military specific training covers:

- Effective responses to the needs of sexual assault survivors who are affiliated with the military.
- Knowledge about military systems, protocols, and culture to improve services to sexual assault survivors who are affiliated with the military.
- A thorough understanding of on-base resources including the Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC) and Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Victim Advocate as well as other responders.
- Adapting service delivery to support callers from military installations throughout the United States (U.S.) as well as overseas.

3. What does the Safe Helpline staffing structure look like?

Safe Helpline staff consists of approximately 60 professionals from a variety of backgrounds with the passion to support this community. All services are provided by full-time or part-time paid staff and there are always at least four staff members available at any time.

The Safe Helpline team consists of six full-time shift managers and about fifteen part-time assistant shift managers and forty part-time staffers. Staffers take online chats and answer hotline calls, while supervisors (either shift managers or assistant shift managers) monitor the staffers, moderate the Safe HelpRoom, and respond to referral texts.



How to Share Safe Helpline as a Resource

There are a number of easy ways to spread information about DoD Safe Helpline. All Safe Helpline outreach materials are free to download or order at <https://shop.safehelpline.org>.

The following outreach content and ideas have all been approved for use by the Department of Defense Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office. However, please ensure that you also receive any necessary approvals from your Service and base leadership prior to posting or using the following materials.

Download Safe Helpline Web Banners:

Many Service members bookmark the base/installation website homepage to find general information on events or available resources. By including Safe Helpline on your homepage, it makes it easier for a Service member to access sexual assault support through Safe Helpline. You can download a variety of web banners here: <http://shop.safehelpline.org/webbanners>

Posting Ideas:

- Download an image and work with the base/installation IT department to make Safe Helpline information the screen saver or wallpaper for public computers on base.
- Work with the base/installation IT department to embed the image and Safe Helpline link directly into your website.

Show the Safe Helpline Video to Your Community:

The "Faces of Safe Helpline" video provides a behind-the-scenes look at Safe Helpline. Interviews with Safe Helpline staff members help survivors better understand who is on the other end of the line. The video showcases the anonymous and confidential support offered by Safe Helpline as well as the personalized approach staff members take in helping survivors.

To receive a copy of any of the videos below, please email outreach@safehelpline.org.

“Faces of Safe Helpline” is available in three lengths:

- 30-second video – PSA style video, provides a snapshot of Safe Helpline services.
- 45-second video – Safe Helpline video featuring staff speaking directly to viewers about Safe Helpline services and what it means to get help. Available on Youtube - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xihv80rQfSA>
- 60-second video – Full-length video provides an overview of Safe Helpline narrated by staff and scenes of where Safe Helpline work.

Add Safe Helpline to Your Email Signature:

safehelpline.org  877-995-5247

Incorporate the following text into your email signature:

- Safe Helpline offers free and anonymous support to survivors of sexual assault in the DoD community, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Learn more at www.safehelpline.org
- Safe Helpline provides anonymous, confidential, support 24/7 to survivors of sexual assault in the military. Learn more at www.safehelpline.org
- Get 24/7 support through Safe Helpline. Learn more at www.safehelpline.org

Distribute Printed Outreach Materials:

Outreach materials are available for download and are free to order at <http://shop.safehelpline.org/>.

How can you use Safe Helpline outreach materials?

- Distribute them during base/installation wide events
- Incorporate the items into check-in procedures
- Add them to welcome bags at resource fairs
- Make the items available all over the base (i.e., Chaplain's office, Family Advocacy Program offices, Substance Abuse Awareness and Prevention offices, hospitals and all other medical and mental health facilities, Special Victims Council/Victims Legal Counsel offices)
- Distribute the items throughout your local community (i.e., local coffee shops frequented by Service members, emergency rooms, local sexual assault service providers)

The options to share outreach materials are unlimited!

Use the PowerPoint Presentation:

The Safe Helpline PowerPoint presentation is a DoD SAPRO-approved presentation that can be used to brief stakeholders or Service members on your base or installation. Use the presentation in its entirety or pull out key slides to incorporate into your own presentation.

The presentation includes:

- Ways our staff support survivors, friends and family members of survivors and responders
- How we ensure Safe Helpline services are anonymous and confidential-and what that means for survivors utilizing our services
- Videos and demonstrations on tools Safe Helpline has created to ensure survivors have a number of ways to access support
- How Safe Helpline services integrate and work with existing SAPR/SHARP services
- New and upcoming services and initiatives

You can download the PowerPoint presentation here: <http://shop.safehelpline.org/store/p/39-Safe-Helpline-PowerPoint-Presentation.aspx>

Use Social Media:

Retweet RAINN's Safe Helpline-related tweets on Twitter, RAINN's Twitter handle is @RAINN. Or you can use your own social media platforms to connect with your community about Safe Helpline!

You can also attach images to your posts by downloading them for free from the Safe Helpline store here: <https://shop.safehelpline.org/store/p/54-Social-Media.aspx>

The following social media content has been approved for use by the Department of Defense Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office. However, please ensure that you also receive any necessary approvals from your Service and base leadership prior to posting.

Twitter:

- Unsure of how to support a Service member who is a survivor of sexual assault? Find out how you can be there for them [here](#). #safehelpline @RAINN
- Knowing what to say to a survivor of sexual assault can be difficult. Safe Helpline can help. Learn more [here](#). #safehelpline @RAINN
- Learn how Safe Helpline offers anonymous and secure services to support survivors of sexual assault in the DoD community [here](#). #safehelpline @RAINN
- Do you know all the ways you can get support through Safe Helpline? Hint: It's not just through the phone. Learn more about how Safe Helpline can support you [here](#). #safehelpline @RAINN
- Need to talk? If you are a survivor of sexual assault, you can get specialized support at safehelpline.org or by calling 877-995-5247. #safehelpline @RAINN
- Want to know more about supporting a survivor of sexual assault in the military? [Safe Helpline](#) has resources for you. #safehelpline @RAINN
- Download the #SafeHelpline app to access resources and helpful self-care exercises. It's free and available for download on the App Store and Google Play. Learn more [here](#). #safehelpline @RAINN
- Are you OCONUS looking for support? Safe Helpline is available 24/7 from anywhere in the world. Connect to a trained staff member by calling 94 + 877-995-5247 or by connecting to the Online Helpline at www.safehelpline.org. #safehelpline @RAINN
- Looking for others to talk to who have been through a similar experience? Consider joining an anonymous [Safe HelpRoom](#) group chat to talk with others who have been affected by sexual assault. It's available 24/7. #safehelpline @RAINN

Facebook and Instagram:

Consider attaching the Safe Helpline images to your posts for additional outreach or using #safehelpline at the end of your posts. You can tag RAINN in your posts, too! Instagram: @RAINN, Facebook: @RAINN01

- Are you a survivor of sexual assault in the military? Get the help you deserve at www.safehelpline.org. #safehelpline (Facebook: @RAINN01/ Instagram: @RAINN)
- Safe Helpline is an anonymous way for sexual assault survivors in the military to find support. Safe Helpline doesn't need to know who you are to get you the help you deserve. www.safehelpline.org #safehelpline (Facebook: @RAINN01/ Instagram: @RAINN)
- Survivors of sexual assault in the military can get free, anonymous, support from anywhere in the world, 24/7 with the Safe Helpline App. It's free and available for download on the App Store and Google Play. #safehelpline (Facebook: @RAINN01/ Instagram: @RAINN)
- Want to connect with other survivors of sexual assault in the military? Safe HelpRoom is an anonymous group chat service, available 24/7 that allows survivors to support one another in a safe online environment. Visit www.SafehelpRoom.org to join the conversation. #safehelpline (Facebook: @RAINN01/ Instagram: @RAINN)

Talk about Safe Helpline in Your Announcements:

Consider using a newsletter announcement to talk about Safe HelpRoom, the anonymous 24/7 group chat service or to talk more generally about the services Safe Helpline offers. You can work with your IT department on base to post these on your base's or installation's website, or share it through email with your clients. Here are some other ideas you can include with your newsletter post to help engage your community during SAAPM:

- Post photos of recent SAPR events, like a resource fair, or presentation
- Engaging leadership early on is key. Highlight your base or installation leadership in the newsletter, by quoting them. Here are some examples you might consider using:
 - "You are not alone. We're here to help and get you the support you deserve." – Col. XX
 - "Retaliation is unacceptable. You can report it to your command, SAPR team, or through DoD Safe Helpline. You're not alone." – Col. XX
 - "What happened is not your fault. We are one team, and we're here to support you." Capt. XX
- Share the newsletter post on your social media platforms to reach more of your community

Sample Newsletter Text Option 1:

Have you heard about the Safe HelpRoom?

Safe Helpline offers an online community where sexual assault survivors in the DoD community can meet to support each other in taking the next steps after a sexual assault, called Safe HelpRoom. It's free, online, secure, and available 24/7.

The Safe HelpRoom provides a secure environment for survivors in the DoD to safely and anonymously receive peer-to-peer support while removing common barriers to accessing in-person care, including time, cost, distance, and scheduling. Also, because Safe HelpRoom is completely anonymous, it can allow stakeholders to connect with survivors who have not yet reached out for assistance.

Here's some reasons why the Safe HelpRoom might be a good resource for you:

- **If you're looking for others to talk to who have been through similar experiences.** Consider joining the anonymous online group chat to talk to others who can understand. It's available any time and accessible from anywhere in the world.
- **If you don't want to talk to someone in person.** Joining a Safe HelpRoom chat can add an extra layer of anonymity to help you feel more at ease by talking in a secure, anonymous community.
- **If you're OCONUS.** For folks who are overseas, the same resources may not always be as available as they are when you're back home. Consider joining Safe HelpRoom for support.

To learn more, you can take a tour of Safe HelpRoom here: <https://safehelpline.org/tour-helproom.cfm>

To join a group chat, logon to www.safehelproom.org.

Safe Helpline launched in February 2011 and is operated by SAPRO through a contract with RAINN (the Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network) - the nation's largest anti-sexual violence organization. DoD SAPRO is responsible for the policy and oversight of the Department's sexual assault prevention and response program. SAPRO works hand-in-hand with the Services and the civilian community to develop and implement innovative prevention and response programs.

DoD Safe Helpline provides anonymous, live, one-on-one specialized support, information, and resources to help empower sexual assault survivors in the DoD community as they take the next steps in their healing process. Safe Helpline services are available worldwide, 24/7—ensuring access to help, anytime, anywhere.

For more information about Safe Helpline and the services it offers, please visit www.sapr.mil or www.safehelpline.org.

Sample Newsletter Text Option 2:

Have you heard about Safe Helpline?

Safe Helpline is the anonymous, confidential, 24/7 resource for members of the military affected by sexual assault to get support.

What kind of support can Safe Helpline provide?

You can access Safe Helpline services anytime from anywhere in the world. Here's the type of support Safe Helpline can provide right away:

Safe Helpline staff members are trained professionals who are readily available to listen to your needs and concerns, discuss long- and short-term safety planning, provide information about additional resources that are tailored to your needs and connect you with local SAPR program personnel and other resources when you are ready.

How can I get help right now?

All Safe Helpline services are anonymous, confidential, and available 24/7.

→ Call the Telephone Helpline at 877-995-5247 to be directly connected to a staff member for one-on-one support.

→ Connect to the Online Helpline by logging onto <https://safehelpline.org/online> or by downloading the Safe Helpline app on the App Store or Google Play to chat one-on-one with a staff member.

→ Get peer support through the Safe HelpRoom by logging onto www.safehelproom.org or by downloading the Safe Helpline app on the App Store or Google Play.

→ Download the Safe Helpline app on the App Store or Google Play to connect to the Telephone Helpline, Online Helpline, or Safe HelpRoom and access self-care exercises.

→ Find information about military and civilian responders and resources near you with the Safe Helpline Responder Database, as well as resources if you are a Transitioning Service Member, through the website at www.safehelpline.org/search, via text, and on the Safe Helpline app. You can text your zip code or installation to 55-247 (in the U.S.) or 202-4705546 (outside the U.S.) to receive a responder's contact information. (Message and data rates may apply).

→ You can learn more about the effects of sexual assault, services Safe Helpline offers, and how to support a friend or loved one with Safe Helpline's guided educational programs. You can access them here: www.safehelpline.org. For SARCs and SAPR VAs, each self-paced program is available for D-SAACP credit.

Safe Helpline launched in February 2011 and is operated by SAPRO through a contract with RAINN (the Rape, Abuse, and Incest National Network) - the nation's largest anti-sexual violence organization. DoD SAPRO is responsible for the policy and oversight of the Department's sexual assault prevention and response program. SAPRO works hand-in-hand with the Services and the civilian community to develop and implement innovative prevention and response programs.

For more information about Safe Helpline and the services it offers, please visit www.sapr.mil or www.safehelpline.org.