

Specific Advocate Services

Some specific services an advocate might provide to an incarcerated person who has experienced sexual assault are:

- Providing crisis intervention over the phone to a survivor who has recently experienced an assault.
- Talking with a survivor about their safety in the weeks following the assault and helping the survivor plan for continued safety in the facility.
- Explaining the different PREA reporting options to an interested survivor.
- Discussing law enforcement reporting options with a survivor.
- Teaching coping skills to help a survivor heal from the traumatic experience.
- Supporting a survivor at a sexual assault forensic exam at a community hospital.
- Advocating for a survivor's ongoing medical needs related to the assault to be met by the facility.
- Explaining the facility's PREA investigation process to a survivor.
- Supporting a survivor at an interview or hearing related to the sexual assault.

What an Advocate's Role is Not

An advocate's role is NOT to:

- Provide legal advice
- Investigate a crime
- Provide therapy
- Be a survivor's friend
- Make decisions for the survivor
- Tell the survivor whether to report or not



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Content for this brochure was developed by the
Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs.

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What is Community Based Advocacy?



Community based advocacy for survivors of sexual assault has many dimensions, but is rooted in assisting survivors in healing after a sexual assault, knowing what rights survivors have, and being familiar with resources that can help survivors.

Advocates are professionals who must meet certain training requirements and other criteria to work with sexual assault survivors.



What is an Advocate's Role?

In general, an advocate's role is to:

- Listen to a survivor's story and provide support.
- Support a survivor's safety and empowerment.
- Keep the survivor's identity and information confidential.
 - » An advocate's conversations with a survivor are privileged.
 - » A community sexual assault program's records are confidential.
 - » An advocate will not reveal a survivor's identity or information unless required by law or a court order, or requested by a survivor with a signed release of information.
- Serve as a liaison between the survivor and the correctional facility or other systems that are involved.
- Inform survivors of their rights as a victim of crime. Some rights include:
 - » The right to be treated with dignity and respect.
 - » The right to have a support person present at the forensic medical examination.
 - » The right to have an advocate present at any law enforcement interviews and hearings.
 - » The right to submit a victim impact statement or report to the court.
- Listen to a survivor's needs and provide information and options so the survivor can make an informed choice.
 - » An advocate might work with a survivor to prioritize needs and help the survivor determine next steps.
 - » An advocate might serve as a sounding board for a survivor to discuss their options.
- Inform survivors of other resources and services that are available to them.

People who experience sexual assault while incarcerated should have access to comprehensive confidential advocacy services.

