



***State Standards for  
Georgia Sexual Assault Centers***

***Approved by the Standards Committee  
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction and Purpose of the Standards .....	3
Terms .....	4
The Sexual Assault Service Standards .....	8
Core Service Standard: 24-Hour Crisis Hotline .....	9
Core Service Standard: Advocacy .....	11
Core Service Standard: Crisis Intervention .....	13
Core Service Standard: Information and Referral .....	14
Core Service Standard: System Coordination and Collaboration .....	15
Core Service Standard: Community Awareness and Outreach .....	17
Organizational Standard: Governance .....	18
Organizational Standard: Governance .....	19
Organizational Standard: Governance .....	21
Organizational Standard: Governance .....	23
Organizational Standard: Governance .....	24
Organizational Standard: Governance .....	26
Organizational Standard: Governance .....	27
Organizational Standard: Strategic Planning, Fiscal Management and Sustainability .....	29
Organizational Standard: Personnel.....	30
Organizational Standard: Staff Development and Training .....	31
Organizational Standard: Cultural Competency.....	32
Organizational Standard: Persons with Disabilities.....	34
Specialized Services: Prevention .....	36
Specialized Services: Therapy.....	37
Specialized Services: Support Groups .....	38
Specialized Services: Medical Forensic Examination.....	39
Georgia Crime Victim’s Bill of Rights.....	41

## INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF THE STANDARDS

This document was developed by the standards committee, comprised of representatives from the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, the Department of Public Health, the Georgia Network to End Sexual Assault, and directors of sexual assault centers located throughout the state. Standards were created by the standards committee in an effort to promote statewide uniformity of direct services and related administrative functions. The primary goal of services provided by sexual assault centers is to promote the safety of victims, create an environment where victims feel safe and empowered, and reduce the trauma and re-victimization experienced by victims. The purpose of these standards is to ensure each client has access to the same level of services they need regardless of geographic location throughout the state of Georgia. Centers are expected to review the standards and ensure compliance.

## TERMS

Co-Victims of Sexual Assault (Collateral Victims of Sexual Assault) - Collateral victims of sexual assault are recognized by the VAWA Sexual Assault Services Program (SASP) as victims of crime. Co-victims include family and household members of adult, youth, and child victims of sexual assault and others collaterally affected by the sexual assault including romantic partners, friends, co-workers and roommates. Perpetrators of sexual assault are excluded.

Crime Victims' Compensation Program – The Crime Victims Compensation program was created as a response to the financial losses incurred by victims of crime. The Program helps victims and their families through the emotional and physical aftermath of a crime by easing the monetary impact placed upon them by providing financial benefits for expenses such as medical bills, loss of earnings, mental health counseling, funeral expenses, and crime scene sanitization. The Georgia Crime Victims Compensation Program is administered by the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council. (O.C.G.A. 17-15-1, et. seq).

Pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 17-5-72 victims of sexual assault in the State of Georgia may request, at no cost to the victim, a Medical Forensic Examination for sexual assault, regardless of whether the victim participates in the criminal justice system or cooperates with law enforcement in pursuing prosecution of the underlying crime. The Georgia Crime Victims Compensation Program should be billed directly for all expenses relating to a Medical Forensic Examination (i.e. lab work, emergency room fees, physician's fees, SANE fees, all clinical fees associated with the exam, sexually transmitted infections testing, etc.) Neither the victim nor any collateral sources (e.g. insurance) may be billed for a Medical Forensic Examination. The Program sets the maximum payment for the forensic medical exam and medications. Payment to the provider will be considered as payment in full.

O.C.G.A. § 17-15-16 provides that the portion of a forensic interview used for the identification of the interviewee's needs may be paid for by the Georgia Crime Victims Compensation Program for crimes occurring in Georgia on or after July 1, 2014.

Crisis Intervention – methods used to offer immediate, short-term help to individuals who experience an event that produces emotional, mental, physical, and behavioral distress or problems.

Cultural Competence – Services, supports or other assistance that are conducted or provided in a manner that is responsive to the beliefs, interpersonal styles, attitudes, language and behaviors of individuals who are receiving services, and in a manner that has the greatest likelihood of ensuring their maximum participation in the program.

Diverse Populations – This includes, but is not limited to, people of any age, marital status, gender, education, sexual identity and orientation, culture, race, ethnic background, religion or spiritual belief, socio-economic status, level of physical, mental, or emotional functioning, residency, citizenship or immigration status, spoken language or means of communication, and HIV status.

Medical Forensic Exam – The sexual assault medical/forensic exam is an examination of a sexual assault patient by a licensed medical doctor, physician’s assistant, nurse practitioner, registered nurse, sexual assault nurse examiner (SANE), sexual assault forensic examiner (SAFE), sexual assault medical forensic examiner (SAMFE), who has specialized education and clinical experience in the collection of evidence and treatment of these patients. The examination includes gathering information from the patient for the medical forensic history; and examination; coordinating treatment of injuries, documentation of biological and physical findings, and collection of evidence from the patient; documentation of findings; information, treatment, and referrals for sexually transmitted diseases, pregnancy, suicidal ideation, alcohol and substance abuse, and other non-acute medical concerns; and follow-up as needed to provide additional healing, treatment, or collection of evidence. This exam is referred to as the “Medical Forensic Examination” under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA).

SART (Sexual Assault Response Team) – A multidisciplinary team that provides specialized immediate response to victims of recent sexual assault by implementing a comprehensive, sensitive, coordinated system of intervention and care for sexual assault victims. The team typically includes victim advocates, health care personnel, law enforcement representatives, and prosecutors. However, SART components vary by community. Many SARTs meet on a regular basis and often engage in systems review to ensure that the best victim-centered services and resources are being provided in their communities.

Sexual Assault – Includes all types of sexual crimes, including rape, aggravated sodomy, statutory rape, attempted rape, sexual battery, prostitution, trafficking, or commercial sexual exploitation. Refer to O.C.G.A. Title 16.

Sexual Assault Centers - provide services for victims/survivors/collateral victims of all ages. Their services are not limited to specific age groups. It is notable that some sexual assault centers serve victims who are legally adults while some sexual assault centers serve victims of all ages. Sexual assault centers also provide services to survivors 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. It should be noted that all services provided are offered free of charge and are confidential.

Sexual Assault Victim Advocate - a sexual assault victim advocate may offer victims and co-victims (collateral victims) a range of services throughout the entire process of responding to sexual assault victims to ensure continuity of care. These services shall include: 24 hour crisis hotline, in person medical accompaniment, crisis intervention, advocacy, information and referral, system coordination and collaboration, interpretation or translations, legal advocacy (civil, criminal, and immigration), and follow – up services to ensure those victims’ interests are represented, their wishes respected, and their rights upheld. In addition, sexual assault victim advocates may provide support groups, counseling, and accompaniment to related appointments to help meet the needs of victims, their families, and friends. The priority of the sexual assault victim advocate is with the victim.

Support Group – Group services that include regular, facilitated meetings with a supportive and educational focus that also provide an opportunity for survivors to connect with other survivors.

Survivor - The term “survivor” is used when referring to victims who are involved in long term healing or have healed from sexual assault.

Trained Advocate - A sexual assault victim advocate that may be paid staff or volunteer providing direct services that has met the standard of training.

Trauma-Informed Approach - A strengths-based framework that is grounded in an understanding of and responsiveness to the impact of trauma that emphasizes the profound neurological, biological, psychological, and social effects of trauma and violence for both the providers and survivors and that creates opportunities for survivors to rebuild a sense of control and empowerment. A trauma-informed approach is used by a program, organization, or system that responds by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices.

Underserved Population – A population for which there is a disparity between the presence of that population in the agency’s service area and the presence of that population among the persons receiving the agency’s services. Populations that may be underserved include foreign born persons; persons with limited English proficiency; persons with disabilities; persons who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender; persons of certain racial or ethnic backgrounds; older persons, men and others.

Victim – The sexual assault victim is someone who has been sexually assaulted. The term victim is used throughout these standards because the focus of services is based upon the

victimization experienced. A victim can be female or male; a person whose gender identity may not conform to his or her sex, or may be someone who doesn't identify as either male or female. There may be instances where individuals are unable to consent due to age, unconsciousness, incapacitation, or disability. In these cases others may suspect sexual victimization and may lawfully be able to seek help for them. The definition of victim includes those who are prostituted, trafficked or otherwise commercially sexually exploited.

Victim-Centered – An approach working with victims of sexual assault that focuses on restoring control to the victim, helping the victim identify and explore options, and supporting the victim's right to make decisions to guide their own recovery.

# THE SEXUAL ASSAULT SERVICE STANDARDS



## CORE SERVICE STANDARD: 24-HOUR CRISIS HOTLINE

<b>Standard</b>	<b>The agency maintains a crisis hotline.</b>
<b>Definition</b>	A telephone service available on a 24-hour basis to connect survivors/co-victims/collateral victims of sexual violence with a trained advocate. An immediately available 24 hour personal response provided in a variety of settings to an individual presenting a crisis related to sexual violence.
<b>Goal</b>	To provide the caller with the appropriate telephone-based crisis intervention, support, information, referrals and options to help effectively address individual needs.
<b>Practices</b>	<p>At a minimum, a 24-hour Crisis Hotline includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• While crisis lines may serve dual purposes, the service must connect survivors of sexual violence to a trained advocate in a timely manner, within 15 minutes of the call;</li> <li>• The crisis line shall be RAINN registered thus making it accessible via toll-free number;</li> <li>• The crisis line provider is encouraged to have a language line available or to equip their crisis line with text telephone capacity or assistive technology for callers who may be hearing impaired or Limited English Proficient;</li> <li>• There shall be sufficient staff and volunteers for 24-hour, seven day-a-week live answer hotline; and</li> <li>• Hotline numbers are widely distributed in areas served by the agency.</li> </ul>
<b>Qualifications</b>	<p>In order to meet the State Standards, all volunteers and paid staff (agent) shall complete 30 hours of in person sexual violence training. 20 hours of initial in person training shall be completed before the paid staff or volunteer has any client contact.</p> <p>In order to meet the Standards of 30 hours of in person sexual violence training, the 10 additional hours of training shall be completed within twelve months of the initial training.</p> <p>All staff and volunteers are required to participate in an additional 10 hours of annual training thereafter to maintain service skills. These additional hours can be done in person or online.</p> <p>Per O.C.G.A. § 24-5-509 "Agent" means a current or former employee or volunteer of a program who has successfully completed a minimum of 20 hours of training in family violence</p>

	and sexual assault intervention and prevention at a Criminal Justice Coordinating Council certified victim assistance program.”
<b><i>Evidence of Compliance</i></b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Documentation of number of contacts/calls per reporting period.</li> <li>2. Review of staffing schedule and a call placed by a reviewer to the crisis number to demonstrate crisis intervention service is available 24 hours each day, and is available immediately. <i>Immediately available means that the interval between a client phone call and a response from a trained advocate is no longer than 15 minutes.</i></li> <li>3. Training records indicate compliance with the training as described in the standard.</li> </ol>
<b><i>On-site Evaluation</i></b>	The team will review supporting documents that may include: call logs, training records, staffing schedule, and aggregate crisis line reports.

**CORE SERVICE STANDARD: ADVOCACY**

<b>Standard</b>	<b>The agency acts on behalf and in support of survivors of sexual violence to ensure that their interests are represented and their rights upheld.</b>
<b>Definition</b>	<p>Providing personal support and/or assistance in accessing sexual violence related services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal: Refers to assisting victims and securing rights, remedies, and services from other agencies.</li> <li>• Medical: Acting on behalf and in support of survivors/co-victims/collateral victims navigating the medical/healthcare system, by ensuring that the survivor has the appropriate information and resources to make decisions about healthcare needs, and assisting with obtaining the desired care.</li> <li>• Criminal Justice/Legal: Supporting survivors/co-victims/collateral victims navigating the legal system by ensuring that the survivor’s questions are answered, interests are represented, and rights are upheld.</li> <li>• Follow-up: Refers to contacts to provide emotional support and empathetic listening.</li> </ul>
<b>Goal</b>	To ensure needed services and adequate support is provided to the survivor to enhance their recovery from sexual violence.
<b>Practices</b>	<p>At a minimum, Advocacy includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal: Providing services in person, on the telephone, or in writing, by an advocate on behalf of the victim to secure rights and benefits to provide a referral and/or a supporting presence in visits to other agencies.</li> <li>• Medical: Providing the survivor/co-victim/collateral victim with accurate information about the physical impact of sexual violence, and about the resources and options available to address healthcare needs; accompanying the survivor in-person to a local hospital, healthcare facility, or sexual assault center for forensic evidence collection, testing, and/or treatment for injury and/or exposure to STIs;             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The sexual assault victim advocate shall respond within 30 minutes if possible and not to exceed one hour.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Per O.C.G.A. § 17-5-72 a victim shall not be required to pay, directly or indirectly, for the cost of a Medical Forensic Examination ;</li> <li>○ The priority of the advocate is with the victim not the medical facility;</li> <li>○ Providing service planning and referrals for follow-up care related to medical/healthcare needs.</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Criminal Justice/Legal: Accompanying the survivor in person to the law enforcement agency and/or the prosecutorial office; advocating for the rights of the survivor within the criminal justice system; providing basic information about the criminal and civil legal systems, including Georgia Crime Victims Bill of Rights, O.C.G.A. 15-17-1, et seq.</li> <li>● Victims Compensation: Inform the victim of the Georgia Crime Victims Compensation Program, O.C.G.A 17-15-1 et seq. May assist the victim in completing and filing the Crimes Victims Compensation Program application.</li> <li>● Follow-up: Initial follow-up should be attempted as soon as possible but within 72 hours. Additional contact as needed, in person, on the telephone, or in writing to provide advocacy services.</li> </ul>
<b>Evidence of Compliance</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A system of record keeping/documentation defined by the agency that identifies clients who received advocacy services.</li> <li>2. Training records indicate compliance with training as described in the standard.</li> <li>3. A schedule which demonstrates advocacy coverage.</li> <li>4. Documentation of working relationships with relevant community agencies.</li> </ol>
<b>On-Site Evaluation</b>	<p>The team will review supporting documents that may include: training records, service documentation, program policy and procedures, and client records.</p>

## CORE SERVICE STANDARD: CRISIS INTERVENTION

<b>Standard</b>	<b>The agency must provide an immediate personal response to a survivor/co-victim/collateral victim presenting in crisis related to sexual violence.</b>
<b>Definition</b>	An immediate 24-hour response provided by a trained advocate in a variety of settings to an individual presenting in crisis related to sexual violence.
<b>Goal</b>	To alleviate acute distress of sexual violence, to begin stabilization, and assist with determining the next steps.
<b>Practices</b>	At a minimum, Crisis Intervention Services include the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing confidential, nonjudgmental support available 24-hours a day via the 24-hour Crisis Hotline, and/or in-person at appropriate times and locations;</li> <li>• Assessing for the needs of the survivor/co-victim/collateral victim, and providing an appropriate response to those needs, which may include referrals.</li> </ul>
<b>Evidence of Compliance</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Documentation of number of contacts/calls per reporting period.</li> <li>2. Review of staffing schedule and a call placed by a reviewer to the crisis number to demonstrate crisis intervention service is available 24 hours each day, and is available immediately. <i>Immediately available means that the interval between a client phone call and a response from a trained advocate is no longer than 15 minutes.</i></li> <li>3. Training records indicate compliance with the training as described in the standard.</li> </ol>
<b>On-Site Evaluation</b>	The team will review supporting documents that may include: Training records, service documentation, program policy and procedures, and client records.

<b>CORE SERVICE STANDARD: INFORMATION AND REFERRAL</b>	
<b>Standard</b>	<b>The agency shall respond to direct requests for information or assistance related to sexual violence.</b>
<b>Definition</b>	Providing timely and relevant contact information to survivors/co-victims/collateral victims for agency services and community resources that address a need.
<b>Goal</b>	To ensure the survivor/co-victim/collateral victim has access to relevant and appropriate resources that will meet the individual's unique and varying needs.
<b>Practices</b>	<p>At a minimum, Information and Referral includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintaining up-to-date contact information for all available resources in and surrounding the community, including resources that are not directly related to victimization (i.e. housing, employment assistance, immigration issues, etc.);</li> <li>• Assisting the survivor/co-victim/collateral victim in evaluating what is needed, utilizing available and appropriate resources;</li> <li>• Providing information verbally or in writing including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Available services including advocacy services</li> <li>○ Referrals to appropriate and relevant resources addressing individuals' needs; including therapy, support group, and Medical Forensic Examination</li> <li>○ Information regarding sexual violence</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Evidence of Compliance</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Documentation of the number of calls/contacts per reporting period.</li> <li>2. Staffing schedule that demonstrates information and referral services is available 24-hours a day.</li> <li>3. Training records indicate compliance with training as described in the standards.</li> <li>4. Documentation that the community resource list has been updated annually.</li> <li>5. Evidence that the agency is disseminating information about sexual abuse/assault.</li> <li>6. Evidence that the agency is reaching out to diverse populations.</li> </ol>
<b>On-site Evaluation</b>	The team will review supporting documentation that may include: documentation of calls/contacts, training records, staffing schedules, resource list, documentation of outreach, documentation of presentations, evaluations from presentations, and any other supporting documents.

<b>CORE SERVICE STANDARD: SYSTEM COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION</b>	
<b>Standard</b>	<b>The agency shall demonstrate the capacity to coordinate and improve the service delivery system, which includes the development of working relationships and agreements.</b>
<b>Definition</b>	Developing and maintaining professional partnerships with programs, agencies, organizations and groups in the community that serve or otherwise impact survivors; such partnerships may be formal or informal.
<b>Goal</b>	To promote consistent, comprehensive, victim-centered services for survivors/co-victims/collateral victims of sexual violence in the community.
<b>Practices</b>	<p>At a minimum, System Coordination and Collaboration includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If there is an active SART in the service area, the Sexual Assault Center should be an integral member. If there is no active SART in the service area, then the Sexual Assault Center should demonstrated concerted efforts to begin the process.</li> <li>• Awareness and/or understanding of the various organizations in and surrounding the community that serve or otherwise impact survivors;</li> <li>• Sharing information and resources, as appropriate, with other programs and organizations in order to provide the most effective services to survivors/co-victims/collateral victims;</li> <li>• Meeting and/or speaking with collaborative partners on a regular basis to discuss best practices, barriers to service implementation, and strategies for effective collaboration;</li> <li>• When possible, Memoranda of Understanding should be developed with collaborative partners to formally define each partner’s responsibilities in responding to survivors in the community. <i>MOU partners for Sexual Assault Centers could include, but are not limited to, Child Advocacy Centers, Law Enforcement, Correctional Facilities, Colleges/Universities, and Medical Facilities.</i></li> </ul>
<b>Evidence of Compliance</b>	1. Documentation that the agency participates (through membership or other evidence of involvement) in local, statewide and/or national groups to improve service for

	<p>individual clients, identify gaps in service, advocate for needed change, share training and other resources and work toward the elimination of sexual violence.</p> <p>2. Evidence of direct participation by any of the following such as: law enforcement, prosecutors, judiciary, child protective services, schools, social services, mental health services, medical health facilities, emergency services, sexual assault response team (SART, O.C.G.A. 15-24-2).</p>
<b><i>On-Site Evaluation</i></b>	<p>The team will review supporting documentation that may include: minutes of meetings, letters of endorsement, previous grants, the agency strategic plan, SART protocol of a judicial circuit/county, other protocols, interagency agreements, MOU's, linkage agreements, and evidence of involvement in local, state and/or national organizations.</p>



<b>CORE SERVICE STANDARD: COMMUNITY AWARENESS AND OUTREACH</b>	
<b><i>Standard</i></b>	<b>The agency conducts community awareness and outreach activities to increase the public’s understanding of service availability.</b>
<b><i>Definition</i></b>	Providing accurate information about sexual violence, and ensuring that the community is aware of the agency, its services and how to access those services.
<b><i>Goal</i></b>	To increase the community’s awareness of sexual violence and ensure access to services for victims of sexual violence.
<b><i>Practices</i></b>	<p>At a minimum, Community Awareness and Outreach includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring that the community at large is aware of the agency, the services it provides, and how and when to access the agency. This includes disseminating brochures and cards as appropriate;</li> <li>• Disseminating messages and materials in the community that support survivors and advocate for the elimination of sexual violence;</li> <li>• Implementing, hosting and/or participating in awareness activities and events that expose the community to accurate information about sexual violence;</li> <li>• Developing and utilizing materials and activities that are culturally and developmentally appropriate for the populations targeted;</li> <li>• Being deliberately inclusive of underserved and marginalized populations when planning and implementing awareness and outreach activities.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Evidence of Compliance</i></b>	Documentation of community awareness and outreach activities in each county served.
<b><i>On-Site Evaluation</i></b>	The team will review supporting documents that may include MOUs, newspaper articles, event fliers, etc.

## ORGANIZATIONAL STANDARD: GOVERNANCE

<b><i>Standard 1</i></b>	<b>The agency has legal authority to operate in the State of Georgia as a nonprofit organization.</b>
<b><i>Practices</i></b>	<p>The agency shall have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legal authority to operate as a nonprofit organization.</li> <li>• By-laws</li> <li>• Evidence that it is a private non-profit 501(c)3 organization or government-based agency responsible for program and fiscal operations.</li> <li>• Evidence of a specific, stated purpose of providing service to survivors/co-victims/collateral victims of sexual violence.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Evidence of Compliance</i></b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Evidence of legal authority to operate, such as articles of incorporation, bylaws, and/or other documents.</li> <li>2. Evidence of legal authority to operate as an entity other than a for profit business.</li> </ol>
<b><i>On-Site Evaluation</i></b>	The team will inspect documents.

## ORGANIZATIONAL STANDARD: GOVERNANCE

<b>Standard 2</b>	<b>The agency has a governing board or an advisory committee for effective leadership and guidance of the sexual assault program.</b>
<b>Practices</b>	<p>The agency shall have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A policy for the selection of the Board of Directors or advisory committee members, duration of membership, and election of officers.</li> <li>• A policy regarding the organizational structure and responsibilities of the Board of Directors or advisory committee. When there is an advisory committee, there is a formalized link to the organization’s governing board.</li> <li>• A board appointed staff position(s) to whom it delegates authority and responsibility for agency management and implementation of policy. This staff position reports regularly to the board or advisory committee.</li> <li>• A policy that shows which group is responsible for selection and evaluation of the director, financial oversight, strategic planning, fundraising, personnel policy, agency, and community relationships.</li> <li>• Orientation for each member of the Board of Directors or advisory committee within the first year of service on sexual violence and on governance specific to their role.</li> <li>• Annual training for Board of Directors or advisory committee members that furthers their understanding of sexual violence.</li> <li>• A board manual provided to all members.</li> <li>• An organizational succession plan for leadership to ensure continuity of services.</li> </ul>
<b>Evidence of Compliance</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The agency has a written description for selection of Board of Directors or advisory committee members, duration of membership and election of officers.</li> <li>2. There is a written description of organizational structure and responsibilities of the Board of Directors or advisory committee. When there is an advisory committee, there is a formalized link to the organization’s governing board.</li> </ol>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. There is a written description that shows which group is responsible for selection and evaluation of the director, financial oversight, strategic planning, fundraising, personnel policy, agency, and community relationships.</li> <li>4. Minutes of board and committee meetings are permanent records and shall be maintained in a secure location.</li> <li>5. There is written evidence of orientation and training for each member of the Board of Directors or advisory committee specific to their role for the organization. This evidence is documented within their individual file or listed in the minutes of the organization.</li> <li>6. There is a written succession plan.</li> </ol>
<p><b><i>On-Site Evaluation</i></b></p>	<p>The team will review documentation of board orientation and training, such as training sessions, conferences attended, videos observed and technical assistance received by board members. Documentation must include dates, attendance, and content.</p> <p>The team will review the board manual and documentation of board meetings.</p>

## ORGANIZATIONAL STANDARD: GOVERNANCE

<b>Standard 3</b>	<b>The agency has policies which address a conflict of interest, or the appearance of a conflict of interest, on the part of the governing board, advisory committee, personnel, or consultants.</b>
<b>Practices</b>	<p>Policies address, at a minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board members, staff and paid consultants having any direct or indirect financial interest in the agency’s assets, business affairs, leases or professional services;</li> <li>• Board members receiving payment, except where permitted by law;</li> <li>• Preferential treatment of board members, personnel or consultants in applying for or receipt of the agency’s services;</li> <li>• The agency ensures that steering or directing referrals exclusively to a private practice in which agency personnel, consultants, or their immediate families may be engaged, is prohibited;</li> <li>• If professional services are provided on the premise that are not associated with the organization, there is clear written disclosure provided to the client indicating that the services are independent of the agency;</li> <li>• The agency administers program services in accordance with applicable professional, ethical and legal principles.</li> </ul>
<b>Evidence of Compliance</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The agency has a written policy addressing board members, staff and paid consultants having any direct or indirect financial interest in the agency’s assets, business affairs, leases or professional services.</li> <li>2. The agency has a written policy addressing board members receiving payment, except where permitted by law.</li> <li>3. The agency has a written policy addressing preferential treatment of board members, personnel or consultants in applying for or receipt of the agency’s services.</li> <li>4. The agency has a written policy addressing the steering or directing of referrals exclusively to a private practice in which agency personnel, consultants, or their immediate families may be engaged, is prohibited.</li> <li>5. The agency has a written policy that if independent professional services are provided on the premise that are not associated with the organization, there is clear written</li> </ol>

	disclosure provided to the client indicating that the services are independent of the agency. 6. The agency has a written policy addressing the administration of program services in accordance with applicable professional, ethical and legal principles.
<b><i>On-Site Evaluation</i></b>	The team will review written policies.

## ORGANIZATIONAL STANDARD: GOVERNANCE

<b><i>Standard 4</i></b>	<b>At a minimum, the agency shall maintain current general commercial liability, professional liability, Directors and Officers liability, and workers compensation as appropriate to the organizational structure.</b>
<b><i>Practices</i></b>	The organization maintains appropriate paperwork that identifies current insurance policies.
<b><i>Evidence of Compliance</i></b>	Proof that a liability policy is in force, including limits, and is available for review.
<b><i>On-Site Evaluation</i></b>	The team will review the policies.

## ORGANIZATIONAL STANDARD: GOVERNANCE

<b>Standard 5</b>	<b>The agency follows written policies and procedures governing the confidentiality of client information, including access to and use of information about clients.</b>
<b>Practices</b>	<p>Policies address, at a minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Informed written consent of the client to receive services.</li> <li>• Response to subpoenas for records and staff;</li> <li>• Informed written consent of the client for participation in public appearances, use of identifiable photographs, video, or artistic creations;</li> <li>• Informed written consent of the client for the release of their specified information to an appropriate recipient;</li> <li>• Mandatory reporting of suspected abuse or neglect of children or vulnerable adults O.C.G.A. § 19-7-5, O.C.G.A. § 30-5-8, and O.C.G.A. § 31-8-80;</li> <li>• A client’s access to their file;</li> <li>• Confidentiality of client information;</li> <li>• Adherence to applicable laws and regulations as set forth by the Health Information Portability &amp; Accountability Act (HIPAA), state and federal statutes, and requirements of program funders.</li> </ul>
<b>Evidence of Compliance</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The agency has written policies and procedures addressing informed written consent of the client to receive services.</li> <li>2. The agency has written policies and procedures addressing the response to subpoenas for records and staff.</li> <li>3. The agency has written policies and procedures addressing informed written consent of the client for participation in public appearances, use of identifiable photographs, video, or artistic creations.</li> <li>4. The agency has written policies and procedures addressing informed written consent of the client for the release of their specified information to an appropriate recipient.</li> <li>5. The agency has written policies and procedures addressing mandatory reporting of suspected abuse or neglect of children or vulnerable adults O.C.G.A. § 19-7-5, O.C.G.A. § 30-5-8, and O.C.G.A. § 31-8-80.</li> <li>6. The agency has written policies and procedures addressing a client’s access to their file.</li> <li>7. The agency has written policies and procedures addressing confidentiality of client information.</li> <li>8. The agency has written policies and procedures addressing adherence to applicable laws and regulations as set forth</li> </ol>



	by the Health Information Portability & Accountability Act (HIPAA), state and federal statutes, and requirements of program funders.
<b><i>On-Site Evaluation</i></b>	The team will review the policies.

## ORGANIZATIONAL STANDARD: GOVERNANCE

<b>Standard 6</b>	The agency follows written operational procedures, consistent with legal requirements governing the retention, maintenance and destruction of client records. These procedures shall address the protection of the privacy of clients and former clients, disposition of client records in the event of the dissolution of the agency and reasonable protection against destruction by fire, earthquake, flood, tornado, or other damage.
<b>Practices</b>	Procedures address at a minimum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Operational procedures on record security, maintenance and access by individuals other than the client;</li> <li>• Safeguards against unauthorized access, fire, loss, or other hazard;</li> <li>• Length of time that records are maintained.</li> </ul>
<b>Evidence of Compliance</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The agency has written policies and procedures addressing operational procedures on record security, maintenance and access by individuals other than the client.</li> <li>2. The agency has written policies and procedures addressing safeguards against unauthorized access, fire, loss, or other hazard.</li> <li>3. The agency has written policies and procedures addressing how long records are maintained.</li> </ol>
<b>On-Site Evaluation</b>	The team will review the operational procedures as well as computer data and back up procedures, if applicable.

## ORGANIZATIONAL STANDARD: GOVERNANCE

<p><b>Standard 7</b></p>	<p>The agency ensures the consistent, deliberate application of defined practices and procedures that promote the health and safety of individuals, the institutional integrity and legality of the organization and its services, and transparency of the organization within the community.</p>
<p><b>Practices</b></p>	<p>The agency adheres to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All federal statutes or agency policies regarding nonprofit organization;</li> <li>• Applicable laws and regulations as set forth by the Health Information Portability &amp; Accountability Act (HIPAA), state and federal statutes, and requirements of program funders;</li> <li>• Expectations for personal and professional conduct of staff members and volunteers, as dictated by organizational policy, and authoritative bodies such as licensing agencies within the State of Georgia;</li> <li>• Policies and statutes related to nondiscrimination, sexual harassment, and violence in the workplace;</li> <li>• Policies regarding financial transparency and accountability for all monies that fund program staffing and services;</li> <li>• A defined grievance process for clients, staff members, and volunteers;</li> <li>• Best practices and/or evidence-based approaches when providing services to clients.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Evidence of Compliance</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The agency has written policies and procedures addressing the adherence to all federal statutes or adherence to agency policies regarding nonprofit organization.</li> <li>2. The agency has written policies and procedures addressing the adherence to applicable laws and regulations as set forth by the Health Information Portability &amp; Accountability Act (HIPAA), state and federal statutes, and requirements of program funders.</li> <li>3. The agency has written policies and procedures addressing the adherence to expectations for personal and professional conduct of staff members and volunteers, as dictated by organizational policy, and authoritative bodies such as licensing agencies within the State of Georgia</li> <li>4. The agency has written policies and procedures addressing the existence of and adherence to policies and statutes</li> </ol>

	<p>related to nondiscrimination, sexual harassment, and violence in the workplace.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. The agency has written policies and procedures addressing the existence of and adherence to policies regarding financial transparency and accountability.</li> <li>6. The agency has written policies and procedures addressing the existence of and adherence to a defined grievance process for clients, staff members, and volunteers.</li> <li>7. The agency has written policies and procedures addressing best practices and/or evidence-based approaches when providing services to clients.</li> </ol>
<b><i>On-Site Evaluation</i></b>	The team will review the policies.

## ORGANIZATIONAL STANDARD: STRATEGIC PLANNING, FISCAL MANAGEMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

<b><i>Standard</i></b>	<b>The board, in conjunction with the Executive or Program Director, develops a strategic plan to include plans for the financial management and long-term sustainability of the agency. Financial management is conducted in accordance with applicable professional, ethical and legal principles.</b>
<b><i>Practices</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The agency develops a strategic plan and reviews the plan on a scheduled basis.</li> <li>• The agency regularly reviews internal and external reports and audits based on generally accepted accounting practices.</li> <li>• The agency creates and implements a development plan that secures adequate funding to support operating and capital needs.</li> <li>• The executive or program director and governing board implements policies and procedures for financial management including record retention and reporting.</li> <li>• The agency provides bonding or insurance of persons responsible for financial resources.</li> <li>• The agency creates and implements an operating budget.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Evidence of Compliance</i></b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The agency has a written strategic plan.</li> <li>2. A copy of the agency's most recent independent financial audit review within the previous two years, and a formal or informal plan to address any areas of concerns raised by an audit or financial review.</li> <li>3. The agency has actively implemented a written plan for diversification of its funding base.</li> <li>4. The agency has written policies and procedures addressing how long records are maintained.</li> <li>5. The agency has written policy or insurance of persons responsible for financial resources.</li> <li>6. The agency has a written annual budget.</li> </ol>
<b><i>On-Site Evaluation</i></b>	The team will review the strategic plans, development plans, policies, and budgets.

## ORGANIZATIONAL STANDARD: PERSONNEL

<b>Standard</b>	<b>The agency has written personnel policies and procedures which specify the responsibilities of employees, volunteers, the Executive Director and the Board of Directors.</b>
<b>Practices</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The agency has current written job descriptions which clearly state minimum qualifications and responsibilities for each position.</li> <li>• A comprehensive manual containing all personnel policies is maintained, kept current, and made available to all staff.</li> <li>• The organization follows acceptable practices recruiting, hiring, and assigning staff, volunteers, and board/advisory committee members.</li> <li>• The agency complies with applicable laws and regulations in regards to fair employment practices and contractual relationships.</li> <li>• A written employee grievance policy is provided.</li> <li>• The agency conducts appropriate, legally mandated and permissible criminal background inquiries, at time of hire and every three years, thereafter.</li> <li>• All new personnel are oriented to the agency's goals, services, policies, and operational procedures, the agency's service population and the agency's collaboration with other community resources.</li> <li>• Personnel records are maintained for all employees and volunteers.</li> </ul>
<b>Evidence of Compliance</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Written job descriptions. Evidence that each employee and volunteer has received a copy of his/her job description and a copy is in each employee's and volunteer's personnel file.</li> <li>2. Copy of agency personnel policy along with written evidence that new employees, volunteers and board members have received copies of applicable personnel policy.</li> </ol>
<b>On-Site Evaluation</b>	The team will review written materials.

## ORGANIZATIONAL STANDARD: STAFF DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

<b><i>Standard</i></b>	<b>The agency shall provide 30 hours of initial training to all staff and volunteers providing direct services. All staff and volunteers participate in additional training of 10 hours annually.</b>
<b><i>Practices</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In order to meet the State Standards, all volunteers and paid staff (agent) shall complete 30 hours of in person sexual violence training. 20 hours of initial in person training shall be completed before the paid staff or volunteer has any client contact. In order to meet the Standards of 30 hours of in person sexual violence training, the 10 additional hours of training shall be completed within twelve months of the initial training. All staff and volunteers are required to participate in an additional 10 hours of annual training, thereafter to maintain service skills. These additional hours can be done in person or online. Per O.C.G.A. § 24-5-509 , "Agent" means a current or former employee or volunteer of a program who has successfully completed a minimum of 20 hours of training in family violence and sexual assault intervention and prevention at a Criminal Justice Coordinating Council certified victim assistance program.</li> <li>• Other ancillary staff or contract staff are oriented to the agencies goals and services.</li> </ul>
<b><i>Evidence of Compliance</i></b>	Documentation of training.
<b><i>On-Site Evaluation</i></b>	The team will review documentation of training, such as training sessions, conferences attended, videos observed and technical assistance received by staff and volunteers. Documentation must include dates, attendance, content, and duration of training.

## ORGANIZATIONAL STANDARD: CULTURAL COMPETENCY

<b>Standard</b>	<b>The agency shall provide effective services within the context of the unique and varying cultural beliefs, attitudes, behaviors, and needs of survivors/co-victims/collateral victims who access services.</b>
<b>Practices</b>	<p>To achieve cultural competency each agency's policy shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain a service delivery structure that is sensitive and responsive to the diversity of the community in which the agency operates; this may include the utilization of messaging and materials in specific languages;</li> <li>• Cultivate respect for all cultural beliefs and customs, and how those beliefs and customs impact survivor's/co-victim's/collateral victim's response to and recovery from sexual violence; this shall include training of staff members and volunteers;</li> <li>• Accommodate, to every extent possible, the unique needs of the survivor/co-victim/collateral victim that are hindered by institutional or physical barriers;</li> <li>• Empower the survivor/co-victim/collateral victim by incorporating their specific beliefs and customs into the response process and service delivery;</li> <li>• Connect the survivor/co-victim/collateral victim to resources in the community that can best meet their specific needs, whether directly or indirectly related to sexual violence.</li> <li>• The agency must be able to assist a survivor of sexual violence that has Limited English Proficiency (LEP). <i>Using children, other family members, or friends to interpret for a survivor is not best practice and may compromise safety.</i></li> <li>• The agency has written policies and procedures addressing the existence of and adherence to a defined grievance process for clients included in your LEP. The grievance plan shall be made available to all clients.</li> <li>• The policy shall be reviewed annually and updated as needed.</li> </ul>
<b>Evidence of Compliance</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Written policy on cultural competency ensuring that sexual violence services are offered without discrimination.</li> <li>2. Documentation of cultural competency training. This training shall be included in the initial and annual training requirement.</li> </ol>
<b>On-Site Evaluation</b>	The team will review the policy.





## ORGANIZATIONAL STANDARD: PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

<b><i>Standard</i></b>	<b>The agency shall have a policy to accommodate all persons with disabilities as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act.</b>
<b><i>Practices</i></b>	<p>The agency shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain a service delivery structure that is sensitive and responsive to the survivor/co-victim/collateral victim with a disability;</li> <li>• Accommodate, to every reasonable extent possible, the unique needs of the survivor/co-victim/collateral victim that are hindered by institutional or physical barriers; this may include training of staff members and volunteers;</li> <li>• Connect the survivor/co-victim/collateral victim to resources in the community that can best meet their specific needs, whether directly or indirectly related to sexual violence;</li> <li>• Identify barriers that prevent access to services and steps for addressing and resolving those barriers;</li> <li>• Assist a survivor of sexual violence that has a disability as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act. <i>Using children, other family members, or friends to interpret for or represent a survivor is not a best practice and may compromise safety.</i></li> </ul>
<b><i>Evidence of Compliance</i></b>	The agency shall have a written policy that identifies and accommodates all persons with disabilities.
<b><i>On-Site Evaluation</i></b>	The team will review policies and examine facilities.

The following standards are specialized services that may be provided directly by a sexual assault center. Not all sexual assault centers provide these services, which include prevention, therapy, support groups, and Medical Forensic Examination. If your organization provides any of the specialized services the following standards apply.

## SPECIALIZED SERVICES: PREVENTION

<b>Standard</b>	<b>The agency conducts evidence based, promising programs, or research informed strategies focused on building skills within the community for the primary prevention of sexual violence.</b>
<b>Definition</b>	Culturally appropriate, structured programs implemented in a variety of settings and to a universal population that promote the primary prevention of sexual violence.
<b>Goal</b>	To equip individuals, groups, institutions and society with the knowledge and skills to prevent sexual violence before first time perpetration.
<b>Practices</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilization of comprehensive, evidence based programs through a continuum of activities addressing all levels of the Socio Ecological Model or Spectrum of Prevention.</li> <li>• Activities are based on promoting protective factors that reduce the likelihood of sexual violence occurring, instead of risk reduction.</li> <li>• Activities are culturally appropriate for the targeted population.</li> <li>• Activities are developmentally appropriate for the targeted population.</li> <li>• Utilization of assessment tools that demonstrate an increase in knowledge and behavior change of the participant.</li> <li>• Utilization of assessment tools that demonstrate commitment to quality improvement of the program.</li> </ul>
<b>Qualifications</b>	Presenters must have demonstrated knowledge and competency in concepts of violence prevention, sexual assault dynamics, Socio Ecological model and Spectrum of Prevention; all presenters will have completed 30 hours of training for rape crisis advocates. Presenters are competent in skills related to working with culturally and linguistically diverse communities. Presenters are committed to ongoing training in best practices related to the primary prevention of sexual violence.
<b>Evidence of Compliance</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The agency provides documentation of program curriculum.</li> <li>2. The agency provides documentation of presenter qualifications.</li> <li>3. The agency provides documentation of assessment tools.</li> <li>4. The agency provides documentation of quality improvement of program.</li> </ol>

<b>On-Site Evaluation</b>	The team will review the documents.
<b>SPECIALIZED SERVICES: THERAPY</b>	
<b>Standard</b>	<b>The agency shall provide therapeutic treatment for survivors/co-victims/collateral victims of sexual violence.</b>
<b>Definition</b>	A professional relationship between a qualified, licensed professional and a client (individual, family, or group) that utilizes therapeutic treatments to address one or more issues presented by the client.
<b>Goal</b>	To promote healing from the sexual violence experience.
<b>Practices</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual, group or family therapy, based on current clinical therapeutic principles generally accepted as being appropriate to sexual violence.</li> <li>• The agency shall provide survivors/co-victims/collateral victims either verbally or in writing options for therapeutic services.</li> </ul>
<b>Qualifications</b>	<p>Practitioners must be licensed psychiatrists or psychologists or be registered or certified professionals in the State of Georgia and must be a licensed in one or more of the following: LCSW, LPC, or LMFT. The sexual assault center agrees to abide by Georgia law regarding the utilization of professional counselors, social workers, and marriage and family therapists. (O.C.G.A. § 43-10A-1, et. seq). In addition, the sexual assault center agrees to abide by Georgia law regarding the utilization of psychologists. (O.C.G.A. § 43-39-1, et. seq).</p> <p>Practitioners who are completing an internship for a master’s degree counseling program in any of the fields listed above and have completed the 20 hours of initial sexual violence training are also eligible providers, as long as they are receiving supervision from a person who meets the qualifications of their degree program.</p> <p>It is strongly recommended that therapists have regular consultation and review of cases.</p>
<b>Evidence of Compliance</b>	Current State of Georgia clinical license of person providing therapeutic services. If a student or an intern, then there is documentation of the initial 20 hours of sexual violence training along with documentation of clinical training by a licensed therapist. If a contractor, then there is a copy of the contract or MOU.
<b>On-Site Evaluation</b>	The team will review the documents.

## SPECIALIZED SERVICES: SUPPORT GROUPS

<b>Standard</b>	<b>The agency shall provide survivors/co-victims/collateral victims with a safe, supportive, non-judgmental environment for the purpose of a support group.</b>
<b>Definition</b>	Regular meetings of survivors/co-victims/collateral victims of sexual violence with a supportive and educational focus led by a trained facilitator.
<b>Goal</b>	To provide emotional stability and promote the understanding of the impact of sexual violence.
<b>Practices</b>	Group meetings with an outcome-based, structured agenda with a primary focus on sexual violence issues.
<b>Qualifications</b>	<p>A facilitator must be familiar with the dynamics of sexual violence and relevant community resources, as well as have an understanding of how medical, legal and social services respond to victims of sexual violence. Facilitators must receive consultation and/or supervision on group process from a qualified professional knowledgeable about trauma response.</p> <p>The facilitator (agent) shall complete 30 hours of in-person sexual violence training. 20 hours of initial in person training shall be completed before the paid staff or volunteer has any client contact. Ten additional hours of training shall be completed within twelve months of the initial training.</p> <p>All facilitators are required to participate in an additional 10 hours of annual training thereafter to maintain service skills. These additional hours can be done in person or online. A licensed therapist may be used in lieu of a trained facilitator.</p> <p>Per O.C.G.A. § 24-5-509 "Agent" means a current or former employee or volunteer of a program who has successfully completed a minimum of 20 hours of training in family violence and sexual assault intervention and prevention at a Criminal Justice Coordinating Council certified victim assistance program.</p>
<b>Evidence of Compliance</b>	The agency provides documentation of sign in sheets of support groups. The agency provides documentation of 30 hours of in person sexual violence training by the facilitator and proof of consultation with a knowledgeable professional about the survivor response and group process.
<b>On-Site Evaluation</b>	The team will review the documents.

**SPECIALIZED SERVICES: MEDICAL FORENSIC EXAMINATION**

<b>Standard</b>	<b>The agency shall provide in-house Medical Forensic Examinations for survivors of sexual violence.</b>
<b>Definition</b>	<p>The sexual assault medical forensic exam is an examination of a sexual assault patient by a licensed medical doctor, physician’s assistant, nurse practitioner, registered nurse, sexual assault nurse examiner (SANE), sexual assault forensic examiner (SAFE), sexual assault medical forensic examiner (SAMFE), who has specialized education and clinical experience in the collection of forensic evidence and treatment of these patients. The examination includes gathering information from the patient for the medical forensic history; an examination; coordinating treatment of injuries, documentation of biological and physical findings, and collection of evidence from the patient; documentation of findings; information, treatment, and referrals for sexually transmitted diseases, pregnancy, suicidal ideation, alcohol and substance abuse, and other non-acute medical concerns; and follow-up as needed to provide additional healing, treatment, or collection of evidence. This exam is referred to as the “Medical Forensic Examination” under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA).</p> <p>Note: victims shall not be billed for a forensic medical exam. Refer to CJCC’s Victims Compensation Program for the current fee schedule and application requirements.</p>
<b>Goal</b>	<p>A timely, high-quality Medical Forensic Examination can potentially validate and address sexual assault patients’ concerns, minimize the trauma they may experience, and promote their healing.</p> <p>A Medical Forensic Examination can increase the likelihood that evidence collected will aid in criminal case investigation, resulting in perpetrators being held accountable and further sexual violence prevented.</p> <p>It is recommended that a Medical Forensic Examination be performed up to a minimum of five days [120 hours] following a sexually violent act. A longer length of time may be needed depending on the circumstances of the assault.</p> <p>It is recommended that the provider have completed SANE/SAFE training. It is strongly encouraged that RNs and nurse practitioners obtain IAFN National Certification.</p>

<p><b>Practices</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The medical provider will follow the recommended guidelines from the International Association of Forensic Nurses (IAFN), a National Protocol for Sexual Assault Forensic Examinations Adults/Adolescents, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for the collection of evidence and the treatment of the patient/survivor.</li> <li>• Those performing forensic medical exams have current licensure.</li> <li>• Those performing forensic medical exams receive oversight from a medical director. Those performing forensic medical exams receive consultation through either the medical director or other Georgia licensed medical provider (RN preferably a SANE/SAFE A/P, NP, PA, DO, MD).</li> <li>• A sexual assault victim advocate may offer victims and their secondary victims a range of services during and following, the exam process. These services may include support, crisis intervention, information and referrals, interpretation or translations, and advocacy to ensure those victims’ interests are represented, their wishes respected, and their rights upheld. In addition, advocates and other victim services providers may provide follow – up services, such as support groups, counseling, accompaniment to related appointments, and legal advocacy (civil, criminal, and immigration) to help meet the needs of victims, their families, and friends. The priority of the advocate is with the victim.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Evidence of Compliance</b></p>	<p>The agency provides documentation of the medical forensic exam protocol that follows the recommended guidelines from the International Association of Forensic Nurses (IAFN), a National Protocol for Sexual Assault Forensic Examinations Adults/Adolescents, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for the collection of evidence and the treatment of the patient/survivor and defines the role of the sexual assault advocate. This protocol should also address the importance of the sexual assault advocate in the medical forensic exam process. The agency provides documentation showing the provider’s current Georgia medical license and evidence of supervision.</p>



<b>On-Site Evaluation</b>	The team will review supporting documents such as license and protocol guidelines, to include SART protocol.
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## GEORGIA CRIME VICTIM’S BILL OF RIGHTS

### VICTIMS HAVE THE RIGHT TO:

- ◆ Be treated fairly and with dignity by all criminal justice agencies involved in the case
- ◆ Proceedings free from unreasonable delay
- ◆ Be notified of the availability of victims’ compensation, which is available under the Georgia Crime Victims Compensation Program at (800) 547-0060 or [www.cjcc.ga.gov](http://www.cjcc.ga.gov)
- ◆ Be notified of the Georgia Crime Victims Bill of Rights
- ◆ Be notified of community based victim services programs
- ◆ Be notified of an arrest warrant being issued for the accused.
- ◆ Reasonable, accurate and timely notice of the arrest, release or escape of the accused.
- ◆ Reasonable, accurate and timely notice of any scheduled court proceedings or any changes to such proceedings
- ◆ Not to be excluded from any scheduled court proceedings involving the accused, except as otherwise provided by law
- ◆ Be heard at any scheduled court proceedings involving the release, plea or sentencing of the accused
- ◆ Refuse to submit to an interview by the accused, accused’s attorney or agent of the accused
- ◆ A waiting area, during judicial proceedings, that is separate from the accused and his or her relatives, friends, and witnesses
- ◆ Complete a Victim Impact Statement and have it presented to the court prior to the trial or plea of the accused
- ◆ File a written objection in any parole proceedings involving the accused
- ◆ Confer with the prosecuting attorney in any criminal prosecution related to the victim
- ◆ Restitution as provided by law
- ◆ Under certain conditions, be notified of the accused being on an electronic release and monitoring program
- ◆ Be notified of the accused being prohibited from contacting the victim

### LAW ENFORCEMENT RESPONSIBILITY

After a victim has made initial contact with law enforcement and court personnel, they shall make the following information available to the victim:

- ◆ That it is possible the accused may be released from custody prior to trial;

- ◆ That the victim has certain rights during the various stages of the criminal justice process and the means by which additional information about these stages can be obtained;
- ◆ That if an arrest of the accused is made, the arresting agency must advise the investigating agency, if different, from the arresting agency. The investigating agency, upon receipt of that information, must promptly notify the victim of the arrest.
- ◆ The custodial authority shall promptly notify the victim of the release of the accused, whenever possible;
- ◆ The availability of victim compensation, which is available under the Georgia Crime Victims Compensation Program at (800) 547-0060 or [www.cjcc.ga.gov](http://www.cjcc.ga.gov); and
- ◆ That a victim may have available to them Community Based Victim Service Programs.

### **PROSECUTION RESPONSIBILITY**

During the prosecution phase of the criminal justice process, the prosecuting attorney has many requirements to keep a victim informed. It is the victim's responsibility to provide a current address and telephone number for the prosecuting attorney to supply the victim with the following:

- ◆ Advise the victim that he or she has the right to be present at all criminal proceedings in which the accused has the right to be present
- ◆ Explain the procedural steps in processing a criminal case. Inform the victim of his or her rights under the law. Suggest procedures a victim should utilize if he or she is subjected to threats or intimidation and provide numbers and contact persons at the prosecuting attorney's office and custodial authority (if applicable)
- ◆ Notify the victim prior to any proceeding in which the release of the accused will be considered, and offer the victim the opportunity to express his or her opinion regarding the release of the accused
- ◆ Advise the victim that if a court grants the accused a pretrial release or bond that the victim may file a written complaint at which time the prosecuting attorney may move the court to revoke that action
- ◆ Advise the victim that he or she has the right to wait during judicial proceedings in an area separate from the accused and his or her relatives, friends, and witnesses. If such an area is not practical, the victim may request that the court minimize such contact
- ◆ The court may, under certain circumstances, order that the victim's current address, telephone number, or place of employment not be released to the defendant by anyone including defense counsel
- ◆ The prosecuting attorney must offer the victim the opportunity to express his or her opinion regarding the disposition of an accused's case if it is a product of a plea bargain or it involves the accused's participation in a pretrial or post trial diversion program
- ◆ Advise the victim which custodial authority he or she must provide a current telephone number and address

Upon written request of the victim, the prosecuting attorney shall notify the victim of the following:

- ◆ That the accused has filed a motion for a new trial, an appeal of his or her conviction, or an extraordinary motion for a new trial;
- ◆ Whether the accused has been released on bail or other recognizance pending the disposition of the motion or appeal;
- ◆ The time and place of any appellate court proceedings relating to the motion or appeal and any changes in the time or place of those proceedings; and
- ◆ The result of the motion or the appeal.

#### **CUSTODIAL RESPONSIBILITY**

- ◆ The custodial authority shall promptly notify the victim of the accused's release from custody of the state or any county correctional facility;
- ◆ The custodial authority shall notify the victim of an escape by the accused and his or her subsequent arrest;
- ◆ The State Board of Pardons and Paroles must provide the victim with twenty (20) days advance notification whenever it considers making a final decision to grant parole or any other manner of clemency action to release a defendant for a period exceeding 60 days.
- ◆ The Board shall provide the victim with an opportunity to file a written objection in any parole proceedings involving the accused.