



Resource & Crisis Center of Galveston County



December 1, 2025

BIENNIAL REPORT

Galveston County Sexual Assault Response Team

Galveston County SART
Resource Crisis Center
Galveston County

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Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) Biennial Report

Galveston County, Texas

Reporting Period: January 1, 2023 – December 31, 2024

Prepared by: Resource & Crisis Center of Galveston County, Inc.

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Executive Summary

Galveston County is a coastal county in Southeast Texas with a population exceeding 350,000. The county includes urban centers such as Galveston, Texas City, and League City, as well as rural and island communities. The Galveston County SART was formally established in 2001 and operates independently, as required for counties with populations over 250,000.

Over the past two years, Galveston County's Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) has deepened its commitment to improving the coordinated response to adult sexual assault. This report presents key insights, evaluates progress toward strategic objectives, and outlines the challenges and accomplishments that have shaped the county's efforts to support adult survivors and strengthen systemic accountability.

Adult sexual assault cases in Galveston County have shown a modest but steady increase, reflecting both improved referral mechanisms and ongoing community outreach. Emphasized the importance for timely forensic exams, trauma-informed care, and advocacy. These insights have guided SART's priorities and informed the development of more responsive protocols.

The team's objectives during this period focused on enhancing interagency collaboration, expanding professional training in trauma-informed practices, and improving data collection and case tracking. SART partners worked to streamline intake procedures, reduce response times, and ensure that adult survivors received comprehensive support from initial disclosure through case resolution.

Galveston County's SARTs have made significant progress. Despite the lack of collaboration of some law enforcement departments. The collaboration of the participating SART members has improved case coordination. To build on this momentum, the report recommends several improvements: Ensure Consistent Law Enforcement Participation, Expand Survivor-Centered Support and Strengthen Protocol Collaboration by conducting regular interagency performance reviews; and expanding survivor engagement to guide service enhancements. By addressing these areas, Galveston County's SARTs can continue to evolve and ensure that adult survivors receive compassionate, coordinated, and effective support.

1.2 SART Members Outlined by Statute:

Chief Administrator of Sexual Assault Program	Resource & Crisis Center of Galveston County, Inc.	Cecily Henderson, CEO
Prosecutor	Galveston County District Attorney's Office	Whitney Rasberry,,Chief Assistant District Attorney
County Sheriff's Office	Galveston County Sheriff's Office	Larry Williamson, Detective
Law Enforcement Agency	League City Police Department	Brittnee Demasi, Detective
Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner/Forensic Examiner	UTMB Health (SANE Team) & Texas Forensic Nurse Examiners (TXFNE)	Nellie Lowen RN, CA-CP SANE, SANE-A & Amanda Amore, Amanda Amore, BSN, RN, SANE-A, SANE-P, CA-CP SANE
Mental or Behavior Health Provider	Gulf Coast Center	Diane Manley, Community and Education Coordinator
Other Community Agency	Galveston County Personal Bond, Magistrate Court and Collections	Aaron Johnson, Director

Legal Framework and Service Standards for Sexual Assault Programs in Texas

Under **Chapter 420.003 of the Texas Government Code**, the Sexual Assault Prevention and Crisis Services initiative support the statewide development of locally operated, nonprofit programs dedicated to assisting survivors of sexual assault. This statute also establishes standards to ensure consistent, high-quality services across all programs.

In accordance with **Texas Code of Criminal Procedure Sections 56A.351 and 56A.3515**, survivors must be offered access to a community-based sexual assault advocate during two critical moments:

- A **medical forensic examination**, regardless of whether the survivor chooses to report the assault to law enforcement.
- An **investigative interview** conducted by law enforcement.

Confidentiality Protections

Sexual assault programs in Texas are now governed by strict confidentiality laws. According to:

- **Texas Government Code Sections 420.051 and 420.0715**
- **Texas Health & Safety Code Sections 44.051 and 44.071–44.075**

All written and verbal communications between survivors and program staff are considered privileged. Programs are prohibited from disclosing any survivor information outside the agency without the survivor's explicit written consent.

Additionally, organizations receiving federal funding through the **Violence Against Women Act (VAWA)**, **Victims of Crime Act (VOCA)**, or **Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA)** must adhere to enhanced confidentiality standards. These agencies are not permitted to use blanket consent forms and must obtain individualized, informed consent for any disclosure.

1.3 & 1.4 Outline of Activities and Data and Findings

The Resource and Crisis Center of Galveston County coordinate the Galveston County SART, which meets on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of each month. Meetings are held in a hybrid format, allowing for both in-person and virtual participation.

Case reviews and interagency coordination

SART meetings were temporarily suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Resource and Crisis Center of Galveston County began reengagement efforts in 2022 and officially resumed meetings in 2023. A total of seven SART meetings were held that year, with no further data recorded.

Number of sexual assault reports received by local law enforcement agencies and staffed at SART meetings:

- January 2023 to December 2024, the Galveston County SART reviewed **78** adult sexual assault cases.

SART Meeting 2024					
Date	Police Department	Staffed	Restaffed	Closed	Charges/Outcomes
January 2024	Texas City Police Department	4	2	1	Criminal Trespass with Bond Conditions/ Warrant Issued
February 2024	Dickinson Police Department	1	1	NA	
	Texas City Police Department	5	4	1	
	League City Police Department	1	1	NA	
March 2024	League City Police Department	2	1	1	
	La Marque Police Department	1	NA	NA	Sexual Assault 40k bond with conditions
April 2024	Kemah Police Department	2	1	NA	Sexual Assault 100,000 bond
	League City Police Department	1	NA	NA	Needs forensic interview
	Texas City Police Department	3	1	1	1. Criminal Charges accepted for Sexual Assault F2 and AF1-Harris with a 50,000 bond
	University of Texas Medical Branch Police Department	1	NA	1	
	Dickinson Police Department	1	NA	1	
May 2024	League City Police Department	1	NA	NA	Sexual Assault 80,000 bond
June 2024	Texas City Police Department	5	1	2	Sexual Assault 250,000 bond Sexual Assault 60,000 bond

	League City Police Department	4	2	2	
July 2024	Texas City Police Department	2	1	NA	Sexual Assault 80,000 with bond conditions
	League City Police Department	2	NA	2	
	La Marque Police Department	3	3	NA	
	University of Texas Medical Branch Police Department	2	NA	2	
August 2024	League City Police Department	3	1	1	(1)SA/oral-80K Bond (2)SA/vaginal-80K Bond
	Texas City Police Department	1	NA	1	
	Galveston Police Department	1	NA	NA	Sexual Assault/vaginal with 60,000 bonds
	Galveston County Sheriff's Office	1	NA	NA	Sexual Assault 60,000 with bond conditions
	Friendswood Police Department	3	NA	1	Sexual Assault 50,000 Sexual Assault 50,000
September 2024	League City Police Department	2	1	1	
October 2024	League City Police Department	2	2	NA	
	Kemah Police Department	2	NA	NA	charges already established. Needs to serve warrant Sexual Assault 40,000
	Dickinson Police Department	1	1 with DA	NA	
	Texas City Police Department	3	3	NA	
November 2024	Galveston County Sheriff's Office	2	1	1	
	League City Police Department	3	3	3	
	Dickinson Police Department	1	NA	NA	Sexual Assault 100,000 bond
December 2024	Texas City Police Department	10	3	6	Agg SA 150K Bond (still needs DNA)
	League City Police Department	2	2	NA	
2024 Total		78	35	28	15

Law Enforcement SART case reviews presented:

- League City Police Department: 23
- Texas City Police Department: 33
- Galveston Police Department: 1
- Galveston County Sheriff's Office: 3
- Dickinson Police Department: 4
- Kemah Police Department: 4
- University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB) Police Department: 3
- Friendswood Police Department: 3
- La Marque Police Department: 4

Community Adult Sexual Assault Referrals to Resource & Crisis Center of Galveston County:

DATE	Residence	Referral	Agency Referral
5/29/2024	Bacliff	Sexual Assault Services	UTMB Galveston-SANE
6/18/2024	La Marque	Sexual Assault Services	UTMB Galveston-SANE
6/25/2024	La Marque	Sexual Assault Services	UTMB Galveston-SANE
7/15/2024	Texas City	Sexual Assault Services	UTMB Galveston-SANE
8/30/2024	La Marque	Sexual Assault Services	La Marque PD
10/2/2024	Galveston	Sexual Assault Services	UTMB Galveston-SANE
11/1/2024	Galveston	Sexual Assault Services	David Simmon, Galveston County DA's Office
12/6/2024	Texas City	Sexual Assault Services	UTMB Galveston-SANE

Office of Court Administration Public Safety Report System Texas Bail Processing and Public Safety Report System report shows the following:

22.011 (a)(1) Sexual Assault criminal charge brought upon the perpetrators.

- 1 Case in 2023
- 11 Cases in 2024

Galveston County District Attorney's Office report:

of Cases filed in 2023 (including pre-indictment):

Sexual assault- 6

Aggravated sexual assault - 6

of Cases filed in 2024(including pre-indictment):

Sexual assault- 26

Aggravated sexual assault- 5

Sexual Assault & Awareness Community Outreach Trainings-

1. Sexual Assault Awareness Panel – Resource & Crisis Center of Galveston County, Inc. (2023)
2. “Police Report Writing 1&2”- Resource and Crisis Center of Galveston County (2023)
3. Strangulation”- University of Texas Medical Branch- Galveston (2023)
4. Sexual Assault Awareness Panel – Resource & Crisis Center of Galveston County, Inc. (2024)
5. **215** Sexual Assault Awareness & Community Outreach Trainings –Resource & Crisis Center of Galveston County, Inc.
2023- 83
2024 - 132

Galveston County Police Department Role Call trainings on Sexual Assault Response Team protocols and sexual assault services – Resource & Crisis Center of Galveston County, Inc.

La Marque Police Department:

- 2023 – 2024 - 71

Texas City Police Department:

- 2023 – 2024 - 4

The Resource and Crisis Center of Galveston County, Inc. (CIS Team) is present at the La Marque Police Department in mid-county on Mondays and Fridays, offering support and services to survivors of sexual assault and conducting protocol training and educational sessions on sexual assault for law enforcement officers. This allows for better mobile advocacy and to be closer to rural populations.

1.5 Protocols

PROTOCOL/GUIDELINES

GALVESTON COUNTY SEXUAL ASSAULT RESPONSE TEAM

The Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) Cooperative Working Agreement was signed in September 2001, creating the Galveston County SART. SART represents a commitment from participating agencies to provide a coordinated, sensitive response to sexual assaults which occur in Galveston County. The team consists of representatives of the Galveston County Criminal District Attorney's Office who prosecute cases, Advocates from the Resource & Crisis Center who provide immediate and long term support to the survivor and her/his family and act as a liaison between the various members of the SART team and the survivor, Forensic Nurses who conduct forensic evidentiary examinations and medical support through University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB) Forensic Nursing Team (FNT), Law Enforcement officers from the various law enforcement agencies in Galveston County who conduct investigations and apprehend perpetrators, and components of the Advocacy Center for Children who handle cases involving sexual assault of a child.

The goal of the Sexual Assault Response Team is for the participating members to work together to investigate, gather evidence, and prosecute cases while providing sensitive, immediate, and long-term support to the victim.

- *All SART members agree that the needs and interests of the sexual assault survivor will be a consideration as each member interacts with the survivor throughout the life of the case.*
- *All SART members agree that survivors will not be blamed for or made to feel responsible for their assault regardless of the circumstances surrounding the situation. Survivors will*

always be given the opportunity to express their preferences as to how their needs would be best addressed during a pending investigation and ultimately filed case.

With this approach, the survivor's active participation is encouraged throughout the entire process. Survivors should not be blamed or made to feel responsible for their assault, nor should they be pressured to participate in the process if they choose not to continue. However, survivors are an integral part of the process and should be made aware that their participation or lack of participation may have an impact on the outcome or disposition of the case. A critical aspect of this agreement is a signed confidentiality form by the survivor through Resource and Crisis Center of Galveston County, Inc.

TYPES OF CASES HANDLED UNDER THIS PROTOCOL

The Sexual Assault Response Team will respond to all reports of sexual assault: female and male, adult, adolescent, and child. Cases involving children should be referred to and follow the protocol established by the Advocacy Center for Children. Cases involving adults or children not covered by the Advocacy Center for Children's protocol should be handled according to the following guidelines:

- SART will respond with immediate services to all acute cases in which the assault has occurred within the past 120 hours.
- In instances where the assault occurred more than 120 hours prior to the report, the survivor should be given information to contact the Resource and Crisis Center of Galveston County, Inc. or if the victim is (17) years of age or younger, Child Protective Services (CPS) or Law Enforcement will contact the survivor's guardian about services through the Advocacy Center for Children. The survivor may be referred to law enforcement, medical personnel, counseling, or other support services based on the case history and needs of the survivor.
- Services will be provided in all cases, acute or non-acute, when the assault occurred in Galveston County. In acute cases where the assault occurred in another county, but the survivor requests services in this county, services will be provided to meet immediate

medical and support needs and then the survivor will be referred to law enforcement and/or SART services in the county where the assault occurred.

ROLES/RESPONSIBILITIES OF SART MEMBERS

Resource & Crisis Center of Galveston County, Inc. (RCC) Advocates

The Crisis Intervention Specialist, Victim Advocate, and Case Manager are employees and advocates of RCC; Accompaniment Advocates can be unpaid volunteers, trained and supervised by RCC. All advocates providing services have received a minimum of 40 hours of training using Office of the Attorney General (OAG) approved curriculum prior to their offering any direct service to sexual assault survivors. The role of the Advocate, paid or unpaid, is to provide support, reassurance, crisis intervention, safety planning, and information to the survivor during the medical, investigative, and judicial process, with the result that the survivor feels empowered and supported through the entire process. The primary objective of the advocate is to inform, support and accompany survivors and their families through the aftermath of sexual assault, and to provide the client with information about the Texas Crime Victims Bill of Rights. These services will be available to every client, regardless of their desire to report to law enforcement.

In keeping a focus on the needs and interests of the survivor, RCC advocates work cooperatively with all other members of SART and assure that the survivor and family/friends or caregivers are given immediate access to the support and services offered by all other members. Additionally, RCC coordinates and facilitates biweekly case review meetings to engage the SART team in a multidisciplinary approach that is beneficial to the needs of the client throughout the process of the investigation and disposition.

A unique function of the advocate is to provide continuity of care. The advocate has the only role which can be present throughout every step of the criminal justice system and/or the survivor's recovery. Advocates will offer assistance and support both to victims and to their families regardless of their desire to report the assault.

Law Enforcement

All of the law enforcement agencies in Galveston County are participating as members in SART. The role of law enforcement is to investigate the incident, gather information and evidence, and, when appropriate, arrest the person of interest. Because of the nature of sexual assault and the survivor's position as both victim and evidence, the law enforcement officer has an additional responsibility to take all reasonable steps to alleviate the negative impact of the investigative process. The primary objectives for a law enforcement officer are to: identify and preserve evidence associated with the case, identify the person of interest; and develop probable cause to support the arrest and prosecution of the person of interest.

In keeping with a focus on the needs and interests of the survivor, law enforcement works cooperatively with all other members of SART to ensure that the survivor is given immediate access to the support and services offered by all other SART members.

Healthcare Provider or Forensic Nurse

The role of the healthcare provider or Forensic Nurse is to ensure a timely medical exam and treatment as the condition warrants. Patients, who present as sexual assault survivors will be given options as to services available, medical treatment/care as well as the option to participate in the Sexual Assault Medical Forensic exam and evidence collection. The medical facility will provide a comfortable setting in which the healthcare provider and/or Forensic Nurse can conduct a Sexual Assault Medical Forensic exam and collect evidence.

The healthcare facility will provide a private area for patients and family members to wait for the examination and meet with other SART members, once the healthcare provider or Forensic Nurse has obtained permission from the patient and/or family member, to be introduced to other SART members. The Forensic Nurse works collaboratively with members of SART and assures that immediate access to available SART members/services and follow-up services/care is offered to the patient/family/significant other.

It is recommended that any health care provider involved with SART procedures complete the OAG Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) Training, including didactic and associated clinical practice and felony criminal court observation.

Prosecutor

The role of the District Attorney's office, after charges are filed, is to prosecute the person of interest in sexual assault cases. The primary objective in a sexual assault case is to see that justice is done. In achieving this objective, the staff of the District Attorney's office works cooperatively with the other members of SART and pursues cases where sufficient, credible evidence against the person of interest exists.

Special Interests

The role of special interests is to provide specialized services to unique populations. The Advocacy Center for Children is one such special interest that is a member of SART in Galveston County. The Advocacy Center provides support services to children who are victims of sexual abuse, serious physical abuse, child deaths, and child witnesses. When a case involves a child, the established protocols and procedures of the Advocacy Center are utilized by SART in Galveston County.

Adult Protective Services (APS) provides intervention and assistance when the victim qualifies as disabled, or as a senior citizen. Staff of APS will be contacted when cases involve these populations.

Response Procedures for Acute Cases

A. When Law Enforcement receives a report

1. The call will be answered according to department procedures.
2. The priority is to ensure the immediate safety and security of the victim.
3. The officer should explain the necessity of a hospital examination and that it is performed by a Forensic Nurse and that it is encouraged that all exams be conducted by a Forensic Nurse. In Galveston County, this is the UTMB Forensic Nursing Team, and HCA Mainland is the Texas Forensic Nurse Examiners (TFNE): Forensic Center of Excellence.
4. The officer may transport or meet the survivor at the hospital and will provide the Law Enforcement Request for Sexual Assault Exam and case number and other appropriate information to hospital staff.
5. Upon the hospital's confirmation that a sexual assault has been reported by the patient, University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB) or TXFNE will immediately notify the

Resource & Crisis Center (RCC) 24-hour hotline to contact the RCC On-Call advocate or advocate volunteer with permission from the patient and/or family member.

6. If the officer leaves the hospital prior to the completion of the Medical Forensic exam, he/she will leave contact information with the Forensic Nurse or the emergency department charge nurse. Upon completion of the Medical Forensic exam, the investigative agency will be notified, and the completed evidence collection kit should be picked up within an hour of the notification. (Law Enforcement has 7 days to pick up the evidence)
7. An investigator will respond in accordance with departmental procedures, but in all cases, they should respond as soon as possible to the assault. The investigator should provide timely updates on the status of investigation to the survivor.
8. As provided by Article 57.01 of the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure (C.C.P.), the investigator assigned to the case shall advise the victim of the right to use a pseudonym in all public files and records covering the offense if requested by the victim. If the victim chooses to use a pseudonym, the investigator shall provide the form to be completed and upon completion abide by the provisions of Article 57.02 C.C.P. in all matters related to the investigation.

A. When UTMB or HCA Mainland receives a patient who presents as a sexual assault survivor, the patient will be assessed to determine the need for immediate medical attention and assess altered mental status or consumption of mind-altering substances prior to the Sexual Assault Medical Forensic Exam.

If the sexual assault has occurred within 120 hours, then the patient will be given the option to receive medical care/treatment only or receive the medical treatment and the Sexual Assault Medical Forensic exam with evidence collection. The patient will also be given the opportunity to see a sexual assault advocate from the Resource & Crisis Center (RCC).

If the patient declines the Sexual Assault Medical Forensic exam the staff will proceed with medical care and treatment and will offer the opportunity to see the RCC sexual assault advocate.

If the patient chooses to have a Sexual Assault Medical Forensic exam and evidence collection at UTMB or HCA Mainland, and **if the patient has a Law Enforcement case number**, ED staff will notify dispatch to activate the Forensic Nursing Team.

If the patient does not have a Law Enforcement case number, UTMB will contact law enforcement in the jurisdiction where the sexual assault occurred. After the case number has been obtained, UTMB dispatch will activate the Forensic Nursing Team.

If no Forensic Nurse is on duty, the patient will be given the time frame of when the Forensic Nurse will arrive and will be placed in a private waiting area. The Forensic Nurse that is On-Call, should maintain a response time of no more than (60) minutes. UTMB staff will remind the patient that it would be better for evidence collection if they did not eat, drink, smoke, or use the bathroom until the sexual assault medical forensic exam has been completed.

The emergency room staff and / or the Forensic Nurse will explain the RCC services and give an estimate of the advocate's response time. The Advocate from the RCC will have a response time of 60 minutes. If the patient and/or family confirm their desire to see the RCC sexual assault advocate, the emergency room staff and / or the Forensic Nurse will have the patient sign the HIPAA form, Authorization for Disclosure of Protected Health Information, and call the RCC to request a sexual assault advocate. Should the patient decline the services of the RCC, the emergency room staff and / or the Forensic Nurse will provide written information on the RCC services. This information will be reinforced at the time of discharge, so the patient and/or family know they may contact the RCC at a later date.

On arrival to the facility or release from assignment, the Forensic Nurse will introduce themselves to the patient/family/friends and explain the Sexual Assault Medical Forensic exam with evidence

collection. If the patient wishes to proceed with the exam, the Forensic Nurse will confirm the sexual assault case number on completed Law Enforcement Request for Sexual Assault Exam form.

Upon arrival to the medical facility, the advocate from the RCC will check in with the emergency room staff before approaching the patient. The RCC sexual assault advocate will be introduced to the patient and will be given time to develop a relationship with the patient.

C. When the RCC Advocate receives a call from hospital personnel, the call will come to the RCC hotline (409-765-7233). The hotline staff will contact the advocate On-Call that day. The staff advocate or volunteer advocate will maintain a response time of no more than 60 minutes. The Advocate will notify the hospital staff of their arrival and will then be introduced to the survivor if the medical forensic examination is not in progress. If the exam is in progress, the Advocate will enter the exam if the survivor is still agreeing to the presence of an advocate. The Advocate will follow agency procedures in all interactions with the survivor and/or family/friends. The Advocate will remain in the examination room during the medical forensic exam only if the survivor agrees to have them present. The Advocate will determine the immediate needs of the survivor, including clothing and immediate support. The Advocate will arrange for follow-up contact with the client within 48 hours of release from the hospital.

In cases involving a child, procedures, and protocols for Advocacy Center for Children (409-741-6000) and/or Children's Protective Services will take precedence. When the circumstances of the case do not involve ACC or CPS, the same procedures will be implemented for adult survivors.

D. When RCC receives a hot line call regarding an acute sexual assault case, the hotline staff will gather as much information as possible regarding the survivor's immediate safety and need for medical attention. The hotline staff will follow established agency procedures to obtain additional information about the survivor and the assault. If the survivor needs immediate medical attention and/or a medical forensic examination, the hotline staff will assist in contacting the appropriate law enforcement and hospital. The hotline staff will contact the On-Call advocate for additional assistance if the survivor needs transportation or other immediate support services.

When the Advocate is contacted regarding an acute sexual assault call to the hotline, the Advocate will respond in the same manner as a hospital or law enforcement call; contact the survivor within 60 minutes of the Call-Out, provide support services to the survivor and/or family/friends and arrange for follow up contact within 48 hours.

E. When law enforcement notifies the District Attorney's office of a sexual assault investigation, an Assistant District Attorney will respond according to established procedures. Once the law enforcement investigation is complete and the District Attorney's office makes the charging decision, the District Attorney's office will communicate with the survivor, maintaining the focus of the prosecution of the case with consideration of the needs and interests of the survivor. In those instances where the survivor has executed the pseudonym form, the District Attorney's office will ensure that the survivor's privacy is maintained in accordance with the statutory provisions of Art. 57.02 C.C.P. Through the use of pseudonyms, the survivor will be identified and represented throughout all court proceedings. The Assistant District Attorney will maintain on-going communication with the survivor, explaining any changes in the status of the case. The District Attorney's office by and through its Victim Assistance Coordinator shall ensure that the survivor has been given notice of the availability of support persons or advocates to be present for any court and case related appearances should they choose to have those individuals present.

RESPONSE PROCEDURES FOR CHRONIC CASES OR ALLEGATIONS INVOLVING INCIDENTS MORE THAN 120 HOURS OLD

A. When Law Enforcement receives a report

An investigating officer will be contacted immediately in all sexual assault cases. The investigating officer will respond as soon as possible to the assault. The investigating officer will provide the survivor with referral information regarding services provided by RCC, establish an ongoing rapport with the survivor, and should provide timely updates on the status of the

investigation to the survivor. It is especially important that the survivors receive accurate information regarding the final disposition of the case.

B. When a hospital receives a walk-in patient

Medical personnel will evaluate the patient's immediate medical needs and provide appropriate treatment. The survivor will be referred to RCC for ongoing support services.

C. When RCC receives a hot line call

The hotline staff will determine if the caller is the survivor or someone close to the survivor. If the call is from someone other than the survivor, the hotline staff will confirm that the survivor wants RCC to intervene. If the assault occurred outside the 120-hour window, a medical exam for collection of evidence is not indicated. A medical exam may be appropriate to address other issues related to the assault such as pregnancy or sexually transmitted infections (STI); however, this type of exam will be the prerogative of the survivor. The hotline staff will follow agency procedures to gather appropriate information about the survivor and the assault incident. The caller will be given appropriate information and referrals regarding medical needs stemming from the assault and/or the possibility of legal proceedings. An Advocate will be notified of the delayed outcry. The Advocate will contact the survivor and offer appropriate services within 48 hours of the initial hotline call. If the call is received in the middle of the night, staff will not be dispatched until the next day.

If the RCC staff receives a hotline call about a sexual assault involving a survivor 17 years of age and younger, the CPS hotline **MUST** be called to ensure the case has been reported (ref. Texas Family and Penal Codes). If the case falls outside of the parameters for investigation by CPS, RCC staff must report the case to the appropriate law enforcement agency. In the cases of survivors who are 17 years of age or younger, a medical exam *will* be required for many if not most sexual assault survivors.

D. Any participating SART member is encouraged to refer any survivor of sexual assault, regardless of when the assault occurred, to RCC for support services.

SART Case Review Process

- The sign-in sheet at each SART case staffing will include a statement of confidentiality. Everyone present during the staffing must sign the statement.
- For identified cases, RCC will facilitate SART case staffing on an as needed basis. The appropriate agency representative involved in that case will be contacted. Any member is able to call a SART meeting or request time for staffing at any meeting.
- RCC will contact the appropriate law enforcement agency and Forensic Nurse prior to the initial staffing on a case.
- The appropriate law enforcement department will review the circumstances of the assault and the status of the investigation. The Forensic Nurse will review any medical issues that need to be followed up or additional referrals. The Advocate will review the services the survivor has received and identify additional needs that the SART might address. The District Attorney's office will review the status of the prosecution's case if charges are filed.

Law Enforcement Request for Sexual Assault Exam (form)

For all reported cases of sexual assault under Texas Code of Criminal Procedure Article 56A.251, a law enforcement agency (LEA) must:

- Use this form to document the decision whether to request a sexual assault exam.
- Provide a copy of this completed form to:
 - ☐ both the health care facility and the sexual assault examiner or sexual assault nurse examiner who provides services to the victim that are related to the sexual assault; and
 - ☐ the victim or the person who consented to the sexual assault exam on behalf of the victim.

120 Hour Law:

I certify that the listed LEA requested a sexual assault exam for an assault reported (select one):

- ☐ Within 120 hours of the assault [Article 56A.251 (a)].
- ☐ Outside of 120 hours of the assault and the **victim is a minor** [Article 56A.251 (b)].
- ☐ Outside of 120 hours of the assault and the **victim is not a minor**, and either (1) based on the circumstances of the reported assault, the LEA believes a sexual assault exam would further investigation or prosecution; or (2) after a medical evaluation by a physician, sexual assault examiner, or sexual assault nurse examiner, the physician or examiner notifies LEA that a sexual assault exam should be conducted [Article 56A.251 (c)]

Location / accessibility of sexual assault forensic examinations and Availability/access to medical care

Four facilities in Galveston County equipped to provide SAFE exams:

- UTMB Health Emergency Room (Designated SAFE Ready facility) 901 Harborside Dr, Galveston Tx. 77550
- HCA Houston Healthcare Mainland (Designated SAFE Ready facility) 6801 Emmett F Lowry Expy., Texas City, Tx. 77591
- Texas City Free Standing ER (Designated SAFE Ready facility) 3302 Palmer Hwy, Texas City, Tx. 77590
- Friendswood 24/7 Free Standing ER (Designated SAFE Ready facility) 225 E Parkwood Dr, Friendswood, Tx. 77546

Resource & Crisis Center of Galveston County, Inc. – Continuum of Care Services for Sexual Assault Survivors:

- Case Management
- Law enforcement Accompaniment/Advocacy
- Medical Forensic Accompaniment/Advocacy
- Emergency shelter
- Assistance with relocation
- Assistance with the Crime Victims Compensation Application
- Assistance with VINE – Victim Notification Network

- Assistance with Address Confidentiality
- Assistance with the Protective Order Application
- Court Accompaniment
- Referrals for therapeutic services
- Referrals for legal services
- Referrals for social services

1.6 Evaluation of Protocols and Case Review

Challenges Identified

- **Limited case sharing by some law enforcement agencies** choosing not to participate in SART meetings, hindering collaborative review and response.
- **Low survivor participation in SART processes**, due to difficulty reconnecting with survivors after the initial report.

Short-Term Goals

- **Resource & Crisis Center of Galveston County, Inc. will continue specialized training for law enforcement** on SART protocols, emphasizing adherence to state-mandated procedures.
- **Boost law enforcement engagement in SART meetings** – some law enforcement agencies are not participating in SART.

Long-Term Goals

- **Produce a survivor feedback survey** to identify service improvements and survivor-centered practices.
- **Increase law enforcement involvement** across Galveston County to ensure consistent survivor representation.

Recommendations:

1.Ensure Consistent Law Enforcement Participation

- Enforce accountability by each law enforcement agency for mandated SART involvement through attendance tracking and follow-up with non-participating agencies.

- Have each law enforcement agency appoint an individual to ensure cases are being brought to SART.
- Recognize agencies demonstrating strong engagement.

2. Expand Survivor-Centered Support

- Provide trauma-informed training for all SART members to improve survivor interactions and reduce re-traumatization.
- Resource and Crisis Center of Galveston County, Inc., host annual Sexual Assault Awareness Panel. Include how the SART supports survivors in trauma response care.

3. Strengthen Protocols Collaboration

- SART Committee to meet at a minimum quarterly: January 14, 2026, is first meeting.
- SART Committee collaborates to update the SART protocol to abide by state mandates.
- SART Committee members will address local community needs.

Case Review

The Case Review was completed on August 22, 2024, 17 days after the reported sexual assault and the case is now closed. It was discussed during a SART meeting attended by a SANE nurse, Galveston County District Attorney's office, Friendswood Police Department and Resource and Crisis Center of Galveston County, Inc. The review covered the survivor's relationship to the perpetrator, interview findings, and other key case details. The meeting was highly effective, resulting in a successful case closure and a positive outcome for the survivor. Law enforcement maintained consistent communication with the victim, which contributed to a successful prosecution and delivery of justice. In addition to legal progress, the survivor received community referrals and ongoing case management for additional services, including continued therapy support. The SART team emphasized transparency, evidence sharing, and collaborative care which helps the victim stay engaged. The case concluded with a Sexual Assault charge under Penal Code 22.011(a)(1) and a \$50,000 bond.

Survivor Feedback

"I know more about community resources."

"I have increased knowledge of crime victims' rights."

“Authorization for Disclosure of Protected Information”?

AUTHORIZATION FOR DISCLOSURE OF PROTECTED INFORMATION

Statement of purpose: This disclosure is made to facilitate review of my case by the Multidisciplinary Team for Human Trafficking Care Coordination. The purpose of the team is to facilitate the assessment, treatment (health, mental, emotional, spiritual, safety), investigation and prosecution of a person who (may) have been a victim of commercial sexual/labor exploitation.

I, _____, authorize the following individuals / agencies to share the following information:

I, _____ (Authorized Personal Representative) authorize to share the following information about _____ (minor's name):

Description of information to be disclosed:

☐ Personal information, Identifying Information, and Demographic including but not limited to name address, health insurance, and social security number. ☐ Emergency Records ☐ Forensic Records ☐ Forensic Photos (Physical injury images only)	☐ Medical Records ☐ Radiology Reports ☐ Laboratory Reports ☐ ABC Clinic Records ☐ Law Enforcement Reports ☐ Forensic Interview ☐ Commercially Sexually Exploited Youth (CSEY) Advocate report / ongoing progress	☐ Crisis Intervention Specialist Report / ongoing progress ☐ CPS / DFPS report and ongoing progress ☐ Applicable Counselor report / ongoing progress ☐ Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) report and ongoing progress ☐ Probation Officer report and ongoing progress
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Information may be shared with listed agencies and individuals:

Agencies	Individuals
☐ Law Enforcement Agency (Police, FBI, Homeland Security, etc.) ☐ Resource & Crisis Center (RCC) ☐ Unbound Houston (CSEY) ☐ Health Care Facilities ☐ Child Advocacy Center (CAC) ☐ Prosecutors Office ☐ Probationary Office ☐ Child Protective Services (CPS) / Department of Family Protective Services (DFPS) ☐ Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) / Guardian ad Litem (GAL)	☐ Law Enforcement Agents ☐ Crisis Intervention Specialist ☐ CSEY Advocates ☐ Health Care Providers (Including Forensic Nurse) ☐ Care Coordinator ☐ CAC Forensic Interviewer ☐ Prosecutors ☐ Probation Officer ☐ CPS / DFPS Agents ☐ CASA / GAL Agents ☐ Counselor / Therapist

This information may be shared:

☐ In person ☐ By phone ☐ By mail ☐ By fax	☐ By email (* I understand email is not confidential and can be intercepted and read by other people.)
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Approved 1/11/21

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Patient Label

AUTHORIZATION FOR DISCLOSURE OF PROTECTED INFORMATION

This authorization shall be in force and effect: For the statute of limitation or until completion of all investigations and legal actions related to this matter, including the completion of any appeal or review, or the expiration of the time for filing any such appeal or review.

Right to revoke authorization in writing: I have the right to revoke this authorization in writing at any time. I understand that if I revoke this authorization, I must present my written revocation to the Human Trafficking Care Coordinator of Galveston County. I understand that the revocation will not apply to information that has already been released in response to this authorization.

Statement that benefits, treatments, investigation, and prosecution are not conditioned on authorization: I understand this authorization is voluntary and I may refuse to sign the Authorization Form. I understand that I am not required to sign the Authorization Form in exchange for receiving health care, investigation, prosecution, or counseling.

Statement of potential re-disclosure: Pursuant to this authorization, the information disclosed may be re-disclosed by the recipient(s) and no longer protected by federal or Texas privacy laws and may be required by law or practice to share with others.

Name of Patient or Authorized Personal Representative

Signature of Patient or Authorized Personal Representative

Relationship to the Patient (if signed by a Personal Representative)

Name of Witness

Signature of witness

Date: _____ Time: _____



Release of Information

READ FIRST: Before you decide whether or not to let RCC share some of your confidential information with another agency or person, an advocate at RCC will discuss all alternatives and any potential risks and benefits that could result from sharing your confidential information with you. If you decide you want RCC to release some of your confidential information, you can use this form to choose what is shared, how it's shared, with whom, and for how long.

I understand that RCC has an obligation to keep my personal information, identifying information, and my records confidential. I also understand that I can choose to allow RCC to release some of my personal information to certain individuals or agencies.

I, _____, authorize RCC to share the following specific information with:

Who I want to have my information: _____
Name: _____
Specific Office or Agency: _____
Phone Number/Fax: _____

RCC may share information: ☐ in person ☐ by phone ☐ by fax ☐ by mail ☐ by e-mail
☐ I understand that electronic mail (e-mail) is not confidential and can be intercepted and read by other people.

RCC can share the following info: _____
Reason for sharing info: _____

Please Note: There is a risk that a limited release of information can potentially open up access by others to all of your confidential information held by RCC.

I understand:

- ☐ That I do not have to sign a release form. I do not have to allow RCC to share my information. Signing a release form is completely voluntary. That this release is limited to what I write above. If I would like RCC to release information about me in the future, I will need to sign another written, time-limited release.
- ☐ That releasing information about me could give another agency or person information about my location and would confirm that I have been receiving services from RCC.
- ☐ That RCC and I may not be able to control what happens to my information once it has been released to the above person or agency, and that the agency or person getting my information may be required by law or practice to share it with others.

This release expires on _____ Date _____ Time _____
Expiration is typically no more than 15-30 days, but may be shorter or longer.

I understand that this release is valid when I sign it and that I may withdraw my consent to this release at any time either orally or in writing.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
Time: _____ Witness: _____

I no longer give my permission to share the above personal information.
Client Signature: _____ Date: _____
I confirm that I still give my permission to share the above personal information until
Client Signature: _____ Date: _____

Client Limited Release of Information Form Created for adaptation by Julie Kence Field, J.D. and NNEDPV.

1.7 Conclusion

Galveston County's Sexual Assault Response Team has demonstrated meaningful progress over the past two years in its commitment to supporting adult survivors of sexual assault through coordinated, trauma-informed care. Despite challenges like COVID halting SART for three years, limited participation from some law enforcement agencies, the commitment of SART partners who do participate has resulted in measurable improvements in response protocols, survivor engagement, and interagency collaboration.

This report highlights the importance of continued investment in training, infrastructure, and survivor-centered practices. By building on recent accomplishments—such as streamlined intake procedures and the integration of survivor feedback—Galveston County is well-positioned to strengthen its response system and ensure that every adult survivor receives compassionate, timely, and effective support.

Moving forward, the SART will focus on deepening community partnerships. These efforts will be critical in advancing the county's mission to provide a comprehensive and equitable response to sexual assault, grounded in dignity, accountability, and healing.

Appendices

- Appendix A: Resource & Crisis Center of Galveston County, Inc. - Call Out Chart
- Appendix B: Outreach Materials and Campaigns
- Appendix C: SART Member Roster and Contact Sheet

Appendix A: Call Outs and Summary Charts

Resource & Crisis Center of Galveston County, Inc.

Hospital Accompaniments - Call-Outs '23- '24

Month	Children (0-12)	Teenagers (13-17)	Adult (18-59)	Elderly (60+)
2023				
September	3	1	5	0
October	5	1	6	0
November	1	0	5	0
December	2	2	0	0
Total	11	4	16	0
2024				
January	1	0	6	0
February	3	1	4	0
March	1	5	6	0
April	1	1	1	0
May	0	3	5	0
June	2	0	3	0

July	0	3	4	0
Aug	1	1	4	0
September	4	4	7	4
October	1	1	4	0
November	0	1	7	0
December	1	2	1	0
Total	15	22	52	4

2023 Call-Outs (Age)

4-month data

Children: 11

Teenagers: 4

Adults: 16

Elderly: 0

2024 Call-Outs (Age)

12-month data

Children: 15

Teenagers: 22

Adults: 52

Elderly: 4

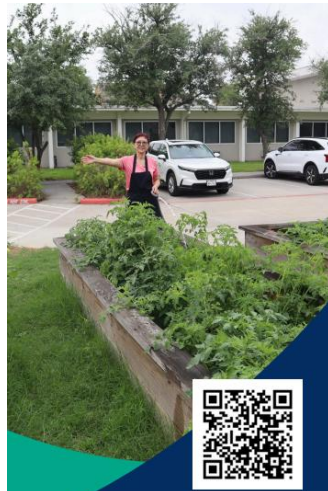
Appendix B: Outreach Materials and Campaigns

Who We Are

The Resource & Crisis Center of Galveston County (RCCGC) has been a lifeline for survivors of domestic and sexual violence for over 45 years. Founded as a grassroots effort in 1979, RCCGC grew in response to the urgent need for safety, support, and advocacy for those experiencing abuse. Over the years, the organization has expanded its services, relocated to better serve survivors, and strengthened community partnerships to remove barriers to healing and justice. Today, RCCGC remains committed to empowering survivors, ensuring they have the resources and support needed to open doors and break the cycle.

How to Volunteer

- Apply – Submit a Volunteer Application on our website (background check may be required for direct services).
- Connect – After submitting your application, our Outreach & Development team will reach out to discuss opportunities.
- Attend Orientation – Learn the essentials (some roles require extra training)!



How to Give

You can support RCC by making a secure online donation using a debit or credit card. To donate by phone, you can call (409)443-0501. If you prefer to give by mail, send a check or money order payable to the Resource & Crisis Center of Galveston County to our administration office address. Every contribution helps provide vital services to survivors in need!

24 Hour Crisis Hotline

Local: (409) 765-SAFE (7233)
Free: 1-888-919-SAFE (7233)

Administrative Office

1204 45th Street
Galveston, TX 77550
(409) 763-1441

League City Office

303 East Main, Suite 250
League City, TX 77573
(409) 763-1441



Galveston Resale Store

2025 Broadway
Galveston, TX 77550
(409) 762-1520

RCC Home Store

1708 23rd Street
Galveston, TX 77550
(409) 443-0560

Texas City Resale Store

2312 Palmer Hwy
Texas City, TX 77590
(409) 942-4380

League City Resale Store

814 West Main Street
League City, TX 77573
(281) 554-6983



RESOURCE & CRISIS CENTER
OF GALVESTON COUNTY, INC.
Opening Doors-Breaking the Cycle

The mission of RCC is to promote the safety, well-being, and best interest of victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse, and human trafficking, and to advocate for the prevention of such crimes.



Our Services

24-Hour Sexual Assault and Crisis Hotline

We offer confidential support and resources for domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking survivors, as well as their loved ones, through our 24-Hour Sexual Assault & Crisis Hotline. Services Include:

- Shelter Intake Services
- Safety Planning
- Information & Referrals for Survivors and their Families
- Immediate Assistance in English and Spanish (Language Line available if needed)
- 24/7 Medical Accompaniment Advocates

Residential Services

The Resource & Crisis Center of Galveston County, Inc. provides free emergency shelter for those actively fleeing domestic violence, sexual assault, or human trafficking. Services Include:

- Safe Housing for Women, Children, and Men
- Safety Planning
- Case Management
- Three Daily Meals
- Counseling & Legal Referrals
- Children's Programs & Schooling Support
- Career & Education Development

Non-Residential Services

Our non-residential services support individuals in abusive relationships, survivors of sexual assault or human trafficking who need help but not shelter. Services Include:

- Case Management
- Safety Planning
- Therapy & Legal Referrals
- Housing Advocacy
- Career & Education Development

Sexual Assault Services

We provide advocacy, crisis intervention, and medical accompaniment to survivors of sexual assault and their families, ensuring support through both immediate care and the legal process. Services Include:

- 24/7 Medical & Court Accompaniment – Advocates support survivors during forensic exams, hospital visits, and legal proceedings.
- Crisis Intervention – Available 24/7 via our hotline or in person (No Walk-Ins After 5pm).
- Advocacy & Support – Assistance navigating law enforcement, prosecutors, and courts.

Prevention Education

RCC offers free community education on sexual assault, domestic violence, and human trafficking. Our presentations cover causes, warning signs, impacts, and available resources through RCC and community partners. We believe prevention starts with awareness—contact us to learn how we can support your school, workplace, or organization!



Appendix C: SART Member Roster and Contact Sheet

Resource & Crisis Center of Galveston County, Inc.

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Galveston County DA

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