

If you have experienced sexual assault, or are a victim or survivor of sexual assault, you may feel alone and confused. These feelings are completely normal, and there is help available. Rape and sexual assault are serious, violent crimes. They are crimes that can happen to anyone. No matter what happened, the sexual assault was not your fault.

Below is information about different options in Kansas for someone who has been sexually assaulted. No matter which options you decide are right for you, a sexual assault advocate can help you consider your options, provide you information on what to expect in your community, and provide you ongoing support and resources (see *Advocate Response*).



Advocate Response

Kansas sexual and domestic violence services can provide the support, safety, and help victims and survivors often need. These services are offered 24 hours per day, seven days a week. Services include crisis hotlines, crisis intervention, personal advocacy, medical advocacy, court advocacy, law enforcement advocacy, emergency accommodations, safe shelter, supportive counseling, support groups, and child and youth advocacy.

All of these services are free and confidential. Any information shared is kept private and cannot be shared with anyone outside the organization, unless:

- In limited circumstances, the organization is required by law to disclose the information.
- The victim or survivor signs an informed, written, time-limited release allowing them to disclose the information.

Visit www.kcsdv.org/find-help for the list of Kansas sexual and domestic violence service providers and contact information.

Hospital Response

You have the right to a sexual assault medical forensic exam, even if you decide not to report the sexual assault to the police.

There are two purposes of the sexual assault medical forensic exam: 1) to provide medical care and treatment; and 2) to collect evidence from the sexual assault. Some hospitals have Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANEs) who are trained to perform the exam. However, any emergency department can provide emergency medical services or treatment.

If you are 18 years of age or older, the hospital should not contact the police without your written permission. If you are under 18 years of age, the healthcare provider must report child abuse to the police or the Kansas Department for Children and Families (DCF). They must also report gunshot wounds and life-threatening stab wounds to the police, and are also required to report to DCF abuse of adults who cannot protect their own interests.

The healthcare provider will first address your medical concerns and provide treatment. They can provide medication to help prevent sexually transmitted infections (STIs) or

pregnancy. They will also collect samples and evidence related to the sexual assault from your body and clothing. You can say no to any part of the exam you do not want to do. Although it is not required, it is recommended that you do not bathe, shower, or do anything that may remove or wash away evidence from your body or clothing in order to keep evidence from being damaged.

The cost of the evidence collection during the sexual assault medical forensic exam is free, but if you need medication or treatment for injuries, then you may be responsible for those costs. Talk to the healthcare provider about what costs you will have to pay. If you choose to file a police report, then the evidence collected may be used for the investigation or prosecution. If you do not file a police report, then the evidence collected will be privately stored in case you change your mind at a later time.

If you have questions or concerns about the sexual assault medical forensic exam, a sexual assault advocate can provide you more information. They can also be with you during the exam to provide you information about your rights and support you through the exam.

Police Response

Reporting a sexual assault to the police is a very personal decision that is your choice. If you choose to file a police report, the police officer will need to ask you questions about the sexual assault. Some questions may be very hard to answer and may not make sense at the time they are asked, but the questions will help the police investigate what happened to you and what to do next. It is not unusual for the police to visit with a victim several times during an investigation. The police may also interview the offender (the person who sexually assaulted you). Once the police finish their investigation, they will send the information to the prosecutor (the county or district attorney).

If you have questions or concerns about making a police report, a sexual assault advocate can provide you more information and support you through the reporting process.

Prosecutor Response

The prosecutor decides if there is enough evidence to move forward with prosecution of the offender. This process can take time. Some victims want information about the criminal court case and have a right to this

information. Many prosecutors have Victim Witness Coordinators who can help you get this information.

If you have questions or concerns about a court case, a sexual assault advocate can provide you more information and support you through the court process.

You Are Not Alone

Sexual assault can be devastating and can affect every part of your life. No matter what you decide to do, it is important to take care of yourself and make decisions that are safe for you. Remember that the sexual assault is not your fault. You have rights and you do not have to go through this alone. A trusted friend or relative, or a sexual assault advocate, can be with you at every step in the process to give you support.



For 24/7 confidential support, contact the following:

Kansas Crisis Hotline
1-888-END-ABUSE (1-888-363-2287)

Kansas Sexual and Domestic Violence Services Nearest You

Visit www.kcsdv.org/find-help for the list of service providers in Kansas and contact information

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**IF YOU ARE A
VICTIM OR SURVIVOR
OF SEXUAL ASSAULT**



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