



VMM-263 Commanding Officer's Statement on Sexual Assault

The Marines and Sailors of VMM-263 must be able to rely on each other every day. Our teamwork and trust will ensure mission success while operating in garrison and combat environments. In order to preserve unit cohesion, we must treat each other with respect and dignity. Acts of sexual assault destroy our confidence in one another and degrade unit readiness and overall combat effectiveness. Sexual assault is a crime not restricted to any gender, race, or age. It is defined as intentional sexual contact, characterized by the use of force, physical threat of force or abuse of authority, or when the victim does not or cannot consent.

Sexual assault is punishable under the Uniform Code of Military Justice and will not be tolerated. Where cause exists, appropriate legal and administrative action shall be taken against anyone victimizing Marines and Sailors by sexual assault. Failure to report or ignoring incidents of sexual assault degrades trust and may have damaging consequences for the victims, 2d MAW and the Marine Corps. Leaders at all levels shall take immediate action to become familiar with MCO 1752.5A and shall pay close attention to Appendix D, the *Commanders Protocol for Responding to Allegations of Sexual Assaults*.

If you are a victim of sexual assault, you are not to blame. If assaulted, contact the squadron Uniformed Victim Advocates (UVA), GySgt Wingfield and SSgt Brewer, a healthcare provider, a chaplain, or the MCAS New River Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC), Ms. Shannon Norenberg, 910-449-5243, as soon as possible. Victims of sexual assault will be treated with sensitivity, decency, and respect. They will receive all available medical, emotional, psychological, and social services. Victim safety, privacy, and treatment are my primary concerns. Information relating to the instances of a sexual assault will only be released to those professionals who have a need to know. Leaders shall ensure that those who elect to make a restricted report have their information safeguarded and must ensure the personal safety of every victim whether making a restricted or unrestricted report. We must ensure that no victim of sexual assault be re-victimized by organizational bureaucracy.

Information, resources, and points of contact are available via the 2D MAW Sexual Assault Prevention and Response website <http://www.2ndmaw.marines.mil/Resources/SAPR.aspx>. The site can also be accessed via the VMM-263 command website.

Acts of sexual assault are contradictory to our corps values: honor, courage, and commitment. I challenge every Marine and Sailor to maintain constant vigilance in order to uphold the ideals of this institution, of which we are all privileged to serve. Our comrades and family members back home deserve nothing less than our unwavering integrity and complete dedication to our mission.


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