
Sexual Assault Investigations

608.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the investigation of sexual assaults. These guidelines will address some of the unique aspects of such cases and the effects that these crimes have on the victims.

Mandatory notifications requirements are addressed in the Child Abuse and Adult Abuse policies.

608.1.1 DEFINITIONS

Definitions related to this policy include:

Sexual assault - Any crime or attempted crime of a sexual nature, to include, but not limited to, offenses defined in 720 ILCS 5/11-1.20 through 720 ILCS 5/11-1.60.

Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) - A multidisciplinary team concept generally comprised of advocates, law enforcement officers, and sexual assault nurse examiners (SANEs). The concept is designed to coordinate a broad response to sexual assault victims.

608.2 POLICY

It is the policy of the Urbana Police Department that its members, when responding to reports of sexual assaults, will strive to minimize the trauma experienced by the victims, and will investigate sexual assaults, pursue apprehension and conviction of perpetrators, and protect the safety of the victims and the community.

608.3 QUALIFIED INVESTIGATORS

Qualified investigators should be available for assignment of sexual assault investigations. These investigators should:

- (a) Have specialized training in, and be familiar with, interview techniques and the medical and legal issues that are specific to sexual assault investigations.
- (b) Conduct follow-up interviews and investigation.
- (c) Present appropriate cases of alleged sexual assault to the prosecutor for review.
- (d) Coordinate with other enforcement agencies, social service agencies and medical personnel as needed.
- (e) Provide referrals to therapy services, victim advocates and support for the victim.
- (f) Participate in or coordinate with SART or other multidisciplinary investigative teams as applicable.

608.4 INVESTIGATION AND REPORTING

In all reported or suspected cases of sexual assault, a report should be written.

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608.4.1 VICTIM INTERVIEWS

The primary considerations in sexual assault investigations, which begin with the initial call to METCAD, should be the health and safety of the victim, the preservation of evidence, and preliminary interviews to determine if a crime has been committed and to attempt to identify the suspect.

An in-depth follow-up interview may be conducted, depending on the circumstances. The follow-up interview may be delayed based upon the circumstances. Whenever practicable, the follow-up interview should be conducted by a qualified investigator.

608.4.2 POLYGRAPH EXAMINATION

Victims shall not be asked or required to take a polygraph examination or any form of a mechanical or electrical lie detector test (42 USC § 3796gg-8; 725 ILCS 200/1).

608.4.3 VICTIM RIGHTS

Victims should be apprised of applicable victim's rights provisions, through the Champaign County State Attorney's Office Victim Advocacy Liaison.

608.4.4 COLLECTION AND TESTING OF BIOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

Whenever possible, a SANE should be involved in the collection of forensic evidence from the victim.

If a drug-facilitated sexual assault is suspected, it is critical to the investigation that a urine sample from the victim be collected by a medical professional.

Sexual assault evidence obtained by the Department in connection with a criminal investigation shall be submitted to an approved laboratory as provided in the Property and Evidence Policy.

608.4.5 DISPOSITION OF CASES

If the assigned investigator has reason to believe the case is without merit, the case may be classified as unfounded. Assigned investigators should consult with CID supervisors regarding cases of a sensitive nature.

608.5 RELEASING INFORMATION TO THE PUBLIC

In cases where the perpetrator is not known to the victim, and especially if there are multiple crimes where more than one appear to be related, consideration should be given to releasing information to the public whenever there is a reasonable likelihood that doing so may result in developing helpful investigative leads. The Criminal Investigation Division supervisor should weigh the risk of alerting the suspect to the investigation with the need to protect the victim and the public, and to prevent more crimes.

608.6 TRAINING

Subject to available resources, periodic training may be provided to:

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- (a) Members who are first responders. This includes, but is not limited to, the following topics:
 - 1. Initial response to sexual assaults
 - 2. Legal issues
 - 3. Victim advocacy
 - 4. Victim's response to trauma
- (b) Qualified investigators who should receive advanced training on additional topics. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - 1. Interviewing sexual assault victims
 - 2. SART
 - 3. Medical and legal aspects of sexual assault investigations
 - 4. Serial crimes investigations
 - 5. Use of community and other federal and state investigative resources, such as the Violent Criminal Apprehension Program (ViCAP)