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District Attorney's Office supports National Sexual Assault Awareness Month

During National Sexual Assault Awareness Month, the Multnomah County District Attorney's Office continues to raise awareness about helping and supporting survivors of sexual assault.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the District Attorney's Sexual Assault Response Team has worked closely with its system-based and community-based partners to ensure victims are heard, respected, prioritized and cared for when reporting and receiving medical care.

The District Attorney's Office recognizes that some survivors may be concerned about going to the hospital to receive medical care after being sexually assaulted.

We want to ensure all community members are aware that Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANEs) are available at all hospitals in Multnomah, Clackamas, Clark (WA), Cowlitz (WA), Yamhill and Washington Counties on a 24/7 basis. Hospitals throughout our region are committed to moving patients into private waiting rooms and exam rooms efficiently. **The fear of potential COVID-19 exposure should not limit a person's ability to seek necessary medical care and forensic examination.**

The Multnomah County District Attorney's Office is also aware of "at-home" or "do-it-yourself" sexual assault kits that are available online. [In September of 2019, the District Attorney's Office produced a short video to inform the public about these kits.](#)

"From a prosecutor's perspective, these at-home sexual assault kits raise a variety of concerns," said Multnomah County Deputy District Attorney Tara Gardner, who is assigned to the Sexual Assault Kit Backlog Elimination Initiative. "The first concern that I would have is that the victim is not receiving the medical care and attention that they need."

During this time SANEs are continuing with their normal response protocols at all local hospitals to ensure survivors receive medical-forensic care.

During all sexual assault forensic examinations where the survivor is reporting to law enforcement or requesting a system-based advocate, the District Attorney's Victim's Assistance Program and its Sexual Assault Victim Advocate (SAVA) program will still be notified.

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In March of 2020, however, to comply with government orders, the program temporarily suspended the in-person portion of their hospital responses. A SAVA will continue to provide support and advocacy to survivors using telecommunications. SAVAs will always provide crisis intervention, resource referrals, and emotional support. This immediate crisis intervention service is then followed by ongoing support and advocacy throughout the investigation and any prosecution.

Click the appropriate link below to view, download and share social media graphics created by the District Attorney's Office to remind sexual assault survivors that Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners are available at all metro hospitals in the Portland-metro and SW Washington communities.

- [Facebook graphic](#)
- [Instagram graphic](#)
- [Twitter graphic](#)
- [Full size graphic for printing \(11.5" x 8"\)](#)

[*Click here to view several short videos produced by the District Attorney's Office specific to National Sexual Assault Awareness Month.*](#)

Resources:

- Emergency: 9-1-1
- Multnomah County Non-Emergency Police Dispatch: 503-823-3333
- District Attorney's Victim's Assistance Program: 503-988-3222
- National Sexual Assault Telephone Hotline: 1800-656-HOPE (4673)
- Proyecto UNICA: 503-232-4448
- Call to Safety: 503-235-5333

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