



City of Dallas

Overview of the Enhancements to the Sexual Assault Investigation Process

**Public Safety Committee
February 12, 2024**

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City of Dallas

Overview



- Purpose
- Definition/Impact
- DPD Sexual Assault Investigations
- Sexual Assault Investigative Procedure
- Expediter Pilot Program
- Partnerships
- Next Steps
- Outreach



Purpose



- Provide the Public Safety Committee and the residents of Dallas with information on Sexual Assault investigations and to highlight a new pilot program aimed at assisting victims of sexual assault.



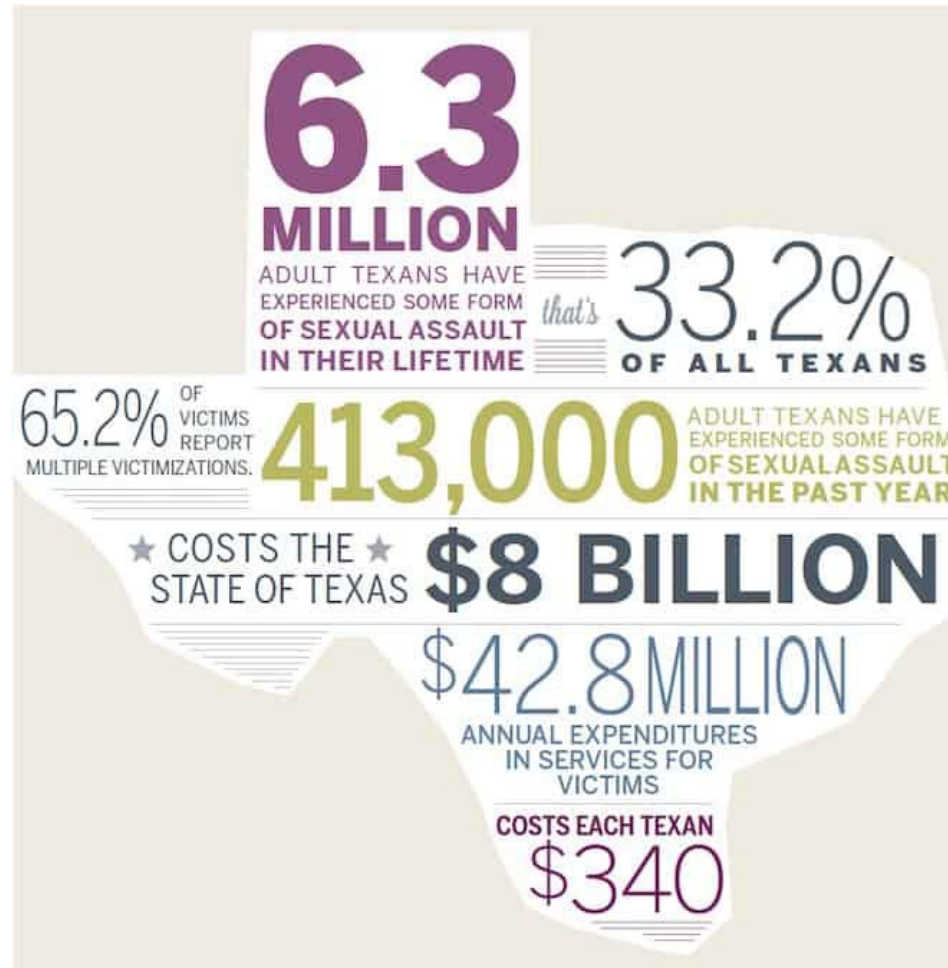
Definition



- Sexual Assault
 - The penetration of the sexual organ or mouth of a person without their consent.
 - Can be enhanced to an aggravated offense if a weapon is used or if the victim suffers serious bodily injury.



Sexual Assault Impact in Texas



Per 2015 Study conducted by the Institute on Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault at the University of Texas at Austin
School of Social Work



DPD Sexual Assault Investigations



- Adult Sexual Assaults are investigated by the Sexual Assaults Unit.
- Sexual Assaults of Children under 17 are investigated by the Child Abuse Unit if the suspect is a family member or caretaker, and the Child Exploitation Unit if the suspect is not a family member or caretaker.
 - Offenses Investigated:
 - Sexual Assault
 - Aggravated Sexual Assault
 - Indecent Assault
 - Stalking
 - Invasive Recording/Photography
 - Unlawful Disclosure of Intimate Visual Material



Sexual Assault Investigative Procedures



- Sexual Assault Investigations involve:
 - Receiving a report from a victim who either calls 911 or goes to a local hospital to receive treatment
 - Sexual Assault Nurse Exam (SANE) of the victim
 - Follow-up interview of the victim
 - DNA testing of the victim's Sexual Assault Kit (SAKI)
 - Identification of a suspect
- Advanced Sexual Assault investigations involve:
 - Combined DNA Index System (CODIS) comparison to known offender confirmation
 - Person of Interest interviews
 - Execution of various evidentiary search and arrest warrants
 - Collaborate with advocates for victim services



Expediter Pilot Program



- In April 2024, the Dallas Police Department, in partnership with Parkland Hospital, will launch a pilot program intended to make it easier for victims to report sexual assault offenses from the hospital.
- The current process requires a call to 911 and in-person reporting through a patrol officer prior to starting a SANE Exam.
- Extensive waiting time may cause the victim to leave the hospital without receiving necessary medical care.
- Could result in a loss of critical evidence.



Expediter Pilot Program



- Initial implementation will allow victims who self-transport to Parkland Hospital to utilize trained expeditors from the Dallas Police Department's Communications Group to report the incident over the phone.
- During the trial period, the Sexual Assault Unit will work with the Communications Group, District Attorney's Office, and Parkland Hospital to ensure the program is operating effectively.
- Following the trial period, this program will be extended to all Dallas hospitals where SANE exams are performed.
- Expected program outcome include an additional layer of privacy and comfort for victims.



DPD Sexual Assaults Partnerships



- Hospitals that provide SANE exams
 - Parkland Hospital
 - Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital Dallas
 - Baylor University Medical Center Dallas
 - Methodist Dallas Medical Center
 - The Turning Point Plano/Courtney's SAFE Place
- Dallas Area Rape Crisis Center (Victim Advocacy)
- Southwestern Institute of Forensic Sciences
- Bode Forensics
- Dallas County District Attorney's Office Sexual Assault Kit Initiative Unit.



Outreach



- Sexual Assault victims can dial 9-1-1 or go to the nearest police station to report the incident. Dallas Police Substation addresses can be found online at <http://www.DallasPolice.net>.
- Victims may also visit a local hospital to request an examination and to report the incident to the police
- Advocacy and Victims' Rights information can be found by contacting the Dallas Area Rape Crisis Center at (972)641-7273 or <https://DallasRapeCrisis.org>.
- For information regarding an ongoing investigation, victims or their advocates can contact the Sexual Assaults Unit, at (214)671-3593.



Next Steps



- Continue the preparation process for implementation of the expeditor pilot program.
- Broaden social media research efforts to contact victims who have previously reported Sexual Assault.
- Maintain a victim centered, Trauma Based Investigative approach.





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