

Report Sexual Abuse

To report an incident of sexual abuse, notify program staff or contact:

DOCCS Office of
Special Investigations
1220 Washington Ave, Bldg. 4
Albany, NY 12226-2050
Call: 1-844-OSI-4NYS
Email: OSIComplaint@doccs.ny.gov
Online: <https://doccs.ny.gov/file-complaint>

If you wish to report to an outside agency:

The New York State
Commission of Correction
Alfred E. Smith State Office
Building
80 South Swan Street, 12th Floor
Albany, New York 12210



State of New York
Kathy Hochul, Governor

Corrections and Community
Supervision

Anthony J. Annucci, Acting Commissioner

Sexual
Abuse
Prevention &
Education
Office

PREVENTION
EDUCATION
VICTIM SUPPORT

The Harriman State Campus
1220 Washington Avenue, Bldg. 4
Albany, New York 12226-2050
<https://doccs.ny.gov/prea>

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The Prevention of Sexual Abuse

Releasee and Community Based Residential Program Information

The Department of
Corrections and
Community
Supervision has
Zero Tolerance
for Sexual Abuse and
Sexual Harassment

Policy

You have the right to be free from sexual abuse and sexual harassment.

Sexual abuse is unwanted sexual contact with another releasee or CBRP resident, or any sexual contact with a staff member. Sexual harassment includes repeated sexual comments or gestures.

The Department does not tolerate sexual abuse or sexual harassment.

All reports of sexual abuse, sexual harassment or retaliation because of such a report will be investigated. Anyone who sexually abuses or harasses someone will be disciplined and/or prosecuted to the fullest extent permitted by law.

About Your Safety

No one has the right to make you do a sexual act. You do not have to put up with sexual harassment, sexual abuse or being forced to have unwanted sexual contact with anyone. If you are being pushed, threatened or blackmailed into a sex act by another releasee, CBRP resident or by staff, you should report it. You should also report if anyone tries to get back at you because you reported such an incident or spoke to an investigator about sexual abuse.

Unwanted sex with another releasee or CBRP resident, or any sex with a staff member is sexual abuse. Here are some things you can do to reduce your risk of sexual abuse:

1. Do not believe a CBRP resident who says he or she will protect or take care of you in exchange for sexual favors.
2. Do not gamble or take gifts from others. Sexual abuse is one way people are sometimes forced to pay off a debt.
3. Do not use drugs and alcohol. You are more likely to make poor choices when you are drunk or high.
4. Pay attention to uncomfortable feelings about others. If you think something is dangerous, it probably is. If you think you are not safe, tell staff.
5. Do not flirt or talk to other CBRP residents or staff about having sex. If someone asks you to do something sexual, you have the right to say "no."
6. Tell a staff member if you are being harassed or threatened for sex.
"Report it. Right away. Don't even hesitate."
7. **If you are sexually abused by another releasee, CBRP resident, or staff, report it.** DOCCS will protect you from the abuser and help will be provided whether or not you name your abuser.

Definitions

Resident-on-Resident Sexual Abuse is when one or more CBRP residents have sexual contact with another resident when they don't want it, or by using coercion, threats or force. A "resident" is any releasee placed in a community-based residential program (CBRP).

Staff-on-Releasee Sexual Abuse is when an employee, volunteer, intern or outside contractor has any type of sexual contact with a releasee. Program staff or DOCCS Staff asking for sex or making sexual threats are also types of sexual abuse.

Sexual Harassment includes:

- (1) Repeated and unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or verbal comments, gestures, or actions of a derogatory or offensive sexual nature by one resident directed toward another; and
- (2) Verbal comments or gestures of a sexual nature to a releasee, detainee, or resident by a staff member (Program or DOCCS), contractor, or volunteer, including demeaning references to gender, sexually suggestive or derogatory comments about body or clothing, or obscene language or gestures.

See Directive #4027 on the DOCCS website.

What to do if you are abused: If you are sexually abused, report it immediately to program staff. **Staff will protect you from the abuser and assist you in getting proper medical attention.** Help will be provided whether or not you name your abuser but be as clear as you can when you report the abuse. The more you tell staff, the easier it will be to help you.

*This brochure is an overview of the Department's Zero Tolerance policy regarding sexual abuse and sexual harassment under the **Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA)**. It is one part of the comprehensive education program. Current materials providing up-to-date information about DOCCS PREA policies are available in various locations in the residential program facility.*



You may want to clean up after the abuse. It is important to get medical help **BEFORE** you shower, wash, drink, eat, change clothing or use the bathroom.

Medical providers will check you for injuries that you may or may not be able to see right away. They can also provide treatment for sexually transmitted diseases and collect evidence of the sexual abuse. Medical providers will also discuss the possibility of pregnancy with a female victim.

Support is available for victims of sexual abuse and harassment:

24 Hour NYS Domestic & Sexual Violence Hotline:
1-800-942-6906
In New York City:
1-800-621-HOPE (4673) or 311

Reporting

How do you report sexual abuse if it happens?

It is important to tell staff that you have been sexually abused or sexually harassed so DOCCS can assist you. **You can tell your program's designated PREA Compliance Manager, any program staff, your Parole Officer, or your Senior Parole Officer.** All staff must report the abuse, and they can only talk about the abuse with officials who **must** know about it to do an investigation or provide you with care.

If you report the abuse in writing first, you may write to the Bureau Chief, Central Office, the DOCCS PREA Coordinator or the Department's Office of Special Investigations (OSI). If you want to report to an outside agency, you may contact the New York State Commission of Correction (SCOC). SCOC will forward your complaint to OSI and, if you ask, you can remain anonymous. You can report the abuse at any time, but the sooner you report it, the sooner it can be investigated and steps can be taken to protect you.

"Staying safe isn't snitching."

If you feel that you have been a victim of sexual abuse or harassment, you should report it right away. You can also have someone else report the abuse for you.

If you think someone else is being sexually abused or sexually harassed, you should report that too.



What happens with reports of sexual abuse? All reports of sexual abuse, sexual harassment, or retaliation for

reporting or being part of an investigation will be thoroughly investigated. Cases may be referred to local law enforcement officials or the Department's Office of Special Investigations (OSI).

The persons responsible shall be held accountable to the fullest extent of the law.

Confidentiality: All records of reports of sexual abuse are confidential under Civil Rights Law § 50-b. The identity of a victim of sexual abuse, the person reporting sexual abuse, any witnesses and the facts of the report itself are confidential. Information is only shared with the people involved in the reporting, investigation, discipline and treatment process, or as otherwise required by law.

Retaliation is not allowed. A releasee will not be punished for good faith reporting of sexual abuse or sexual harassment. OSI or other law enforcement may charge a person with making a false report if, after investigation, it is proven that the person made the statement knowing it was false or baseless, or the person reported an alleged crime or incident knowing it did not occur (e.g., Penal Law §§ 210.45, 240.50).

A report made in good faith is not falsely reporting an incident or lying even if the investigation does not substantiate the allegation.