FACTS ON UNITED STATES MILITARY SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Statistics from the 2016 – 2020 DoD SAPRO Reports and their appendices/annexes, unless otherwise noted.
https://www.saprobio.org/library/item.655363
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Sexual Violence Remains Pervasive

- In FY18, 20,500 service members were sexually assaulted or raped including 13,000 women and 7,500 men. The rate of sexual assault and rape jumped by almost 40% from FY16 to FY18, and for women the rate increased by over 50% to the highest level since 2006.

- Of women who reported a penetrative sexual assault, 59% were assaulted by someone with a higher rank than them, and 24% were assaulted by someone in their chain of command.

Vast Majority of Cases Go Un-Reported

- 76.1% of victims did not report the crime in FY18.

Retaliation Is the Norm

- 64% of women who reported a sexual assault face retaliation.

- 66% of retaliation reports alleged that retaliators were in the reporter’s chain of command.

- A third of victims are discharged after reporting, typically within 7 months of making a report.

- Victors received harsher discharges, with 24% separated under less than fully honorable conditions, compared to 15% of all service members.

Low Trust and Satisfaction in System

- In FY18, over 1 in 4 victims who did not report feared retaliation from their command or coworkers.

- Nearly 1 in 3 victims who did not report feared the process would be unfair or nothing would be done.

- Less than half of female survivors felt well supported by their chain of command.

Conviction and Prosecution Rates

- Despite a 22% increase in unrestricted sexual assault reports since 2015, convictions have plummeted by almost 60% in the same timeframe.

- In FY 2019, of the 5,699 unrestricted reports of sexual assault, 363 (6.4%) cases were tried by court martial, and 138 (2.4%) offenders were convicted of a nonconsensual sex offense, the lowest prosecution rate since at least 2010.

High Demand for VA Care

- Over 1,325,000 outpatient visits took place at the VA for Military Sexual Trauma (MST)-related care in FY17, a 1.3% increase from FY15.

- Approximately 38% of female and 4% of male military personnel and veterans have experienced MST.

- 40% of women homeless veterans have faced MST. Veterans with an MST history are over twice as likely to experience homelessness.

Sexual Harassment is Alarming High

- 6.3% active duty men and 24.2% active duty women were sexually harassed in FY18.

- 1 in 5 women who experienced sexual harassment were also sexually assaulted.

- DoD concluded that “sexual harassment is a leading factor affecting the unit climate on sexual assault.”

- The majority of victims were harassed by someone in their chain of command.

- 1,021 formal sexual harassment complaints were investigated in FY19, a 10% increase from FY18.

Good Order and Discipline at Risk

- Service members who are sexually harassed are at significantly greater risk of sexual assault.

- More than 1 in 4 survivors of either sexual assault or sexual harassment/discrimination took steps to leave the military as a result.

Definitions: Sexual assault in the survey corresponds to crimes defined by Uniform Code of Justice (UCMJ) Article 120 (rape & sexual assault) and Article 80 (attempts). Sexual harassment is defined in federal law and military regulations, refers to gender-based mistreatment that results in harm to one’s career.


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