



FACTS ON UNITED STATES MILITARY SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Statistics from the 2016 – 2021 DoD SAPRO Reports and their appendices/annexes, unless otherwise noted.
<https://www.sapr.mil/reports>
Updated September 2022

Sexual Violence Remains Pervasive

- In FY21, close to **36,000** service members experienced sexual violence including 19,000 women and 16,600 men. The rate of wrongful sexual contact **jumped by almost 35%** from FY18 to FY21.
- In FY21, nearly **9,000 reports** of sexual assault involving service members were received, a 13% increase from reports made in FY20.

Vast Majority of Cases Go Un-Reported

- In FY21, only about **1 in 5 service members** reported their sexual assault to a Department authority.

Retaliation Is the Norm

- **67% of women** who reported a sexual assault were **retaliated against after coming forward**.
- **64%** of retaliation reports alleged that retaliators were in the reporter's chain of command.
- A **third** of women who reported a sexual assault were discharged within a year of reporting, typically **within 7 months**.ⁱ
- **24%** of these women received a less than fully honorable conditions discharge.ⁱⁱ

Little Trust and Satisfaction in System

- **66% of women** believe the military will not protect their privacy, **60% of women** believe the military will not ensure their safety, and **61% of women** believe the military will not treat them with dignity and respect if sexually assaulted.
- For both men and women, one of the **top two responses** for why they did not report was thinking **no action would be taken**.
- **47% of women** cited worrying about **potential negative consequences from co-workers** as a reason for not reporting.
- **48% of survivors** reported **dissatisfaction** with the support they received from **military-assigned Special Victims Counsel/Victims Legal Counsel**.

Low Conviction and Prosecution Rates

- Despite a **continual increase** in unrestricted sexual assault reports since 2015, **convictions** have plummeted in the same timeframe.

- In FY 2021, of the **6,356 unrestricted reports** of sexual assault, only 372 (**6.0%**) cases were tried by court martial, and just 176 (**2.8%**) offenders were **convicted of a nonconsensual sex offense**.

High Demand for VA Care

- Approximately **38% of female** and **4% of male** military personnel and veterans have experienced MST.ⁱⁱⁱ
- **40%** of women homeless veterans have faced MST.^{iv} Veterans with an MST history are **over twice as likely** to experience homelessness.

Sexual Harassment is Alarming High

- **7%** of active duty men and **29%** of active duty women were **sexually harassed** in FY21.
- About **40%** of 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.”**
- **24%** of women and **19%** of men identified at least one alleged offender as **someone in their chain of command**.
- **1,732** formal sexual harassment complaints were made in FY21, a **75% increase** from FY20.

Good Order and Discipline at Risk

- If a unit has a climate of sexual harassment, then a woman has a **1 in 4 chance** of experiencing unwanted sexual contact.
- 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 and includes a pervasive and severe sexually hostile work environment that interferes with the ability to do one's job and/or sexual quid pro quo. Gender discrimination, also defined in law and regulations, refers to gender-based mistreatment that results in harm to one's career.

ⁱ Department of Defense (DoD) Inspector General, *Evaluation of the Separation of Service Members Who Made a Report of Sexual Assault* (2016), <https://media.defense.gov/2016/May/09/2001714241/-1/-1/1/DODIG-2016-088.pdf>.

ⁱⁱ DoD IG report; Veterans Legal Clinic, Legal Services Center of Harvard Law School, *Underserved: How the VA Wrongfully Excludes Veterans with Bad Paper* (2016), https://www.vetsprobono.org/library/item.655363-Underserved_How_the_VA_Wrongfully_Excludes_Veterans_with_Bad_Paper.

ⁱⁱⁱ L Wilson, “The Prevalence of Military Sexual Trauma: A Meta-Analysis,” *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse* (2016).

^{iv} J Pavao, JA Turchik, JK Hyun, et al., “Military Sexual Trauma Among Homeless Veterans,” *Journal of General Internal Medicine* 28 Suppl 2 (2013).