

**COMMANDING OFFICERS STATEMENT
ON SEXUAL ASSAULT AND PREVENTION RESPONSE**



The Marine Corps has no tolerance of for sexual assault. As the Commanding Officer for Marine Corps Logistics Base Albany; it is my responsibility to provide supervision of the command's Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Program. The definition of sexual assault is the as intentional sexual contact, characterized by: use of force, physical threat of force, abuse of authority, or when the victim does not or cannot consent. Sexual assault is a crime that is not restricted to any age, race, or sex. Marine Corps Order 1752.5C provides specific guidance and instructions for identifying, reporting, and addressing the issue of sexual assault. We have a specific responsibility as members of this command to eliminate sexual assault within the Corps; to assist those service members and civilians affected by sexual assault. We will treat sexual assault victims with dignity and respect. Ignoring or falling to report sexual assault incidents will have damaging consequences for the victim and the command. Predators will have the full legal and administrative actions pressed against them.

Treatment of sexual assault victims will ensure their sensitivity, decency, and respect. All personnel are to ensure a victim receives appropriate medical, emotional, psychological, and social services. Victim safety is paramount at all times. In the event of a sexual assault, a victim has the option of a restricted report, which means they can receive services and medical care anonymously. Military personnel are mandatory reporters of sexual assault, except where policy has made certain members exempt through confidentiality. Members with confidentiality are Uniformed Victim Advocates (UVA); Victim Advocates (VA) with Marine & Family Programs, Family Advocacy Program; Sexual Assault Response Coordinators (SARC); and Healthcare providers. I recommend a VA or UVA be contacted first to provide crisis intervention as these individuals are available 24 hours a day and are trained to assist victims in dealing with the command, law enforcement, and medical personnel and can advise you of your reporting options. The 24/7 Sexual Assault Support Line is (229)881-3883.

Once a victim informs law enforcement officials or a representative from their command, a restricted report is no longer an option. The alternative, an unrestricted report, if initiated and the command is notified that you are a victim of sexual assault. Unrestricted reports allow the commander to provide a full range of protection and start an official criminal investigation in addition to receiving services and medical assistance arranged by the UVA or VA. Although unrestricted reports are not confidential, victim privacy is a foremost consideration. Protection of victims, who have the courage to report sexual assault incidents, must feel confident that their personal safety and privacy.

Eliminating incidents of sexual assault takes a dedicated community effort. I charge every Marine, Sailor, and civilian, starting with senior leadership, to understand his or her duty to safely intervene and prevent sexual assault by identifying and stopping behaviors that may lead to sexual assault. Doing nothing is NOT an option. Bystanders to potential sexual assaults must take decisive action to prevent incidents before they occur. To do otherwise is a contradiction to our core values of Honor, Courage, and Commitment.

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Michael J. Fitzgerald".

MICHAEL J. FITZGERALD
COLONEL, UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
COMMANDING OFFICER
MARINE CORPS LOGISTICS BASE ALBANY