## **What does OHCS do?**

## OHCS and the DAO-202-955 Program Management Office receive allegations of sexual assault/harassment, works with managers to stop behavior immediately, coordinates with The Workplace Violence Prevention and Response Office (WVPRO) to immediately connect Impacted Persons (IP) with assistance, reviews allegations for investigation and/or referral for criminal jurisdication, oversees inquiries and ensures appropriate corrective and disciplinary action have been taken by management.

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## **What does WVPR do?**

The Workplace Violence Prevention and Response Office (WVPRO) is designed to navigate Impacted Persons to receive crisis intervention, referrals, and emotional support using local and national resources. All NOAA employees, contractors, and affiliates may receive support from WVPRO. This includes volunteers with specialized training, Volunteer Assistance Liaison, who can help facilitate live, confidential, one-on-one services and support regardless of the place or time of an occurrence, even if an incident occurs outside of the workplace or is unrelated to work.

## **I need help. Where do I go?**

The NOAA SASH helpline is available to all people affiliated with NOAA and has reporting mechanisms that are delivered directly to WVPR.

**NOAA SASH 24 Hour Helpline :**

(Voice) 1.866.288.6558

(Text) 202.335.0265

**ALASKA ONLY***:* 1.800.478.8999

You may also reach WVPRO directly via email: noaa.victimservices@noaa.gov

If there is an emergency situation, please dial 911.

## **What are my reporting options?**

Members of NOAA’s workforce who experience **SEXUAL ASSAULT** have two reporting options:

A Restricted Report is for the Impacted Person (IP) who reports a sexual assault directly to the WVPRO prior to reporting to a supervisor, law enforcement or complaint channels (see below). The purpose of a restricted reporting is to access confidential support and referral services through WVPRO without leadership involvement or an investigation. An IP may convert a restricted reporting to an Unrestricted Report at any time.

An Unrestricted Report is for the IP who elects to have the incident investigated or after disclosures have been made to a supervisor, law enforcement or complaint channels (see below). The IP is also entitled to support and referral services through WVPRO. An unrestricted report may not be converted to a restricted report at any time.

To preserve both reporting options, it is recommended the IP consult with WVPRO ***prior to*** making a reporting decision, as WVPRO is the only entity that can receive a Restricted Report. Contact noaa.victimservices@noaa.gov or your [Regional Coordinator](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1SYYIt0eFw_jhAV2876o5gkRTcg99W3ctlSD6o0JPcao/edit#heading=h.lzzzbjdnk3wg)

Members of NOAA’s workforce who experience **SEXUAL HARASSMENT** have various reporting channels:

IPs may report to a supervisor or request an investigation or inquiry through the following complaint channels.

The [Office of Human Capital Services](https://sites.google.com/noaa.gov/ohcs/home) manages NOAA’s DAO 202-955 process, which is designed to provide an expedited inquiry for reviewing allegations of harassment prohibited by Federal law (i.e., sex, race, color, national origin, age, religion, disability or reprisal), terminating incidents of harassment, and taking disciplinary actions as appropriate. Report prohibited harassment to the DAO 202-955 Program Management Office (PMO) at DAO-955.OHCS@noaa.gov

The [Office of Inclusion and Civil Rights](https://www.noaa.gov/inclusion-and-civil-rights) (OICR) handles equal employment opportunity (EEO) complaints for NOAA employees and applicants who feel they have been subject to discrimination. Harassment, unwelcome conduct that is based on race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy), national origin, age (40 or older), disability or genetic information.

If you feel you have been subjected to harassment and wish to file an EEO complaint, please contact OICR at :

* 301-713-0500 (main)
* 800-452-6728 (toll free)
* email noaa.oicr@noaa.gov.

These channels are also available to those seeking an Unrestricted Report of sexual assault. IPs may report through both channels concurrently as each offers unique opportunities for resolution (A 955 inquiry may result in disciplinary action against the offender, whereas EEO offers individual remedy for the IP).

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## **What are the limits of confidentiality?**

WVPRO staff and Volunteer Assistance Liaisons will do everything to preserve confidentiality however there are exceptions when disclosure of information from an IP’s record may be necessary. The following are such exceptions :

**Danger to self or others**. The Volunteer Assistance Liaison or WVPRO Regional Coordinator must disclose information to the appropriate agencies and/or personnel if an IP indicates that they plan to hurt themselves or another person. This may include Office of Human Capital Services (OHCS), Workforce Relations Division (WRD), Office of Law Enforcement (OLE), Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and Office of Inclusion and Civil Rights (OICR).

**Child abuse or neglect**. As a mandated reporter, Volunteer Assistance Liaison’s and WVPRO Regional Coordinators must report any suspected or alleged child abuse or neglect to the state’s child protective service agency.

Need to know. Information may be disclosed to appropriate internal NOAA agencies and only those who are acting in an official capacity.

## **How can I become involved and/or improve my workplace?**

NOAA employees may volunteer to become a Volunteer Assistance Liaison and serve other members of the NOAA workforce who have been impacted by sexual assault or sexual harassment (SASH). Volunteer Assistance Liaisons assist their clients by providing transparency, support, information, and resources to navigate the SASH reporting process at NOAA. Ideal candidates must show reliability, integrity, discretion, compassion, and commitment. No prior training or experience is required as selected Volunteer Assistance Liaisons will attend an initial 40-hr course and become credentialed by the National Advocate Credentialing Program (NACP). Applicants must be a NOAA Federal employee, 21 years old, able to pass a background check, and receive their supervisor's recommendation. The first step in becoming a Volunteer Assistance Liaison is completing the [Interest Form](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdee90BFISh6CGdAa7zg16KSZh0kSkZhHaSQigteG6UQ7wm2w/viewform) or visit our [website](https://sites.google.com/noaa.gov/wvpr/volunteer-assistance-liaisons) for more information.

Whether or not you decide to volunteer, we all have a role in creating safe workplaces here at NOAA. Research shows that in work environments where respect and inclusion are the norms, sexual assault and sexual harassment are less frequent. We can all uphold an environment of prevention by setting an expectation of shared dignity and respect, maintaining professionalism, and intervening when we witness problematic behavior. Here are three approaches you might use to address a situation:

**Direct** - Confronting the issue directly by “calling out” the behavior and demanding it stop.

**Distract** - Creating a disruption that changes the dynamic without directly confronting those involved. This may include asking an unrelated question, requesting assistance from one of the parties involved, etc.

**Delegate** - Asking help from someone better equipped to handle the situation. This may include involving a supervisor or simply asking someone who is more assertive to intervene.