

What to do if you are sexually assaulted by an inmate or a staff person?

- Immediately report the incident to someone, such as any staff member you feel comfortable telling.
- Do not shower, brush your teeth, use the restroom, or change your clothes. You may destroy important evidence.
- Request immediate medical attention. You may have serious injuries that you are not aware of, and any sexual contact can expose you to sexually transmitted disease.
- Seek the support of a trusted friend, family member, or victim advocate. The days ahead can be traumatic and it helps to have people who care about supporting you.
- Be aware that victims of sexual assault often experience feelings of self-loathing, anger, rage, humiliation, nightmares, isolation, and depression. Physical symptoms may include headaches, stomach aches, sleep disturbances, and loss of appetite.
- Professional help will be available to you. Mental health staff will help you recover from the emotional impact of any violence you have suffered.

How do I report that I have been sexually assaulted?

Inmates are encouraged to report any incident of sexually abusive behavior perpetrated against them by a staff member or another inmate. Do so immediately. Talk to any staff person with whom you feel comfortable. You may speak to a unit officer, sergeant, correction program officer, or a medical, mental health, or program provider. Perhaps you would be more comfortable speaking with a Chaplain, Imam, Rabbi or a volunteer. Call a family member or call your attorney.

You do not have to face this alone!

GET HELP!

Call your institution HOT LINE or If you don't feel comfortable speaking to institution staff, call the Commissioner's HOT LINE at

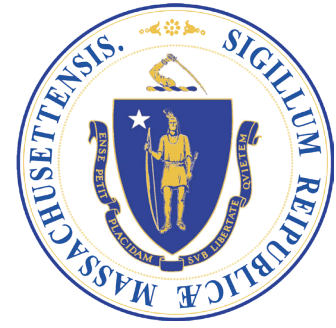
508-422-3486

Inmates who perpetrate sexual assault against another inmate should know that...

- The Department of Correction has zero tolerance for such offenses.
- Each case will be thoroughly investigated and remain open until the perpetrators are identified.
- All substantiated cases of sexual assault against inmates will be referred for discipline and when appropriate, prosecution.
- Inmates who have been found guilty of disciplinary charges for any type sexually abusive behavior will receive significant sanctions.
- The Department views all sexual contact between inmates as coercive and therefore never consensual.
- You may lose statutory good time which has been credited to your sentence.
- You will be segregated during the investigation.
- You may be charged with a separate criminal offense.
- You may be denied Parole.
- Any sexual contact increases your risk of exposure to a sexually transmitted disease, including AIDS.
- You may be designated as a sexual predator, thereby limiting your work and housing options during your incarceration
- You may be referred to the Sex Offender Registry Board for designation as a sex offender under the Massachusetts General Laws.

Remember, if you make a false report against a staff member...

If the Department investigation reveals that an inmate has made false allegations or a material statement, which he/she in good faith, could not have believed to be true, the Department may take appropriate disciplinary and/or criminal action under the Massachusetts General Laws. Truthful allegations will be taken very seriously, but false allegations against a staff member will result in significant disciplinary action



PROTECTING YOURSELF FROM SEXUAL ASSAULT

The Prison Rape Elimination Act otherwise known as PREA is a Federal law which was passed unanimously by the United States Congress and signed into law in 2003 by President George W. Bush. The Act supports the elimination, reduction, and prevention of sexual assault and rape in correctional systems across the country. This includes federal, state, county facilities, and all other law enforcement detention facilities.

What does this mean to me?

- It means that the Massachusetts Department of Correction does not tolerate any incidence of sexually abusive behavior in any facility.
- It means that the Department is committed to protecting all inmates from being sexually abused by either a staff person or by other inmates.
- It means that your protection from sexual abusive behavior is a top priority for all DOC staff, contractors, and volunteers.
- It means that if you report that you are being threatened and/or sexually abused it will be taken seriously and will be investigated in a thorough and objective manner.
- It means that victims of sexual assault will be afforded ongoing medical, mental health, and victim services.
- It means that the Department will aggressively pursue the discipline and prosecution of any perpetrator of sexual abuse, whether they are a staff person or an inmate.
- It means that any information about your case will be treated in a professional and confidential manner by specially trained investigators.

The complete DOC Policy on Sexually Abusive Behavior Prevention and Intervention 103 DOC 519 is available to inmates in the Law Library.

Please read it carefully.

Facts about sexual assault in prison

- Nobody asks to be raped. Sexual assault is a crime of violence and has nothing to do with lust or passion.
- Anyone, male or female can be sexually assaulted.
- A rapist can be male or female, an inmate or a staff member.
- Age or physical attractiveness is not a factor.
- Some rapists seize an opportunity to assault someone, but many rapes are planned ahead of time.
- Non-violent, first-time offenders, and inmates who are gay or transgender are targeted most frequently. People who are physically small or have mental illness or disability or are incarcerated on charges of prostitution are also targeted.
- Sexual orientation is not a factor. Rapists may be either heterosexual or homosexual. Victims may be either heterosexual or homosexual.
- 90 to 95% of male victims who are raped in prison do not report it.
- 52% of all females have experienced some sort of sexual victimization while incarcerated.
- The victim of sexual abuse is a “victim” and is not at fault.

How do I protect myself from sexual assault by inmates?

- Be aware of situations that make you feel uncomfortable. Trust your instincts.
- If something feels wrong about the environment or situation you find yourself in, leave the area.
- Don't let your manners get in the way of keeping you safe. Don't be afraid to say “No”, “Stop it, now”, or “Get lost!”
- Walk and stand with confidence. Many rapists choose victims who look like they won't fight back or are emotionally weak. Keep your head up, do not avoid eye contact.
- Avoid talking about sex and casual nudity. These things may be viewed as a come on or make another inmate believe that you have an interest in a sexual relationship.
- Do not accept food, clothing or other gifts from other inmates. Being in debt to another inmate may lead to the expectation that you will repay the debt with sex.
- Avoid secluded areas like closets, storage areas, stairwells, isolated showers or unoccupied bathrooms; Position yourself in plain view of staff members.
- If you are being pressured for sex, talk to a staff member immediately.
- If you become aware that another inmate is being sexually abused report it to a staff member. Next time it could be you.
- Beware of inmates who offer to protect you. Protection frequently has a cost.
- Do not give out information about your family, friends, or financial support.
- Do not buy large quantities of canteen items.