

**Sexual Assault Victim Advocate (SAVA) Program (GS-11)**  
**Volunteer Victim Advocate Program (VA)**  
**30 Oct 13**

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**Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Program**

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**- All Sexual Assault Victim Advocates (SAVA) and Volunteer Victim Advocates (VA) are located at the installation level**

**- SAVA**

- Serve as an installation Sexual Assault Victim Advocate providing a wide range of essential support and advocacy services, liaison services, and care to victims of sexual assault in accordance with generally accepted procedures and techniques
  - Establishes the link with local victim support agencies in order to gain support and cooperation in achieving support for victims of sexual assault and to promote the enhancement of the sexual assault prevention and support program
- FY12 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) requires the Air Force's 91 projected SAVA be in place 1 Oct 13
  - 19/91 SAVAs hired to date (Per AF Civilian Personnel) (Hiring was slowed by recent furlough and government shutdown)

**- VA**

- Volunteer program that provides essential support, liaison services and care to victims of sexual assault
- Currently 2,237 VAs that are National Organization of Victims Assistance (NOVA) credentialed and are located worldwide at AF installations

**- Responsibilities:**

Commonalities:

**- SAVA/VAs, both:**

- Provide crisis intervention, safety planning, referral, ongoing non-clinical support, and furnishes information on available options and resources to assist victims in making informed decisions regarding reporting options and care
  - Provide the victim with a complete explanation of restricted and unrestricted reporting options, and in the case of restricted reporting, follows DoD and AF guidelines addressing confidential disclosure and privacy
  - Possess an extensive knowledge of professional and non-professional services and support available, informs the victim of referral services available on the installation as well as in the surrounding community
  - Provide continuity of care and ensures coordination is accomplished with all AF functions who must respond to victim's needs, to include physical and emotional safety
- Ensures the victim of sexual assault receives all needed guidance and support during administrative, medical, investigative, and legal procedures and that the victim understands the processes involved
  - Provides assistance in contacting appropriate military and/or civilian legal offices for services
  - Assists victim with gaining access to service providers and available victim support resources that may help the victim explore avenues of actions

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- Maintains support and follow-up contact with sexual assault victims throughout the lifecycle of the case
  - Ensures victims continue to receive the necessary care and support until the victim states, or SARC determines, that support is no longer needed
- Complies with DoD certification and continuing education requirements
- Promotes awareness of sexual assault prevention in the community by performing outreach activities in the preparation for and implementation of the Sexual Assault Awareness Month campaign

Differences:

**- SAVA:**

- Role is a paid, typically GS-11, position
- Assists the installation SARC in the development and delivery of comprehensive sexual assault training to comply with Department of Defense (DoD) requirements
  - Facilitates or assists in the planning, scheduling, and delivery of sexual assault prevention and response training for all installation personnel, leadership, deploying personnel, volunteer victim advocates, and other key functional stakeholders to include annual refresher SAPR training.
  - Coordinates guest speakers, arranges announcements and marketing, and coordinates logistics for the various training activities.
- Assists the SARC in the supervision of volunteer Victim Advocates
  - Assists in the initial and periodic refresher training of volunteer Victim Advocates
  - Serves on the installation sexual assault prevention and response (SAPR) Case Management team and ensures SARC is kept abreast of victim's status/case.
- Represents the SAPR installation program at both military and civilian agencies
  - Maintains contacts with agencies that provide such services and remains knowledgeable of their confidentiality policies and the procedures for accessing services of these agencies.
  - Promotes awareness of sexual assault prevention in the community by performing outreach activities in the preparation for and implementation of the Sexual Assault Awareness Month campaign
- Conducts assessments of individuals to determine required care needs and evaluates safety and levels of risks; provides emotional support, guidance, and advice to victims in crisis while addressing the individual's needs and desires.
  - Cases are assigned from a variety of sources to include referrals from SAPR hotlines, training classes, command identification, investigator identification, and medical provider identification.
  - Conducts assessments of individuals to determine required needs and evaluates safety and levels of risks; provides emotional support, guidance, and information to victims in crisis while addressing the individual's needs and desires.
  - On request of the victim may accompany them and/or act as their spokesperson, providing support in securing medical treatment for injuries; safe shelter; protective orders; court orders; support before, during, and after trials; appointments; educational services; transportation; financial services; and any other services deemed necessary.

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**VA:**

- Role is strictly volunteer and AF sees this as a critical function

**- Selection process:**

**SAVA:**

- Apply per AF Civilian Hiring policies, to meet requirements in the position description:
  - Knowledge of a wide range of generally accepted practices and procedures associated with victim advocacy, social services delivery systems, principles, and behavioral theories relating to victim advocacy, sexual assault and other acts of interpersonal violence
  - Knowledge of laws, regulations, executive orders, issues, etc, relating to victim advocacy, sexual assault, and interpersonal violence.
  - Skill in effective development and delivery of sexual assault prevention and response training to a variety of individuals and organizations
  - Ability to employing various methods and techniques typical of a sexual assault victim advocate program, including crisis intervention, situational assessment, and analyzing the needs of the victim to support/assist them in the resolution of complex problems
  - Ability to function as liaison to installation and community organizations representatives to establish, maintain, and provide effective victim support in a wide variety of situations
- Installation commander is the hiring official, interviewing and selecting the SAVA

**VA:**

- Per AFI 36-6001, must:
  - Have a Commander's or Agency Head's Statement of Understanding/Permission to apply
  - Have a Volunteer's Statement of Understanding as a Volunteer Victim Advocate
  - Have a completed Application, per AFI
  - Conduct an interview with the installation SARC
  - Have a completed criminal background check conducted by AFOSI using AFOSI Manual 71-122
  - Have a completed mental health background check by the local base mental health office

**- Training:**

**SAVA:**

- Receives specific training at the Sexual Assault Response Coordinator Course at Maxwell AFB
  - The new/revised course will start January 2014.
  - The course is eight days, 64 total hours
- Must have minimum of 40 NOVA-credentialed hours
- Requires 32 hours of continuing education every two years after initial NOVA certification

**VA:**

- Receives training at their installation by local SARC/SAVA
- Must have minimum of 40 NOVA-credentialed hours
- Requires 32 hours of continuing education every two years after initial NOVA certification

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