

HALTON REGIONAL POLICE SERVICES BOARD

ADEQUACY STANDARDS POLICY DOCUMENT

Policy No. & Subject:	B-LE-034 – Sexual Assault Investigation
Date Approved:	November 23, 2000
Effective Date:	January 1, 2001
Reporting Requirement:	N/A
Revision Dates:	November 27, 2014, February 16, 2017, August 10, 2017, May 17, 2018
Service Directive Linkage:	INV-003 Sexual Assault Kits INV-016 Sexual Assault Investigations INV-021 Criminal Investigation Management Plan CPO-040 Victims Services

1. **Sexual Assault Investigation (pursuant to O. Reg. 3/99 and PSM Guideline No. LE-034)**

- 1.1 It is the policy of the Board to ensure that investigations into sexual assaults are appropriately undertaken and managed, with an emphasis on the provision of optimal victim support in accordance with the Victims' Bill of Rights.
- 1.2 To support this policy, the Chief of Police shall:
- a) develop and maintain Service Directives and procedures that:
 - i) require that investigations be undertaken in accordance with the Service's Criminal Investigation Management Plan;
 - ii) require compliance with the procedures set out in the Ministry's designated *Ontario Major Case Management Manual*;
 - iii) address communications and dispatch, initial response and investigations relating to sexual assaults;
 - iv) address appropriate accountability mechanisms for classification of cases as unfounded;
 - v) safeguard victim privacy in conjunction with standards established by the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Ontario; and
 - vi) address community notification;
 - b) work, where possible, with hospitals and agencies which provide services to victims of sexual assault, including Sexual Assault Treatment Centres, Sexual Assault/Rape Crisis Centres and Victim Services, as well as the local Crown, to ensure a co-ordinated and effective response to victims of sexual assaults, and to ensure that all victims of sexual assault are provided access to information on available community supports, including crisis numbers, counselling services and oversight agencies, at the earliest possible opportunity;
 - c) establish a Sexual Assault Advisory Committee comprised of community-based stakeholders including victim/survivor advocacy agencies, police and other direct service providers to survivors of sexual assault, whose purpose shall be (1) to ensure that survivors of sexual assault are provided with the best support possible, (2) to determine

HALTON REGIONAL POLICE SERVICES BOARD

ADEQUACY STANDARDS POLICY DOCUMENT

whether sexual assault cases are being classified as they should be, and (3) to make recommendations to resolve any inappropriately classified case as well as any changes to policy, procedures or training to ensure that sexual assault cases are being classified as they should be;

- d) establish a Victim Advocate Case Review system that provides for independent evaluation by community partners of all sexual assault cases classified as unfounded in order to assist the Service and the Board in ensuring that sexual assault investigations are in fact employing best practices and are appropriately classified;
- e) provide regular, ongoing training and skills development for Officers and other appropriate members on the response to sexual assault occurrences that address victims' assistance, rape myths and gender bias in sexual assault investigations and trauma-informed service provision and that should include hands-on learning opportunities, as well as training delivered by external experts, including victim advocates, and mandatory training, when appropriate, as well as case review training for both police and partner agency case reviewers; and
- f) provide an annual report to the Board on the recommendations of the Sexual Assault Advisory Committee and the findings of its victim advocate case reviews, including:
 - the number of sexual assault cases reported to the Halton Regional Police Service,
 - the number of unfounded cases,
 - the number of cases independently reviewed by community partners, and
 - actions taken to address the recommendations of the Sexual Assault Advisory Committee.