

## Get Help

Whether or not you choose to report the assault to the police, do not try to work through this event alone. Seek support from someone you trust, such as a counselor, friend or family member who can provide emotional support and guidance through this difficult time.

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*If you have been sexually assaulted,  
it is not your fault,  
and you are not alone.*

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**Disclaimer:**

The information is not presented as a source of legal advice.

\* Smith, S. G., Chen, J., Basile, K. C., Gilbert, L. K., Merrick, M. T., Patel, N., ... Jain, A. (2017). The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS): 2010-2012 state report. Retrieved from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control:  
<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/NISVS-StateReportBook.pdf>

## Resources for Victims

**National Sexual Assault Hotline  
Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network**  
800-656-HOPE  
[www.rainn.org](http://www.rainn.org)

**National Sexual Violence Resource Center  
(NSVRC)**  
[www.nsvrc.org](http://www.nsvrc.org)

**The National Domestic Violence Hotline**  
800-799-SAFE (7233)

**Sexual Assault Support for  
the DOD Community**  
877-995-5247  
[www.safehelpline.org](http://www.safehelpline.org)

**If you feel you are in immediate  
danger, dial 911**

**ATF Victim Witness Assistance Program**  
Tel: 888-267-2570 (Not a Hotline)

Case Agent:

**Regional Victim Witness Specialist**



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U.S. Department of Justice  
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives  
Victim/Witness Assistance Program



# ATF

## Coping With Sexual Violence and Sexual Assault



## WHAT IS SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT?

*The term sexual assault refers to sexual contact or behavior that occurs without explicit consent of the victim.*

*Some forms of sexual assault include:*

- Fondling or unwanted sexual touching
- Forcing a victim to perform sexual acts, such as oral sex or penetrating the perpetrator's body
- Penetration of the victim's body, also known as rape
- Attempted rape
- Public display of images that were taken in a private context or when the victim was unaware

### Rape

Rape is a form of sexual assault, but not all sexual assault is rape. The term rape often refers to sexual penetration without consent of the victim. This can include penetration of the vagina or anus or any body part with any type of object. Each state has its own legal definition of rape.

Ejaculation or physical injury does not have to occur for these acts to be considered rape. The law generally describes that if these acts are forced or coerced on another and they result in great mental anguish or great bodily harm to the victim, they may qualify as criminal sexual penetration.

### What is force?

Force does not always refer to physical pressure. Perpetrators may use emotional coercion, psychological force, or manipulation to coerce a victim into non-consensual sex. Some perpetrators will use threats to force a victim to comply, such as threatening to hurt the victim or their family or other intimidation tactics.

### Date Rape

The term "date rape" is sometimes used to refer to acquaintance rape. Perpetrators of acquaintance rape might be someone you met on a date, but they could also be a classmate, a neighbor, a friend's significant other, or any number of different roles. It is important to remember that dating, instances of past intimacy, or other acts like kissing do not give someone consent for increased or continued sexual contact.

## Facts About Sexual Assault

- In the U.S., one in three women and one in six men experienced some form of contact sexual violence in their lifetime.\*
- In the majority of cases of rape, the victim knew the perpetrator.
- Everyone is a potential victim, whether female or male of any age, race, religion, or occupation.

## If You Are Sexually Assaulted

- Reach out to a trusted friend or family member who can provide support and guidance during this critical time.
- Seek medical assistance - do not bathe or change your clothes or brush your teeth in order to preserve physical evidence of the person who assaulted you.
- A physical exam is typically conducted in order to collect evidence. A doctor or nurse will use a rape kit to collect evidence. This might be fibers, hairs, saliva, semen, or clothing left behind by the attacker.