



# ARMY RESILIENCE DIRECTORATE



**SHARP**  
SEXUAL HARASSMENT/ASSAULT  
RESPONSE AND PREVENTION

## FACTSHEET

### NEW: SHARP Restructure

Based on recommendations from the Secretary of Defense Independent Review Commission, or IRC, on Sexual Assault in the Military, the Army has removed Sexual Assault Response Coordinators and Victim Advocates from the operational chain of command and is working to further professionalize the workforce. SHARP has also been directed by SecDef to phase out collateral-duty SARC and VA positions and replace them with a full-time response workforce at the installation level.

New workforce requirements were developed by sexual violence experts, using proven approaches for supporting victims. Although the military setting will have its unique challenges, the overall DoD strategy is rooted in evidence-based practices.

The OSD-directed structure provides for an installation-based response program, as depicted below:

- The restructure established a new professional oversight structure at the tactical and operational levels and moved the program outside the command structure, which is intended to eliminate perceived leader bias, protect victim privacy, and empower SHARP Professionals to prioritize the needs of victims. This new oversight structure mirrors other sexual assault response services such as medical, legal, and law enforcement.
- Army identified select commands at the ACOM/ASCC (operational) level to maintain SHARP Program Management Offices and, where authorized, increased support staff to meet program oversight responsibilities.
- At the tactical (installation) level, the SHARP Program established full-time, civilian Lead SARCs to serve as the focal point to direct and coordinate response activities. They support and advise the installation Senior Commander and all tenant commanders but are supervised and evaluated by a SHARP Program Manager at the operational level.
- The Lead SARC supervises all SHARP Professionals on the installation to ensure delivery of victim-centric care. SARCs and VAs are responsible for communicating with their supported commanders, as dictated in policy, to support commanders in meeting their responsibilities to the victim and the program.
- SARCs and VAs are distributed at each installation, whether supporting a specific brigade or providing overarching support. In some cases, resources will not be organic to a specific unit, but will be shared across an installation to cover multiple tenant units.
- SHARP Program Prevention Specialists support the Senior Commander and are responsible for the coordination and implementation of comprehensive primary prevention activities that address individual, interpersonal, organizational and community factors that contribute to sexual harassment and sexual assault.

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### Frequently Asked Questions

- **What's the most significant aspect of this restructure?** We are moving to an installation-based model where everyone, regardless of command alignment, COMPO, or branch of service will receive SHARP services as a function of the military installation closest to the victim. The new SHARP structure is no longer based on chain of command, although for many traditional installations there will be minimal change. SARCs and VAs will be consolidated on the Senior Commander's TDA but will remain embedded in their units to provide direct support to commands and victims. SARCs and VAs on the installation will be supervised by the installation's Lead SARC (or a Supervisory SARC). Not only will this result in an independent reporting structure for SHARP professionals, but it will also enable SHARP professionals to provide a more victim-centric response.
- **It is imperative that we get the right people in these vital positions but my command/installation is in a remote area and getting good talent is difficult. What can HQDA SHARP offer to help with this?** The following HR flexibilities are available to assist commands in recruiting and retaining a highly-qualified civilian workforce. The use of these flexibilities is subject to local funding availability, eligibility requirements, and current delegated approval authorities. Work with your local Civilian Personnel Advisory Center.  
Superior Qualifications and Special Needs Pay Setting Authority. This discretionary authority is often referred to as an advanced-in-hire rate. It allows hiring officials to set the rate of basic pay of a newly-appointed employee at a rate above the minimum rate of the appropriate General Schedule (GS) grade because the candidate has superior qualifications, or the agency has a special need for the candidate's services. Hiring officials may use the superior qualifications and special needs pay-setting authority to set the rate of basic pay for an employee upon first appointment as a civilian employee of the Federal Government, or reappointment to a GS position with a 90-day break in service.  
Recruitment, Retention, and Relocation Incentives. Commonly referred to as "the 3Rs", these incentives are intended to attract new employees, retain current employees, or relocate current employees with unusually high or unique qualifications for unique or hard-to-fill positions. Total incentive payments may not exceed more than 25% of the employee's annual rate of basic pay in effect at the beginning of the service period multiplied by the years of obligated service. The employee must agree to enter into a service agreement for a specified period of time for all authorized incentives. The agreement must be by the employee and approved by the authorizing official prior to the employee's entrance on duty (for new hires) or the effective date of the incentive (for current employees).
- **Will Soldiers continue to serve in the SHARP program?** Yes. The new Sexual Assault Response Workforce (SARW) guidance published July 2024 has several roles for military personnel, specific to deployment requirements. During the years of counter-insurgency operations, we deployed SHARP Professionals with their unit. As we now prepare for Large Scale Combat Operations in a multi-domain environment, we must reevaluate how we think about and deploy sexual assault response capability in theater. The SHARP program is currently evaluating the needs of each location based on anticipated duration and availability of supporting infrastructure. For long-term missions at locations with permanent infrastructure, special assignment positions enable the Army to position full-time military SHARP Professionals to ensure response capability is available. For more temporary missions, like rotational deployments, collateral duty will deploy/redeploy with operational units to support their requirement.

For more detailed information on these and other updates, see <https://www.sapr.mil/latest-policy-updates>.