



An Abuse of Power

Due to the imbalance of power between offenders and staff in correctional settings, sexual interactions between staff (who have power) and offenders (who lack power) are unprofessional, unethical and illegal. Some offenders who lack power may become sexually involved with staff in an effort to equalize the imbalance of power. Occasionally an offender may try to use sex to improve his/her standing or circumstances (e.g., better job, avoid disciplinary action, affect a release plan, gain privileges, etc.). Because of the imbalance of power between offenders and staff, contractors, vendors and volunteers, there can never be a consensual relationship between offenders and persons working or volunteering for the Department. The law states "consent" is not a defense to prosecution.

Report any / all instances of suspected sexual abuse and sexual harassment to:

C.R.T.C. Director, Mr. Gene Loya
956-546-4017

P.R.E.A Coordinator, Mr. Gene Loya
956-546-4017

Clinical Counselor, Ms. Angie Gonzalez
956-546-4017

Friendship of Women
956-544-7412

**Cameron County Probation
Community Supervision and
Corrections Department**

Cameron County CSCD

**A Resident's Guide for the
Prevention and Reporting
Sexual Abuse and Sexual
Harassment in Community
Correctional Facilities.**



**Cameron County
C.S.C.D. has a Zero
Tolerance policy for
Sexual Abuse and
Sexual Harassment**

What is Sexual Harassment?

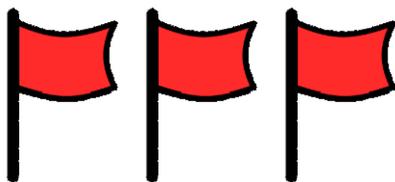
Includes but is not limited to, repeated and unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors, or verbal comments, gestures or actions, demeaning references to gender.

Abuse:

includes, but not limited to, subjecting another person to any sexual act or contact between an employee, volunteer, contractor, or agency representative, and an offender or client, by force, persuasion, inducement, or enticement; any sexual act or contact in which an employee, volunteer, or agency representative participates or forces any offender or client to engage; subjecting another person who is incapable of giving consent by reason of their supervision or custodial status, physical or mental state; or rape, sexual molestation, prostitution or other form of sexual exploitation

Reporting Abuse / Harassment:

We urge you to report any inappropriate staff/offender behavior immediately. Illegal and unethical behavior compromises the security and safety of offenders and the entire facility.



The Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA)

is a Federal law established to address the elimination and prevention of sexual assault and rape in correctional facilities. PREA applies to all federal, state, and local, prisons, jails, police lock-ups, private facilities, and community settings such as residential facilities.

It is the policy of Cameron County Probation to comply with all standards set by PREA to prevent, respond, educate, screen and report sexual harassment or sexual abuse in all of its facilities.

The Cameron County Probation Dept. will demonstrate compliance not merely by words and written policy, but through a zero tolerance approach demonstrated through our actions to prevent, and the Department's response to outcries of sexual assault.

In response to PREA, the Cameron County Probation Dept. is intolerant of sexual abuse towards inmates by staff, volunteers, contractors, or individuals having responsibility for the care, custody, and control of inmates. Staff, volunteers and contractors must be mindful that unprofessional relationships will not be allowed. These relationships are criminal and may be prosecuted under state and federal statutes.

History of Victimization

Some people don't think of offenders as 'victims' of staff sexual misconduct, especially when the offender appears to be a willing participant or even initiated the sexual or 'romantic' interactions with a staff member. The offender is always the victim because of the imbalance of power. The consent or willingness of an offender to participate may be a survival strategy or a learned response to previous or current victimization. Many offenders have a history of victimization (physical and/or sexual abuse), which may make them especially vulnerable to the sexual overtures of persons in positions of authority. Their perception of affection / love may be skewed by this background of abuse, making it impossible for them to refuse advances of a staff member. In some instances, particularly for female offenders, their survival in the community has been directly related to using their sexuality to obtain the means to survive. Coupled with low self-esteem, this carries over into their conduct while incarcerated and while under community supervision.

If you or someone you know is in need of counseling for sexual abuse, or you would like to anonymously report abuse please call the Friendship of Women:

956-544-7412