

About Us

Tri-County S.P.E.A.K.S. (TCS) is a non-profit advocacy program. The organization originally established as People Against Rape (PAR) in 1974, until rebranding of name at the beginning of 2021. TCS is established to assist adult survivors of sexual assault in the tri-county area. TCS provides crisis intervention and supportive services in Charleston, Dorchester, and Berkeley counties. The services offered at TCS include:

- 24-Hour Crisis Line, providing support to survivors in times of crisis.
- Hospital Response, providing support for survivors during medical treatment
- Resource and Referrals, helping to connect survivors with other service providers
- Court Accompaniment, providing support during civil and criminal legal hearings
- Public Awareness and Education, to prevent sexual violence before it starts.

**SEXUAL ASSAULT IS NEVER
THE VICTIM'S FAULT.**

*We're here
for you.*



Sexual Violence Prevention, Education,
Advocacy, Knowledge & Services

Contact Us

Office

198 Rutledge Avenue, Suite 5
Charleston, SC 29403

Phone

843-577-9882

Website

www.tricountyspeaks.org

24/7 Hotline

843-745-0144



Tri-County S.P.E.A.K.S.

Anonymous Reporting Options

For Adult
Survivors of
Sexual Assault

What is Anonymous Reporting?

Anonymous reporting is an option for adult survivors of sexual assault. This option allows you to receive free medical treatment and have forensic evidence collected, without making a report to law enforcement.

You can go to MUSC Emergency Department to receive treatment for any injuries, prevention of sexually transmitted infections, pregnancy prevention if desired, and an opportunity to talk with an advocate. Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC) is the only hospital in the tri-county area that performs SAFE exams.

You do not have to make a report to law enforcement. The evidence collected will be stored for one year, to give you time to decide whether you want to report the crime. In South Carolina, there is no statute of limitation for criminal offenses in criminal sexual conduct. However, marital rape cases in the state of South Carolina have a 30-day statute of limitation.

What Will Happen at the Hospital?

When you arrive at the Emergency Room, let them know that you have been sexually assaulted. They will notify the Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner, a nurse who specializes in working with sexual assault victims.

They should also contact Tri-County S.P.E.A.K.S., so an advocate can be there to help you, as well. If they do not, and you would like to have someone there for support, you can call our 24-hour hotline at 843-745-0144.

If you are under 18 or if a weapon was used, hospital staff may report the crime because of South Carolina's mandated reporting laws. Call TCS if you have any questions like this.

You will not be charged for the sexual assault forensic exam (SAFE) as long as the exam is conducted within 120 hours of your assault. These costs are covered by the State Office for Victims Assistance (SOVA).

The nurse will collect forensic evidence. The nurse can also treat you for sexually transmitted infections and unintended pregnancy. Being tested for STIs includes a large dosage of antibiotics, some individuals may be started on nPep if they meet the criteria. The TCS advocate can explain the process to you and be with you the entire time, if you choose.

You are not alone.



Once the evidence is collected, the kit will be sealed with no names, address, or contact information on the outside. The kit will have your patient account number for tracking purposes only.

The kit cannot be opened by anyone unless you decide to report to law enforcement and initiate an investigation. This being said, the kit will also not undergo testing through SLED either until a report is made. If you have not decided to make a report after one year, the kit will be destroyed.

In cases of marital rape, the kit will be destroyed after 30 days, since there is currently a 30-day statute of limitations on marital rape in South Carolina.

What if I Decide to Report Later?

You can decide to "covert" your kit, meaning you can report the crime, at any time. If you decide you want to report the crime to law enforcement, you can contact TCS at 843-745-0144. We can help you through the process. The hospital will ask you to sign a release, to give them permission to turn the kit over to law enforcement.

Can Someone Be With Me?

Absolutely. Advocates with Tri-County S.P.E.A.K.S. (TCS) are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. All of our services are free and confidential. An advocate can talk with you about how you're feeling, offer support, tell you about your options, and also meet you at the hospital and be with you throughout the process. TCS advocates are also available to provide ongoing services and support.



Our Hotline service is provided by Call Experts, a 24/7 complete contract center for all voice and electronic communications.
www.CallExperts.com