

# Sexual Violence Definitions

**Sexual violence** encompasses a broad range of behaviors from sexual harassment to rape, including:

- attempted or completed voyeurism (peeping)
- indecent exposure
- knowingly transmitting sexually transmitted infections
- inducing incapacitation to facilitate sexual contact.

Both men and women can be victims and perpetrators of sexual violence, and sexual violence can happen between people of the same or different gender, non-strangers, strangers, and between more than two people, regardless of gender, sexuality, ability, race, ethnicity, class, religion, and/or relationship status.

**Sexual assault** is a general term that can include touching, without consent, of the sexual or other intimate parts of another, directly or through clothing, in order to cause bodily injury, humiliate, harass, or degrade another or arouse or gratify sexual response or desire.

**Rape** is non-consensual intercourse.

**Force** is not limited to physical force but can include coercion, intimidation, etc. A person can be rendered temporarily incapable of providing consent as a result of the influence of an intoxicating substance, such as alcohol or drugs. A person may voluntarily become intoxicated, but still be unable to give consent to sexual activity. Often, the victim fears for his or her life or physical well-being and feels that there is no choice but to do what the attacker wants. But submission does not equal consent. *Remember: Sexual violence is NOT the fault of the survivor, no matter what happens or what the situation is, the person at fault is the person who chooses to use violence.*

**Stranger rape** occurs when a person is raped by a perpetrator with whom she/he has never had contact.

**Non-stranger rape** encompasses several different subcategories of rape. These categories include: acquaintance rape, date rape, and marital rape.

**Acquaintance rape** indicates that the survivor and the perpetrator were acquainted with one another or were “friends” before the assault.

**Date rape** indicates that the survivor and the perpetrator were dating or involved in a relationship at the time of the assault.

**Marital rape** indicates that the survivor and perpetrator were married at the time of the assault.

**Gang rape or multiple assailant:** occurs when there is a sexual assault by two or more persons against another person.

**Child sexual abuse** occurs when a person forces a child to have any sexual contact or forces a child to perform sexual acts.

**Sexual harassment** is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct in the sexual nature. Such conduct has the purpose of or effect of, unreasonable interference with an individual's work/school performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working environment.