

HOW TO MANTAIN APPROPRIATE BOUNDARIES

What can I do to avoid inappropriate staff/inmate relationships?

Most "staff on inmate" misconduct occurs after seemingly innocent professional boundaries have been crossed. The following behaviors will assist you in maintaining appropriate boundaries:

- * Maintain professional distance.
- * Focus behavior on duty assignments.
- * Do not become overly close with any particular inmate.
- * Do not share your own or other staff members personal information with or around inmates.
- * When speaking to inmates about other staff, refer to staff members with their rank and last name. If not conversing about ranking officials, refer to staff members as "Ms." or "Mr." and their last name.
- * Do not accept gifts or favors from inmates.
- * Be knowledgeable of HCSO **PREA policy D-116**, rules of conduct, and laws regarding sexual misconduct and sexual harassment.

DUTY TO REPORT

All staff including contractors and volunteers must report any incident of sexual misconduct/sexual abuse or sexual harassment within the Harris County Sheriff's Office. Staff members are subject to disciplinary sanctions up to and including termination when one has violated departmental sexual misconduct policies. All efforts will be made to ensure the confidentiality of the reporting staff member. Some forms of reporting include but or not limited to:

- * Facility or Division Commander
- * All supervisory personnel
- * PREA Sexual Assault Hotline (713)-755-7991
- * PREA Manager (713)-755-8114
- * HCSO PREA Unit: hcsopreaunit@hctx.net



Jail Tip Line

(713)- 755-4236

hcsombudsman@harriscountysoc.org

For Employment Opportunities Visit:

www.hcsojobs.com



1200 Baker St.

Houston, Texas 77002

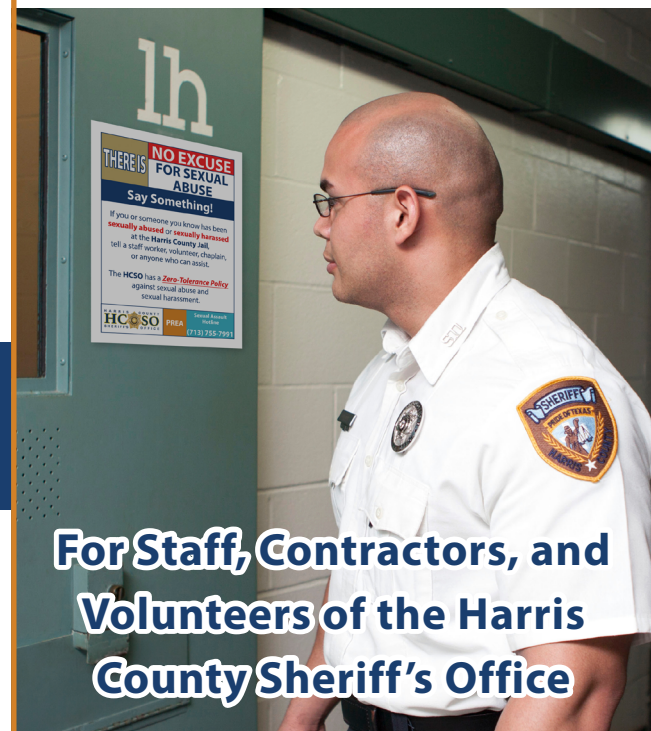
Public Information Office (713)-755-6044



www.sheriff.hctx.net | www.hcsojobs.com



A Guide for Preventing and Reporting Sexual Misconduct with Inmates in Our HCSO Facilities



For Staff, Contractors, and Volunteers of the Harris County Sheriff's Office

PREA
Sexual Assault Hotline
(713)-755-7991

hcsopreaunit@hctx.net

HARRIS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

The Harris County Sheriff's Office is the third largest Sheriff's Office in the nation. The HCSO Criminal Justice Command is staffed by more than 1,600 dedicated employees and has approximately 9,400 inmate beds.

The mission of the Harris County Sheriff's Office is to enhance the safety and protect the trust of the citizens of Harris County by enforcing the law with integrity and professionalism.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this pamphlet is to train and educate staff, volunteers, and contractors on the Prison Rape Elimination Act of 2003 (PREA), (Texas Penal Code) § 39.04; Violations of the Civil Rights of Person in Custody; Improper Sexual Activity with Person in Custody, and the agency's standard concerning inmate sexual abuse.

It is with inmates and your duty to report incidents of inmate sexual abuse.

PREA

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 the Harris County Sheriff's Office to comply with all standards set by PREA to prevent, respond, educate, screen and report sexual misconduct in all of its facilities.

The Harris County Sheriff's Office 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 Harris County Sheriff's Office is intolerable 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.

STAFF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

The **HCSO Staff Sexual Misconduct policy D-115** is to provide procedures for the prevention, detection, response, and investigation of staff sexual misconduct within the Criminal Justice Command facilities.

All staff including volunteers and contractors are prohibited from subjecting another employee or other individual to harassment or retaliation for reporting alleged sexual misconduct with inmates.

Texas Penal Code § 39.04 **Violations of the Civil Rights of Person in Custody; Improper Sexual Activity with Person in Custody** states an official of a correctional facility, an employee of a correctional facility, a person other than an employee who works for compensation at a correctional facility, a volunteer at a correctional facility, or a peace officer commits an offense if the person intentionally:

1. Denies or impedes a person in custody in the exercise or enjoyment of any right, privilege, or immunity knowing his conduct is unlawful; or

2. Engages in sexual contact, sexual intercourse, or deviate sexual intercourse with an individual in custody.

When in doubt, one should seek clear guidance from an HCSO representative before engaging in what could be viewed as misconduct later. If it "exceeds" professional standards of conduct and/or deviates from agency policy, it may be undue familiarity.