

# AUSTIN/TRAVIS COUNTY INTERAGENCY SEXUAL ASSAULT TEAM

## MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is an agreement among the primary Austin/Travis County agencies that address and respond to adult sexual assault. The agencies entering into this MOU agree to form the Austin/Travis County Interagency Sexual Assault Team (ISAT). ISAT will function as a community response team committed to a collaborative effort across law enforcement, prosecution, evidence collection, and services for victims/survivors of sexual assault. This document does not create any contractual rights or obligations on the part of any signatory or on behalf of any third party.

### MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Austin/Travis County Interagency Sexual Assault Team is to increase the effectiveness of this community's systemic response to adult sexual assaults through a collaborative effort that embodies the Team's guiding principles.

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- **Honor, Respect & Collaboration:** working together in a courteous and professional manner and treating each other with decency and dignity by recognizing the value of the partnership;
- **Honesty, Empathy & Responsibility:** being truthful and forthright in our thoughts and words, responsive to individual and community needs and responsible for our actions; and
- **Integrity, Commitment & Justice:** maintaining a steadfast resolve and dedication to succeed by doing the right thing for the right reasons to support victim/survivor safety and offender accountability.

### STRATEGIC ACTIVITIES

Strategic activities of ISAT include but are not limited to:

- Understanding and assessing current relevant policies and practices of individual ISAT agencies;
- Establishing and maintaining a process for reviewing ISAT policies and procedures as well as sexual assault cases and trends;
- Identifying gaps in and making recommended solutions to our systemic response to victims/survivors of sexual assault;
- Identifying and implementing trauma-informed, victim-centered, best practice strategies to improve the documentation, investigation, prosecution, and services provided to sexual assault victims/survivors;

- Pinpointing additional or identifying and securing new resources to enhance local sexual assault responses, including investigation, prosecution, notification and service delivery to victims/survivors;
- Identifying interdisciplinary training needs as well as developing and providing training;
- Reaching a common understanding of definitions and terms;
- Collecting, analyzing and evaluating data; and
- Making accurate and timely reports to the community on ISAT's systemic response to adult sexual assault.

## MEMBERSHIP

The Austin/Travis County Interagency Sexual Assault Team is made up of entities that have jurisdiction in Travis County and statutory responsibilities in regard to investigation, forensic evidence collection, and prosecution of adult sexual assault. This includes the following types of agencies:

### Law Enforcement

Any law enforcement agency in Travis County may be a member of the Austin/Travis County Interagency Sexual Assault Team (see signatory page/s for complete list of members).

Law enforcement agencies gather and preserve evidence to help ensure a prosecutable criminal case. This includes interviewing and taking statements of witnesses and suspects, evidence collection, evidence testing, crime scene preservation and the preparation and execution of search and arrest warrants.

### Victim Services within Law Enforcement

Departments that have a dedicated victim services unit or division are in a unique position, operating from within law enforcement and often serving as the crime victim's first point of contact. The counselors work in tandem with sworn personnel responding to violent crime incidents. Direct services, focused on trauma-informed care, include crisis intervention, counseling, personal advocacy, and information and referrals to help victims, survivors and their families recover more quickly and completely from the effects of victimization.

### Sexual Assault Forensic Exams

The SAFE Alliance is a non-profit organization that provides acute medical forensic examinations and sexual assault advocacy at the SAFE forensic clinic and in area hospitals for the purpose of gathering and preserving evidence and supporting survivors in the aftermath of a sexual assault.

### Prosecution

The Travis County District Attorney's Office prosecutes all felony criminal cases of sexual assault. The primary statutory mandate of the District Attorney is to see that justice is done. Responsibilities include: partnering with the law enforcement agencies in Travis County by

providing prompt and comprehensive legal advice regarding criminal investigations of sexual assault on a 24-hour basis; assisting law enforcement with all aspects of criminal investigations, including assistance with grand jury subpoenas, search warrants and charging decisions, facilitating the coordination of investigations, reviewing all criminal sexual assault cases for presentation to the grand jury, closure and return for further investigation; and prosecuting sexual assault cases in district court to disposition.

#### Victim Services within Prosecution

The DA's Office also includes Victim/Witness Counselors that provide victim services to assist victims during the prosecution process including, but not limited to, immediate crisis intervention counseling, information and referral for services, assistance with Crime Victim's Compensation and VINE, and criminal justice system advocacy and support.

#### Survivor Advocacy and Services

The SAFE Alliance provides support and advocacy for survivors following a sexual assault regardless of their participation in the legal system. SAFE provides crisis intervention, counseling, legal services, emergency shelter, referrals and assistance with Crime Victims Compensation applications.

### **TEAM GOVERNANCE AND STRUCTURE**

#### **Executive Committee**

The Austin/Travis County Interagency Sexual Assault Team is established and governed by an Executive Committee composed of designated representatives from the Travis County District Attorney's Office, the Travis County Sheriff's Office, the Austin Police Department, the Lakeway Police Department, the Pflugerville Police Department, the University of Texas Police Department, a Combined Area Law Enforcement Association (CALEA) Travis County designee, and The SAFE Alliance. The Committee will, at a minimum, address the following issues:

- 1) The membership of the Executive Committee and the ISAT as a whole;
- 2) The selection of a Chair to serve as convener, responsible for setting agendas, and presiding over Executive Committee meetings;
- 3) The selection of other officers necessary for governance;
- 4) The development, approval, and adoption of written policies and procedures to guide and inform the duties of the working ISAT and the ISAT's collaborative operations;
- 5) The development, approval, and adoption of specific goals and objectives to strengthen the mission of the ISAT;
- 6) The development, approval, and adoption of written performance measures to assess the impacts, challenges and successes of ISAT;
- 7) The preparation and distribution of minutes; and
- 8) The time and place of Executive Committee and ISAT meetings.

Any media or open records request regarding the work of the ISAT received by any Team member should be referred to the Chair of the Executive Committee. See ISAT policies and protocols for additional information.

#### **Team**

Each member organization of ISAT can appoint Team Member(s) who represent their organization. Members can include managers who oversee sexual assault investigation, prosecution, evidence collection, and victim/survivor services as well as persons providing these direct services. Team membership is flexible to allow for the appropriate staff to be present to address specific agenda items in meetings.

The District Attorney's Office will provide leadership of the Team as well as staff support for meetings. Decision-making will be by a consensus-building process with final recommendations made to the Executive Committee for any related actions.

#### **Other Stakeholders/Subject Matter Experts**

The Team may engage other stakeholders that have content knowledge or resources specific to an agenda item or Team/ISAT project. The stakeholders will generally participate in discussions during designated times and abide by all ISAT policies and protocols. Participation in discussions of a sensitive nature will be limited and will require a signed release form from victims/survivors being discussed as well as an agreement of confidentiality signed by the stakeholder.

#### **SIGNATORY RESPONSIBILITIES**

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Participation in the ISAT can be terminated by any party without cause by giving written notice to the other parties.

**THE UNDERSIGNED AGREE TO THE TERMS OF THIS MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING FOR THE AUSTIN/TRAVIS COUNTY INTERAGENCY SEXUAL ASSAULT TEAM:**

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MARGARET MOORE  
TRAVIS COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY  
TRAVIS COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

10/20/17  
DATE

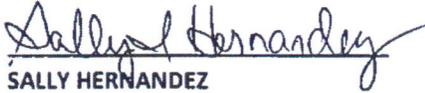
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SALLY HERNANDEZ  
TRAVIS COUNTY SHERIFF  
TRAVIS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

10-19-17  
DATE

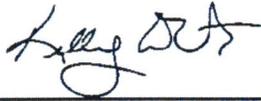
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\_\_\_\_\_  
KELLY WHITE  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER  
THE SAFE ALLIANCE

\_\_\_\_\_  
10/19/2017

DATE



\_\_\_\_\_  
JULIA SPANN  
PRESIDENT  
THE SAFE ALLIANCE

\_\_\_\_\_  
10/19/2017

DATE

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BRIAN MANLEY  
INTERIM CHIEF OF POLICE  
AUSTIN POLICE DEPARTMENT

10-31-17  
DATE

**SIGNATORY RESPONSIBILITIES**

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\_\_\_\_\_  
TODD RADFORD  
CHIEF OF POLICE  
LAKEWAY POLICE DEPARTMENT

10-19-17  
DATE

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\_\_\_\_\_  
**JESSICA ROBLEDO**  
**CHIEF OF POLICE**  
**PFLUGERVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT**

10-18-17  
**DATE**

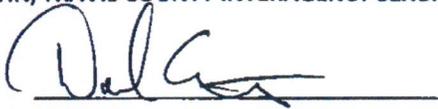
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**DAVID CARTER  
CHIEF OF POLICE  
UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS POLICE DEPARTMENT**

11-2-2017  
DATE

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\_\_\_\_\_  
**LYNN DIXON**  
**CHIEF OF POLICE**  
**AUSTIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**DATE**

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\_\_\_\_\_  
**GARY MILLER**  
**CHIEF OF POLICE**  
**BEE CAVE POLICE DEPARTMENT**

3-23-2018  
**DATE**

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\_\_\_\_\_  
**SHANE SEXTON  
CHIEF OF POLICE  
CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**DATE**

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\_\_\_\_\_  
CHRIS BRATTEN  
CHIEF OF POLICE  
ELGIN POLICE DEPARTMENT

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

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\_\_\_\_\_  
JOE HAMILTON  
INTERIM CHIEF OF POLICE  
JONESTOWN POLICE DEPARTMENT

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

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\_\_\_\_\_  
**ROBERT SMITH  
CHIEF OF POLICE  
LAGO VISTA POLICE DEPARTMENT**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**DATE**

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\_\_\_\_\_  
**RYAN PHIPPS  
CHIEF OF POLICE  
MANOR POLICE DEPARTMENT**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**DATE**

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\_\_\_\_\_  
**LEONARD CANTU**  
**CHIEF OF POLICE**  
**MUSTANG RIDGE POLICE DEPARTMENT**

3-23-2018  
**DATE**

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\_\_\_\_\_  
**DAYNE PRYOR**  
**CHIEF OF POLICE**  
**ROLLINGWOOD POLICE DEPARTMENT**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**DATE**

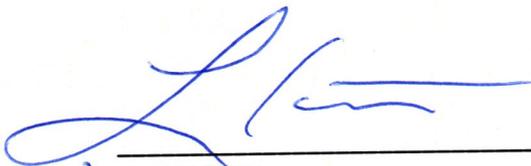
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\_\_\_\_\_  
(Lenn) **LEN CARTER**  
**CHIEF OF POLICE**  
**SUNSET VALLEY POLICE DEPARTMENT**

3/23/2018  
**DATE**

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\_\_\_\_\_  
**SCOTT GERDES  
CHIEF OF POLICE  
WESTLAKE HILLS POLICE DEPARTMENT**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**DATE**

**SIGNATORY RESPONSIBILITIES**

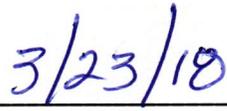
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Each entity signing this agreement is a full member of the Austin/Travis County Interagency Sexual Assault Team. The members recognize that the interests of sexual assault victims/survivors and the community are best served when investigations, prosecutions and services are coordinated and when agencies collaborate in a way that is mutually supportive. Each member accepts and supports the value of the role and contribution of every other member and agrees to support the collaborative effort. This includes the commitment of resources to ISAT and the sharing of information to the extent allowed by law. Each member commits to an ongoing assessment of the collaborative effort.

Participation in the ISAT can be terminated by any party without cause by giving written notice to the other parties.

**THE UNDERSIGNED AGREE TO THE TERMS OF THIS MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING FOR THE AUSTIN/TRAVIS COUNTY INTERAGENCY SEXUAL ASSAULT TEAM:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**LOU DELIRA**  
**CHIEF OF POLICE**  
**VILLAGE OF BRIARCLIFF POLICE DEPARTMENT**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**DATE**

**SIGNATORY RESPONSIBILITIES**

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\_\_\_\_\_  
**HOMER HUERTA**  
**COMMANDER**  
**ST. EDWARD'S UNIVERSITY POLICE DEPARTMENT**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**DATE**