



SEXUAL ASSAULT RESPONSE TEAM

**WILLIAMSON COUNTY, TEXAS
2025 BIENNIAL REPORT**

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SART OVERVIEW

What is SART, and what is its purpose?

In 2021, the 87th Texas Legislature passed SB 476 which requires all Texas counties to form a Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) in order to have a statewide infrastructure of resources, awareness, connection, and coordination to address adult sex crimes at a local level.

Each county's commissioners court is required to establish a SART for the purpose of organizing professionals from multiple disciplines to provide wrap-around support to survivors of adult sexual assault.

The Williamson County SART consists of many law enforcement agencies, advocacy groups, mental health services, and medical organizations. The law which created the requirement for a county SART enumerated statutory core members that *must* be identified and involved with the team. The current statutory core members of the Williamson County SART are:

- Jimmie Gabel, Vice President of Client Service – Hope Alliance
- Victoria Winkeler, Chief Prosecutor of the Special Victims Unit – Office of the District Attorney, 26th Judicial District of Texas
- Lieutenant Joseph Claypool, Criminal Investigations Division – Round Rock Police Department
- Lieutenant Jason Braeutigam – Williamson County Sheriff's Office
- Crystal Love, Executive Director – Brave Alliance
- Andrea Richardson – Bluebonnet Trails
- Lieutenant Bobby Vernengo – Cedar Park Police Department

While these listed members are the statutorily required members of the SART, many other agencies voluntarily participate and are involved in the Williamson County SART in order to provide unified care for survivors of adult sexual assault.

Some of the intended purposes of the SART are to track data related to reports, investigations, and prosecutions of adult sexual assaults; ensure appropriate protocols are created and implemented across all agencies involved in the process of a survivor receiving services or making a report of sexual assault; and to collaborate, communicate and coordinate amongst agencies at all levels.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since the initiation of SB 476, the Williamson County SART has been in the process of creating protocols that can be agreed upon by all participating agencies. Per statute, every odd numbered year requires that a report be submitted to the Commissioners Court of each county detailing particular information and statistics.

The purpose of this report is to comply with the requirements enumerated in SB 476, and to provide the Commissioners Court with an understanding of what the Williamson County SART has been involved with from January 2024 to October 31st, 2025.

Among other things detailed herein, the Williamson County SART has coordinated and agreed upon Sexual Assault Response Protocols, participated in training and other activities to engage the members of the team, and maintain data related to the investigation and prosecution of adult sexual assault (and similar or related) offenses in Williamson County.

When evaluating the data presented in this report, only sexual assault offenses committed against an individual who was 18 years old or older are covered by the SART. Offenses committed against an individual who was a child at the time of the assault are specific not included within the statutory mandate.

This 2025 report seeks to build upon the information provided in our first biennial report submitted in 2023, as well as update data from local law enforcement and the District Attorney's Office. Of note, we have also included data from BRAVE Alliance related to forensic service requests for adult sexual assault survivors in Williamson County. We have also included information related to trainings and community partner collaboration that are core to the SART mission.

As the process of reporting and data collection continues to take shape, this report attempts to be as accurate as possible. Therefore, it is important to note that the reporting process and data collection are still in their early stages. The data collected from law enforcement agencies spans from January 1, 2024 through October 31, 2025. However, as some agencies have submitted early, numbers for some agencies may be more reflective of an August or September cutoff.

DATA AND FINDINGS

Below is a chart diagramming the data provided by participating law enforcement agencies specifying the number of adult sexual assault reports received and cases investigated.

Law Enforcement Agency	Sexual Assault Reports Received*	Sexual Assaults Reports Investigated*
Cedar Park Police Department	26	20
Hutto Police Department	9	8
Taylor Police Department	4	4
Round Rock Police Department	59	59
Leander Police Department	38	29
Williamson County Sheriff's Office	86	79
Georgetown Police Department	34	34

* While sexual assault is a specific offense enumerated in the Texas Penal Code, agencies have cases which may not fall under that specific statutory language but could include things like, Aggravated Sexual Assault or Prohibited Sexual Conduct in their numbers. Each agency was allowed to evaluate the cases involved to determine if they qualified as a sexual violent offense.

Prosecution Data

Below is a chart diagramming the prosecution data related to adult sexual assault cases received by the Office of the Williamson County District Attorney for the 26th Judicial District of Texas for decisions made from January 1, 2024 – October 31, 2025. Note: Cases resolved but filed prior to 2024 will show as a resolution but not be counted as having been filed during this time.

Prosecutorial Action	Number of Cases
New Adult Sexual Assault (ASA)* Charges Filed	41
ASA Indictments Filed (True Bill)	27
ASA Indictments Rejected (No Bill)	25
ASA Charges Convicted**	37
ASA Charges Dismissed*	25
Defendant's Acquitted***	2

* For purposes of this data, ASA charges include Sexual Assault, Aggravated Sexual Assault, Prohibited Sexual Conduct, and others deemed to be considered sexually violent offenses where the victim is over the age of 17.

** For purposes of this data, the "conviction" language includes cases where a defendant was placed on probation (including deferred adjudication probation) or prison.

***This category *only* includes cases where a trial was held, and a defendant was specifically found "not guilty."

Forensic Services Data

Below is a chart diagramming data provided by BRAVE Alliance related to Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) requests from January 1, 2024 -- September 30, 2025.

	Acute Service Requests	Non-Acute Service Requests	Total Service Requests
2024	64	7	71
YTD 2025	49	13	62

Below is a chart diagramming data provided by BRAVE Alliance related to age demographics for SANE services requested from January 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025.

	Patients Aged 17-44	Patients Aged 45-64	Patients Aged 65 and Over
2024	59	11	1
YTD 2025	48	10	4

Relationship Between Strangulation and Sexual Assault

In data reported by BRAVE Alliance, it was noted that in 2024, 21 patients reported being strangled by their assailant during the sexual assault. In data provided from January 1, 2025 through September 30, 2025, 27 patients reported being strangled by their assailant during the sexual assault.

SANE Kit Data

In an effort to comply with new data point reporting requirements found in Section 351.257 related to SANE kit collection, BRAVE Alliance reports that there are currently 0 kits that are delayed for pickup in Williamson County. Future reports will seek to use Track-Kit and its system for data collection, however at the time of submission, going directly to our forensic nursing partner was deemed to be the most effective way to collect this information.

PROTOCOLS

The protocols of the Williamson County SART are contained in their entirety herein:

WILLIAMSON COUNTY SEXUAL ASSAULT RESPONSE TEAM

PROTOCOL

Adopted December 2022 | Ratified November 2023

PURPOSE

- A. The Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) is a group of individuals and agencies who work independently on a day-to-day basis and communicate with each other regularly to discuss mutual cases and solve mutual problems related to disclosures of sexual assault in Williamson County, Texas, thus **minimizing survivor re-traumatization and increasing the efficacy of response.**
- B. The purpose of this Protocol is to establish and maintain a clear, and effective **community-wide coordinated approach and response** to the problem of sexual assault that prioritizes the health and safety of survivors. This Protocol represents the combined efforts of professionals from law enforcement, medical personnel, advocacy, and the judicial system. The appointed team membership and requested attendance may change over time depending on the needs of the survivors served and the goals of the SART. Interagency cooperation is essential in supporting the healing process of survivors, and in facilitating the arrest, prosecution, and conviction of sexual offenders.

MISSION

- A. The mission of the Williamson County SART is to build communication and collaboration between agencies serving sexual assault survivors. The SART initiative is a survivor-centered project designed to provide a collaborative, interdisciplinary team response to sexual assault. The goal of the SART is to provide services to ensure a transition from victim to survivor free of re-traumatization for every individual whose life is impacted by sexual violence.
- B. The technical expertise and collaboration of the SART is vital to the community's ultimate goals: Appropriate and successful prosecution and restoration of the survivor's sense of safety, agency and wellness.
- C. Members of the Williamson County SART meet bi-monthly to discuss trends, cases, and improvements to survivors of sexual assault services. The SART meetings allow for and encourage collaborative communication, discussion of concerns, problem solving, and conflict resolution as necessary.

GUIDELINES

- A. The physical, emotional and psychological well-being of the sexual assault survivor is the priority throughout the sexual assault investigation and prosecution.
- B. The health care facility considers the personal safety and health care needs of the survivor.
- C. The forensic nurse offers a medical forensic exam in compliance with agency guidelines.
- D. The sexual assault advocate considers the well-being of the survivor as well as the family and/or friends of the survivor.
- E. The law enforcement representative works to ensure the safety of the survivor and the quality and integrity of the sexual assault investigation.
- F. The District and County Attorney's office works in coordination with the respective agencies to ensure an effective response to sexual assault.
- G. The diverse needs of the survivor; including, but not limited to, abilities, gender, race/ethnicity, age, sexual orientation/identity, economic status, literacy, language and access to resources, are recognized, and action is taken to provide respectful and appropriate accommodations and services.
- H. All survivors of sexual assault receive individualized, developmentally appropriate treatment.
- I. Every effort is made to protect and respect all sexual assault survivors' right to confidentiality at every stage of their involvement with SART and by each participating SART member.
- J. Each survivor of sexual assault will have the opportunity to provide feedback regarding their experience with the criminal justice process and services provided by the SART via follow up calls and emails.

SECTION I: PROTOCOLS RELATED TO RESPONDING TO DISCLOSURES

- A. Law Enforcement Response
 - 1. When law enforcement receives a report of a sexual assault, officers take steps to protect the victim from further harm and follow all applicable standard operating procedures.
 - 2. For all survivors of sexual assault, law enforcement will offer the opportunity for a forensic nurse exam. If the survivor wishes to proceed with the exam law enforcement will notify the SAFE site, hospital or forensic nurse and victim's services. The forensic nurse immediately contacts Williamson County Crisis Center dba Hope Alliance to access a sexual assault program advocate.
 - 3. When the police and victim arrive at the medical facility, the patient will be medically screened, per medical facility policy, prior to completion of forensic exam. The forensic nurse, may stay with the victim during any necessary medical evaluation and until the victim is cleared medically and transferred to the medical forensic examination area. If no forensic nurse is present to

accompany the victim during the medical evaluation process, a community based or law enforcement advocate may remain with the victim, if the victim so desires.

4. All survivors being interviewed as part of an investigation following a sexual assault report are offered access to a sexual assault program advocate. Law enforcement contacts Williamson County Crisis Center dba Hope Alliance.
5. In non-acute cases that involve a prepubescent victim, the detective will follow established protocol to contact the Children's Advocacy Center for an interview and SANE, as appropriate.
6. Interagency information is shared in accordance with state and federal law, to ensure the timely exchange of relevant information including, but not limited to date, time, and location of SANE.

B. Medical Personnel/Hospital Response

1. If a minor or geriatric/disabled sexual assault victim presents to a hospital emergency room initially, hospital personnel may contact law enforcement.
2. If an adult sexual assault victim able to give consent presents to a hospital emergency room initially, only with patient consent may hospital personnel notify the appropriate law enforcement following triage and medical screening.
3. If consent to involve law enforcement is given, then law enforcement will discuss potential options available to the victim for a SANE, including possible locations where one may take place. Law enforcement will then contact Victim Services and assist in arranging a SANE if desired by the victim.
4. If consent to involve law enforcement is not given, then contact shall be made with Williamson County Crisis Center dba Hope Alliance and/or Brave Alliance, for discussion of options available to the victim for a SANE, including possible locations where one may take place. The contacted agency shall then assist in arranging a SANE if desired by the victim.
5. If an adult sexual assault victim presents to area hospital and states that they have been sexually assaulted and do not wish to make a report to law enforcement, the triage nurse contacts Williamson County Crisis Center dba Hope Alliance to **access a sexual assault program advocate** to speak with the patient about options.
6. Hospital staff will work in conjunction with the sexual assault program advocate to determine patient's desire to report to law enforcement. If patient states that they do not want to report the crime to law enforcement at time of disclosure the patient may still want and be permitted to have evidence collected or a medical exam performed. If the patient reports to a hospital that does not have access to a forensic nurse, the staff will provide a medical screening and transfer patient to designated SAFE facility (or if patient refuses transfer, offer a basic forensic exam if available). In Williamson County, SAFE designated hospitals will accept patients as transfers unless the patient's associated injuries warrant a specialized service not available at the

proposed receiving hospital. The patient will be triaged and medically screened per hospital policy.

7. Interagency information is shared in accordance with state and federal law, to ensure the timely exchange of relevant information including, but not limited to date, time, and location of SANE.

C. Anonymous Disclosures and Reporting

1. In accordance with Federal and State regulations, adults presenting to health care providers requesting a forensic examination, who have elected not to make a complaint to law enforcement, will be provided with an exam and appropriate evidence collection. Special consideration for these patients will be made. The SART's desire for the patient is to ensure appropriate medical care, timely advocacy, and continuous opportunity to involve law enforcement.
2. Procedures for anonymous reporting include patient contact with health care provider, timely contact with advocacy, and comprehensive patient education regarding evidence storage, law enforcement involvement, and time limitations.

SECTION II: PROTOCOLS RELATED TO ACCESSIBILITY

A. Accessibility and Response of Sexual Assault Forensic Examinations

1. The forensic nurse will confirm contact with Williamson County Crisis Center dba Hope Alliance to access a sexual assault program advocate.
2. The forensic nurse will notify the victim of their legal sexual assault accompaniment rights. The patient will be given education about the exam, advocacy, and law enforcement involvement. The patient will be offered a medical forensic examination.
3. The forensic nurse will speak with the patient and attempt to determine the location of the sexual assault. Location of assault will assist the advocate and nurse in formulating a patient safety plan, potentially including a report to the appropriate law enforcement agency.
4. When requested by the victim, in accordance with the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure and the Texas Government Code, a sexual assault program advocate will accompany the victim into the examination room to provide support during the exam.
5. Prophylactic medications for sexually transmitted infections and pregnancy as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention will be offered as indicated at the time of the exam. This offering will be based on patient exam and history. Should additional medications be needed a prescription will be given to the patient to fill at the pharmacy of their choice.
6. The forensic nurse will provide information regarding follow-up medical care. The forensic nurse, VS and/or the advocate will make arrangements, at the victim's request, to contact the victim for follow-up, supportive counseling, information and referral, and legal advocacy- including information and assistance with Crime Victims' Compensation and Victims' Rights.

7. When the medical forensic examination is complete, the forensic nurse or forensic nursing program will release the evidence and documentation to law enforcement with the patient's written consent.
 8. At the time of discharge, the patient will be given OAG information sheets on how to retrieve their evidence should they choose to report within five years. Non-report evidence collection kits will be sent to the Texas Department of Public Safety's currently designated storage facility.
- B. Accessibility and Response of Sexual Assault Program Advocates
1. Survivors have the right to a sexual assault program advocate be present during SANEs and law enforcement investigative interviews.
 2. Sexual assault program advocates as defined by Section 420.003, Government Code are accessed through Williamson County Crisis Center dba Hope Alliance 24/7 by calling the hotline at 1-800-460-7233.
 3. Upon request by law enforcement, medical personnel/hospital, or forensic nurse, an advocate will respond, in person within one hour of the initial call to the location of SANE and/or investigative interview. Some advocates have various language capacities, and all have access to interpreting services.
 4. The advocate will be introduced to the survivor and support persons prior to the examination and/or investigative interview, when possible
 5. The survivor and support persons will be given the opportunity to decide how they want to interact with the advocate during the examination and/or investigative interview, including dismissal of the advocate.
 6. The advocate may be present for the exam if desired by the survivor in accordance with the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure and the Texas Government Code.
 7. The advocate's role is to provide crisis intervention, information, referrals, and support services. They cannot provide transportation, respond to a survivor's home or scene of a crime, act as an interpreter, or participate in the gathering of evidence or investigation of the sexual assault. Interpretive services provided by an involved agency shall be utilized with the consent of that agency.
 8. Information shared by the survivor to the sexual assault advocate is privileged and therefore entitled to protection from disclosure in court and legal proceedings.
- C. Accessibility of Medical Care
1. *Information on the availability of and access to medical care when the care is clinically indicated.*
- D. Accessibility of Behavioral Health Services
1. Williamson County's Local Mental Health Authority is Bluebonnet Trails Community Services. They offer a crisis hotline and mobile crisis outreach team for immediate 24/7 response to behavioral health crises accessible by calling 1-800-841-1255. They partner with Williamson

County Emergency Services at 911 dispatch – and respond as the backup center for Texans calling 988, the National Suicide & Crisis Lifeline.

2. Bluebonnet Trails Community Services also offers behavioral health services including counseling, medication management, respite, substance use treatment, and case management accessible by calling 1-844-309-6385.
3. Behavioral health hospitals offering hotline services and inpatient, partial hospitalization, and intensive outpatient treatment located in Williamson County for persons seeking mental wellness and recovery from substance addictions include:
 - i. Rock Springs 512-948-3636
 - ii. Georgetown Behavioral Health Institute 512-819-1154

SECTION III: PROTOCOLS RELATED TO BILLING AND PAYMENT

- A. In accordance with the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure Article 56A.304 the health care facility, sexual assault nurse examiner, or sexual assault examiner that provides the examination will make an application to the attorney general for reimbursement in the amount set by the attorney general for the forensic examination. This application must include certification that the examination was conducted in accordance with the requirements of Article 56A.303(a), and a complete and itemized bill of the reasonable costs of the forensic portion of the examination. The health care facility, sexual assault nurse examiner, or sexual assault examiner must request additional reimbursement when necessary but must provide justification to the attorney general.
- B. This article does not require a law enforcement agency to pay any costs of treatment for injuries. Therefore, the victim will be informed and provided information regarding Crime Victims' Compensation (CVC) in order to cover other expenses related to the crime. Victim Services and/or Hope Alliance will then assist victims in applying for CVC. Given that medical insurance information is required for billing in the event that the victim does not complete or follow CVC guidelines and is held responsible for all medical expenses and given that CVC is a payer of last resort, all hospitals hosting and/or acting as SAFE sites will obtain any information regarding private insurance, Medicaid, or Medicare per hospital guidelines.
- C. Victim Services and/or Hope Alliance will assist with any CVC reimbursement. They may also follow up with hospital administration to advocate for all remaining ER / physician fees be waived for the victim.

SECTION IV: PROTOCOLS RELATED TO PROSECUTING SEXUAL ASSAULT CASES

- A. Sexual Assault survivors will be contacted by the prosecutor within 72 hours of receiving the case. Survivors will also be updated prior to grand jury proceedings and if possible, have an in-person meeting prior to grand jury.

- B. Sexual Assault survivors will be notified prior to any plea offers and negotiations. If the victim is unable to be contacted, attempts will be made to email and find updated contact information as much as possible. In cases where the prosecutor has taken exhaustive measures to inform the survivor of the plea and still been unable to make contact, a plea agreement can be reached without survivor input.
- C. All survivors will be met with in person for trial preparations. If an in-person meeting is not possible, a video conference is sufficient.
- D. All survivors will be treated with respect and understanding. Survivors will know that their thoughts and feelings on the outcomes matter. They will be updated on what is going on with the case on a regular basis and should expect honest communication from the prosecutor.

SECTION V: CASE REVIEWS PROTOCOL

- A. In an effort to continually minimize sexual assault survivor re-traumatization and increase the efficacy of response, cases will be reviewed as consented by survivors and biennially at minimum.
- B. Sensitivity to a survivor's health, safety, and healing is sustained when attempting to obtain a survivor's consent.
- C. A written and signed consent by the survivor specifying what information can be shared, for the purpose of case review, and who can receive the information is required in order to review the survivor's case.
- D. Unless a survivor has signed a written consent to release information as outlined in B. of this section, privacy and confidentiality is maintained during case reviews as required by law.
- E. Cases reviewed, including successes, problems identified, and solutions agreed upon, inform the biennial assessment and evaluation.

SECTION VI: CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROTOCOL

- A. Conflict is a normal and important part of growth and movement toward the mission and when attended to constructively and respectfully, conflict can be an opportunity to strengthen collaboration and trust.

Steps taken to resolve conflict include:

- a. Creating an effective atmosphere
- b. Clarifying perceptions
- c. Focus on individual and
- d. Building shared positive power
- e. Looking to the future
- f. Generating options
- g. Developing "doables" aka stepping-stones to actions
- h. Making mutually beneficial agreements

(as identified by Jeanpaul Tshimanga)

- B. Unless a survivor has signed a written release of information specifying what information is to be shared and with who, privacy and confidentiality is maintained during conflict resolution as required by law.

SECTION VII: CROSS-AGENCY TRAINING PROTOCOL

- A. At minimum, 4 hours of annual cross-agency training related to dynamics of sexual assault is required for members. When appropriate and possible, efforts to collaborate and coordinate in person multi-agency trainings will be made.

SECTION VIII: COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT AND SART EVALUATION

- A. Community assessment is an ongoing process that includes but is not limited to trending sexual assault reports to law enforcement agencies, SANE/SAFEs, and advocacy services during each SART meeting with special attention to drug-facilitated sexual assault, predatory date rape, and sex-trafficking.
- B. Every other year, an evaluation is conducted using sexual assault case reviews to measure the effectiveness of individual agency and interagency protocols and systems.

COLLABORATION AND TRAINING WITH COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Since our last SART report, Williamson County team members have worked to promote awareness, support victims, and garner community involvement in the fight to hold perpetrators accountable and protect survivors of sexual assault. A highlight of those efforts include:

1. Team member attendance at the Conference on Crimes Against Women in Dallas, Texas
2. Participation at the Every Victim, Every Time Conference- hosted annually in Bryan, Texas, to bring together law enforcement, prosecutors, and victims services professionals for invaluable training through specialized topics and case studies
3. Promoting and participating in Amplify Wilco Day- a profit share event at a local business to support Hope Alliance
4. Participation in fundraising efforts for Hope Alliance, BRAVE Alliance, and the Children's Advocacy Center
5. BRAVE Alliance has worked with law enforcement agencies in our county to provide training on strangulation, allowing for the development of new patrol and investigative protocols
6. Team member participation in training with the Human Trafficking Institute, hosted at the Williamson County Sheriff's Office Training Center
7. Encouraging support and participation at community events amongst local law enforcement agencies
8. Worked to develop new victim services education materials to provide a streamlined approach to providing resources and support survivors

SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH PROCLAMATION

In April, 2025, Williamson County SART members collaborated to present a proclamation to the Williamson County Commissioners Court, declaring April 2025 as Sexual Assault Awareness Month. Team members were present in Commissioners Court and were able to share with the Court and members of the community the importance of the work done to minimize survivor re-traumatization, while also increasing efficiency within law enforcement response and the judicial process. The Proclamation was met with a unanimous vote of support.

CONCLUSION

As Williamson County grows, the work of SART continues to increase in impact. Our team seeks to meet the needs of survivors of sexually violent offenses from a trauma-informed lens, while collaborating amongst our members and with our community partners in an effective way to hold perpetrators accountable. It is our goal to continue to work together to protect survivors, pursue justice, and raise meaningful awareness in the community so that the citizens of Williamson County understand the importance of reporting these offenses, knowing that SART is prepared to walk alongside survivors from the moment they call for help through the conclusion of their involvement in the judicial process.

