



## USING THIS GUIDE

This Participant's Guide is intended to assist individual viewers of the video material outside of a facilitated group or classroom setting. The scenarios presented do not necessarily depict a correct or incorrect way to handle a situation. The goal is to prepare participants to later engage in discussion of the scenarios and topic and how it relates to them and to their agency policy and procedures. See the explanation for "Informational/Individual Viewing" on next page.

## VIEW THE VIDEO

To access this video online, visit the [POST Learning Portal](#).

## ABOUT THIS VIDEO

This training program is designed for California peace officers who may be called upon to conduct initial investigation of sexual assault cases, with a focus on unique investigative strategies, Trauma-Informed Approach, delayed reports, interviewing, evidence collection, and arrest considerations. Program segments include child sexual assault, victimology, interview preparations, scene management, and victim contact considerations. A special section emphasizing the peace officer's role and abilities in enhancing victims' long-term well-being is also included.

Utilizing realistic calls common to patrol officers, this program can enhance veteran officers' response and investigation of sexual assault calls while increasing newer officers' skill sets.

Expert commentary and facilitated discussions with current investigators and field experts are included to broaden the viewer's understanding of the many aspects of these very serious investigations.

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## GUIDE CONTENTS

### Video Viewing Options and Features

Describes how the training video is formatted and organized on screen and provides navigation instructions for facilitators or individual viewers. The video may be viewed in a single training session or broken up into shorter segments.

### Program Overview

Lists the main teaching points and provides general information that is examined in greater detail within each scenario.

### Scenarios

Each scenario features a brief overview and *Key Learning Points* to assist with quick review of the material during the presentation.

### Participant's Self-Assessment

A self-assessment is provided at the end of this guide and must be reviewed with the designated training manager or supervisor for the participant to receive training credit.



## VIDEO VIEWING OPTIONS AND FEATURES

Two different viewing options are offered with this training video: FACILITATED GROUP COURSE or INFORMATIONAL/INDIVIDUAL VIEWING.

### FACILITATED GROUP COURSE

The **Facilitated Group Course** option should be selected when the video is being used in a classroom or briefing setting. The material may be delivered in a single session or broken up over several days, such as delivery during briefing or roll call. The material is divided into tabbed sections that the facilitator may play in whatever order they feel best meets the training need (see Navigating the Video section below). Once the material has been covered in its entirety, the instructor, supervisor, or training manager (as designated by the department) may [submit a completed training roster](#) via POST EDI for CPT credit for participants.

### INFORMATIONAL / INDIVIDUAL VIEWING

The **Informational/Individual Viewing** option should be selected when a participant is viewing the video alone or without an instructor or supervisor present to facilitate the delivery of the material. This option should not be used in a group training session. This option is intended for participants who work in a remote location, for a smaller agency that cannot readily access group training, or for an individual who is simply interested in viewing the video for informational purposes. The segment order is preset, and the viewer will be guided through the video without live facilitator interaction.

At the discretion of the department-designated training manager or supervisor, participants of the Informational/Individual Viewing mode may receive CPT credit for viewing this video. To receive credit, individual viewers must be provided with the Participant's Guide (pdf). The individual watches the video and reviews and completes the Participant's Guide assessment as they follow along. The training manager or supervisor then facilitates a discussion of the video and assesses the participant's responses using the Participant Assessment Answer Key provided at the end of this guide. If the facilitator is satisfied that the participant has demonstrated an understanding of the concepts of the video, they may [submit a completed POST Course Roster](#) via EDI for CPT credit.

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Facilitators should contact POST's [Training Delivery and Compliance Bureau](#) at (916) 227-7748 or their POST [Regional Consultant](#) for questions about completing and submitting POST Course Rosters via POST EDI for training video completion.



## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

- Staying objective for each investigation is key to proper findings.
- Looking and remaining beyond the emotions of a call is important to good investigative approaches.
- The victim's safety (physical and emotional) is paramount to investigative processes.
- Knowing agency policy and investigative procedures in advance is critical to quality investigations.
- Proper interview techniques include knowing when, where, and if to interview.
- Clearly explaining investigative processes to victims and related parties is both expected and helpful.
- It is incumbent upon officers to know and provide information on local and statewide resources.
- The timing, place, and duration of interviews are usually dependent on the victim's emotional and physical well-being.
- Trauma may directly affect a survivor's ability to recall facts and the timing of that recollection.
- Asking victims *why* certain events occurred is rarely beneficial in sexual assault interviews.
- Victims are unaware of the type and depth of questions officers may be asking and they should be advised generally of the questions in advance.
- Officers should not misinterpret victims' inability to provide information as being uncooperative or refusing to assist.
- Properly explaining available services rather than just providing victims with the legally required "card" is extremely valuable to victims.
- A multi-disciplinary team approach helps to minimize victims' exposure to additional trauma.
- Minimal Facts Interviewing is often utilized with juveniles and developmentally disabled adults to initiate an investigation and to minimize re-traumatization.
- Providing privacy during assault investigations is required and appropriate.
- When practical, seeking advice of more experienced investigators is warranted.
- Setting the stage for difficult interviews aids victims in providing information.
- Delayed reporting never diminishes the need for a proper investigation.
- Providing victims extra time during interviews is beneficial.
- Many factors may affect the timing of a victim's reporting of an incident.
- Victims have the right to have a support person of their choosing and a certified sexual assault victim advocate present.

*Continued*

**PROGRAM OVERVIEW** CONTINUED

- Advising involved parties of body camera activations during interviews is appropriate in sexual assault investigations.
- It is critical to know from the onset of the investigation where potential evidence may exist.
- Allowing victims sufficient time to process events and respond during interviews is beneficial.
- Preparing interviewees before questioning is vital for obtaining valid and accurate information.
- Interviewers asking permission of victims during investigations aids in victim comfort and validation.
- A Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) exam may be requested and performed without a victim making a police report.

**SEGMENT 1 – UNIQUE INVESTIGATIVE STRATEGIES**

**A veteran and a newer officer respond to a P.C. 288 (child molestation) report at a familiar address where prior call history initially affects one officer's approach and interview with the victim's father. Case-specific details affect the actions the officers take.**

**KEY LEARNING  
POINTS**

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Remaining objective for each investigation is key to proper findings.

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Looking and remaining beyond the emotions of a call is important to good investigative approaches.

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The victim's safety (physical and emotional) is paramount to investigative processes.

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Knowing agency policy and investigative procedures in advance is critical to quality investigations.

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Proper interview techniques include knowing when, where, and if to interview.

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Clearly explaining investigative processes to victims and related parties is expected and valuable.

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It is incumbent upon officers to know and provide information on local and statewide victim resources.

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## SEGMENT 2 – TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACH

**An interview with two trauma and victim experts provides officers with valuable information specific to the victims whom officers are trying to assist through their investigations. Specific interviewing tips, principles of victimology, and best practices that safeguard victims while still providing for investigative needs are provided.**

### KEY LEARNING POINTS

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The timing, place, and duration of interviews are usually dependent on the victim's emotional and physical well-being.

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Trauma may directly affect a survivor's ability to recall facts and the timing of that recollection.

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Asking victims why certain events occurred is rarely beneficial in sexual assault interviews.

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Victims are unaware of the type and depth of questions officers may be asking and they should be advised generally of them in advance.

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Officers should not misinterpret victims' inability to provide information as being uncooperative or refusing to assist.

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Properly explaining available services rather than just providing victims with the legally required "card" is extremely valuable.

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A multi-disciplinary team approach help minimize victims' exposure to additional trauma.

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Minimal Facts Interviewing is often utilized with juveniles and developmentally disabled adults to initiate an investigation and to minimize re-traumatization.

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**SEGMENT 3 – INTERVIEWING CONSIDERATIONS**

**An officer responds to the police department lobby on a reported rape that occurred two years prior when the victim was a juvenile. He speaks with the victim and her friend.**

**KEY LEARNING POINTS**

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Providing privacy during assault investigations is required and appropriate.

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When practical, seeking advice of more experienced investigators is warranted.

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Setting the stage for difficult interviews aids victims in providing information.

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Delayed reporting never diminishes the need for a proper investigation.

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Providing victims extra time during interviews is beneficial.

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Many factors may affect the timing of a victim's reporting of an incident.

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Victims have the right to have a support person of their choosing and a certified sexual assault victim advocate present.

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**SEGMENT 4 – EVIDENCE COLLECTION AND ARREST DECISION**

**Officers respond to a hotel room on a report of a possible sexual assault. They interview the victim and collect evidence.**

**KEY LEARNING  
POINTS**

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Advising involved parties of body camera activations during interviews is appropriate in sexual assault investigations.

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Knowing from the onset of the investigation where potential evidence may exist is critical.

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Allowing victims sufficient time to process events and respond during interviews is beneficial.

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Preparing interviewees before questioning is vital for obtaining valid and accurate information.

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Interviewers asking permission of victims during investigations aids in victim comfort and validation.

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A Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) exam may be requested and performed without a victim making a police report.

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## CONCLUSION

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**After completing this course, participants should better understand the following as related to sexual assault investigations:**

- How officers can be better prepared in advance of the call
- Recognizing personal bias and maintaining objectivity
- The Trauma Informed Approach and aspects of victimology
- Challenges inherent to victim interviews
- Evidentiary considerations
- Rights of victims and officer responsibilities toward ensuring those rights are understood and protected
- Reasons reporting may be delayed
- Methods and tactics used to enhance communication, provide survivors with useful/mandated information, and are reflective of professionalism

**ASSESS WHAT  
YOU LEARNED**

The Participant's Guide Assessment is a separate document for individual viewers who wish to view the video outside a group or classroom setting and later work with the agency-designated trainer or supervisor for POST CPT credit.

This is not a formal testing tool. All answers should be evaluated by the trainer. The answers provided in the separate Facilitator's Guide match the video content and are listed for general guidance.

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

As you watch the training video in the Informational/Individual Viewing mode, follow along and answer the questions below. You may pause the video and view a section again if needed. The goal is for you to complete this assessment and then discuss the material with your designated agency training manager or facilitator.

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**Sexual assault investigations require, in essence, no different approaches and handling from other investigations regularly conducted by officers.**  
(circle one)

- A. True
- B. False

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**Which of the following is *not* a benefit of Minimal Facts Interviewing?**  
(circle one)

- A. Reduced exposure to interviews
- B. Faster gathering of incident details
- C. Highly trained interviewers involved
- D. Scheduling conducive to the many involved parties
- E. Often preferred when no victim safety conditions exist

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**Which of the following is *not* common with delayed reporting by a victim?** (circle one)

- A. A current event triggered the need to report
- B. Victim feels they can no longer conceal the incident
- C. It can take years or decades to report
- D. Social media may provide incident confirmation
- E. Diminishes investigative need

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**How might prior events negatively affect an officer's approach to an incident involving known persons?** (mark all that apply)

- A. Location familiarity aids in officer safety
- B. Bias may exist with either the contact or the officer
- C. Familiar persons may have enhanced communication
- D. Current circumstances may be defined by past experiences
- E. "Blind spots" may hinder officer awareness and safety

*Continued*



**ASSESS WHAT YOU LEARNED**  
CONTINUED

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**Which of the following is *not* reflective of the victim's responsiveness that officers can expect when questioning in sexual assault investigations?** (circle one)

- A. Delayed memories of the event(s)
- B. Concise and complete details
- C. Emotional detachment, even to a significant life event
- D. Varied sensitivity or emotions
- E. Incongruent flow of details
- F. Commendations for meritorious actions

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**Which of the following would indicate a non-present victim should likely be contacted by law enforcement?** (mark all that apply)

- A. Victim's safety at risk
- B. Suspect's identity still unknown
- C. Possesses perishable evidence
- D. Victim's family members are aware of the incident
- E. Victim's condition is deteriorated

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**Describe the investigative concerns related to additional persons being present during victim interviews:**

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**The results of an officer's handling of a sexual assault investigation are only minimally different both short and long-term than those of other cases typically investigated.**

- A. True
- B. False

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**Which of the following interviewer traits typically benefit interview outcomes?** (mark all that apply)

- A. Allowing flexibility in responses
  - B. Asking open-ended questions
  - C. Advising the victim whenever they are "off track"
  - D. Encouraging additional contact as new information is known
  - E. Being steadfast without acknowledging victim's varied emotions
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*Continued*



**ASSESS WHAT  
YOU LEARNED**  
CONTINUED

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**Which of the following are often considered during the initial phase of sexual assault investigations?** (mark all that apply)

- A. The need for search warrants
  - B. Notifications to victim's employer
  - C. Legal standing for evidence collection
  - D. Advanced notification to medical facility
  - E. PIO notifications
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