# Conversation Guide: Harassment Reporting Landing Page & Poster

## Warm-up Questions - 5-15 minutes (depending on whether show poster)

*NOTE how to share URL: dictate / Zoom chat / email / text*

Let’s start with a question...

I'd like you to imagine that you or a friend went to a VA medical clinic today for a doctor's appointment, and on the way in, a person said something rude and made a sexual gesture that made you or your friend feel uncomfortable. You or your friend think more about what happened and decide to report it to hopefully prevent it from happening to other people. What do you think you or your friend would do? I would find the person who was in authority to talk to the individual to stop this from happening again. Supervisor, HR representative, just someone who could bring this problem to light.

How would you find this person? I would the front desk.

*(don't / report it / talk with someone/police at VA / call 911 / google)*

* Can you tell me more about why?
* What do you think you or your friend would do next?
  + *(Google / Facebook / MHV / eBenefits / Contact center call or email / VA.gov / In person / \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_)*

### For sighted participants

Say that while you were at VA, you saw a poster about reporting harassment, but you're no longer there. How would you find information about reporting harassment now? I would probably go on the internet. The Department of Veterans Affairs website.

Have you gone to that website before? Yes ma’am

Do you know the url for that? I just google DepartmentofVeteransAffairs.gov

What information would you look up online?

* *(ask someone / google it? / VA.gov? / \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_)*

### For sighted participants on desktop

Now I'd like to show you a poster and get your feedback on it. *(share my screen with poster and give mouse control to participant so they can move around)*

* What are your initial impressions? Have you seen this before? I have seen this poster before. I am trying to scroll down. \*You may need to use your finger or I can move it for you.\* Yes I have seen this poster before. I think the poster provides a lot of good information when you are in that kind of situation.
* *(Note especially any sentiments/feelings they express re safety, comfort, trust, confidentiality)*
* *(Pause to allow as much time as the participant wants to read/process the poster)*
* What do you think you or your friend would do next if you wanted to report the interaction I described earlier--a person said something rude to you and made a sexual gesture that made you feel uncomfortable? Well, if I couldn’t talk to someone directly at the office, I would call one of these numbers to report this to ensure this did not happen again in the future. First, I would try to talk to some first because that is something that needs to be handled immediately.
* Which number would you call?
* If you were still at the facility, how would you decide how to report it? If I was at the VA I would either tell the police or talk to the front desk before calling the 800 number.
  + *(call 911 / call 800 # / talk to patient advocate / police / building security / \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_)*
* What other thoughts do you have about this poster? Can you scroll back up? My only question would be which VA Police are they about? Are they speaking on the security guards or is this a whole different department? Who are the VA Police? That popped out at me. Who exactly are they?

### For participants using a screen reader

Say that while you were at VA, someone mentioned that you could report harassment, but you're no longer there. How would you find information about reporting harassment now?

* *(ask someone / google it? / VA.gov? / \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_)*

What assistive technology are you using today?

How would you rate your level of experience with using a screen reader--beginner, intermediate, advanced, or expert?

How long have you been using a screen reader?

Are you wearing headphones today? I'm asking so I will be able to hear your screen reader during the session.

* ***(if on desktop)*** Could you please share your audio with me on Zoom?
* ***(if on mobile)*** Would it be possible for you to take them off and use your computer or mobile audio?

## Start screen sharing

Are you OK continuing with the session? We can take a break if you want to.

I'm going to share with you a web page. While you're looking at it, I would like you to *talk aloud* as much as possible so that you share what you're thinking, what you're doing, what you like, what you dislike, and what you're unsure about.

I would like you to share your screen with me so I can watch you use the web page in your web browser. *(refer to Screen sharing instructions above, if needed)*

What kind of device are you using today? *(Phone / Computer) iPad*

I'm going to (spell/put into the Zoom chat) a link for you to open (<https://staging.va.gov/hrt>). *(If asked, reassure that this is a legitimate link to what I want you to test.)*

Do you see the link? \*Technical issues with sharing\* I see the link, but when I click on it I cannot share my screen.

## Veteran Tasks

### Task 1: [Explore landing page] - 15 minutes

***(for everyone)*** Let's say that you found this page on VA.gov.

What are your initial impressions of this page? Have you seen this page before? I think I have seen this page before. So, I would like you to talk out loud what you are looking at. I see that they have the call 911 or the VA police, but I still have the question about the VA Police, what to expect when filing a report, but my question is what is the timeline and what would happen?

Looking at all this what would you think? I would prefer to get a response immediately but no longer than an hour. I would think if it took longer than those emotions may rise, memories could fade, feeling of defeat, and worried that it is not looked at as important. I could feel like my report may just fall into a black hole depending on how many reports they get that day.

You would prefer to get a response quickly to avoid reliving the situation? Yes. My other question would be, the individuals taking the phone calls are they Veterans are they contractors, and they employees of the VA, or medical professionals? Who am I talking to? Is it someone who could provide me information on this situation and ensure me that action will be taken and how long it will be before action is taken? I just want to ensure confidential, so the individual does not know I reported them, especially if I worked directly with that person. Even more so if they are not just doing this to me but to other employees as well, that is on one hand I want it to remain confidential but on the other hand I want them to know this way they know not to mess with me. I would also want to be moved to a different section.

I am hearing you say two things. If you work with that person, you may want them to know so they no longer mess with you, or you may not want them to know because fear of punishment. Either way you would want to be moved? Yes.

* *(Note especially any sentiments/feelings they express re safety, comfort, trust, confidentiality)*
* *(Pause to allow as much time as the participant wants to read/process the page)*

What do you think you or your friend would do next if they wanted to report the interaction I described earlier--a person said something rude and made a sexual gesture that made you or your friend feel uncomfortable? Well like I said I would try to find the supervisor first, but I would definitely do a follow up to make sure it is not being blown off. If it happened to someone else, I would hope they would feel comfortable coming to me this way I can help them fix the issue and recommend them to get mental/emotional support because in situations like this, people tend to victim blame themselves when it is someone else taking advantage of them.

* *(call 911 / call VA police / call 800 # / in person / call at a VA health facility / Vet Center / regional office / national cemetery / \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_)*

What do you think will happen next? I would hope the person is informed they were reported, has been present to the chain of command, and told this is unacceptable behavior within the VA system. Majority of the time individuals who harass others they have done it before, and the message that this kind of behavior is not tolerated. They need to make it a serious issue instead of blowing it off. Definitely needs to be handled immediately.

What other thoughts do you have about this page? I am just looking at the hours here. So what happens before and after these hours, and on Thursday it is only opened 9 – 1? What would they do if something happened before or after that time? I think it should be 9-4 every day. What if something happens at 4 on a Friday? That individual would have to carry that with them all weekend. I think most businesses open at 8 and close at 5. If the person is torn with what happened to them at 4 what resources are available to these individuals. I think you should have a way to report over the weekend. Especially if they are questioning what happened to them, and then they feel defeated having to wait until Monday to report. There should be a resource in place to help get them through the weekend that is readily available. That is my honest thought.

Did you see anything on this page about a 24-hour resource like that? Let me see. I guess my question too, what kind of message does the Veteran get after hours? I do not see anything on here about 24 hours. Wait. Okay. Right here how to quickly get the help you need, the last bullet. But it goes against what the bullet above it states with the hours. It is saying 24/7, but on top it is giving hours. So back to my question, what kind of message are the Veterans getting when calling after hours?

What would you do if something did happen after 4pm? I would still try to call and hopefully I would get someone. This may bring me down if no one answers when I really need help.

Did you notice that the phones in the two bullets are different? Yes, I did notice that, but Veteran Crisis line could be for any crisis, but the top number is strictly for harassment.

So you are looking strictly looking for a number that handles harassment? Yes, I do not think the crisis line would be able to help me with filing a report of harassment.

* Feedback on the information in it?
* Feedback on how the information is organized?

## Post-Task Interview - 15 minutes

*Type into #feedback-backchannel: "Any questions you want me to ask?"*

What thoughts do you have about what you've reviewed today?

* What was *helpful* about what you've reviewed today? Looking at this I am wondering could this really give us what we need. Definitely has resource in where to start, but the final outcome is still in question. It states one business day, how many reports are they receiving in a day. If there are 50 cases and mine is the 51st that day, by the time you get to mine, and I have come to terms with what happened and a week later they are finally calling me, and I am having to relive what happened to me and bringing me back to my emotional state. And you are still waiting for a resolution, and you are stuck in a pit hole all by yourself.
* That is exactly why we are doing this today. This is why your feedback is so important to us.
* I am hearing is waiting a while to hear back to you may end up bringing more trauma. Yes.
* What was *not* helpful about what you've reviewed today?
* What would you like to *change* about what you've reviewed today? Let me see. This poster we are saying to report harassment at the VA. Harassment is a crisis. I think the third bullet is throwing me off. I think the crisis bullet needs to be removed, and this poster directs strictly harassment and how to handle harassment.
* Would you totally remove this bullet or move it somewhere else? I would move it closer to the end.
* And you are saying that because it is not dealing with the rest the information/ Yes that is what I am saying. That is not what I was envisioning when talking to someone.

We would like the harassment reporting resources to meet the needs of ALL Veterans who may have been harassed at a VA site. If you've ever experienced any type of harassment at VA, and are willing to share, we would like to know a little more about your experiences. I'm not asking for details, and I don't want you to re-live these difficult experiences. Your feedback today has been valuable, even if you decide to not answer the questions I'm about to ask. If you share anything about your experiences or someone else's with me, what you say will remain confidential. Are you comfortable if I ask a few more questions?

* Have you or anyone you know ever been made to feel uncomfortable by someone else at VA while applying for, using, or communicating about your VA benefits or health care? This could be in person, over the phone, or in an email or text message. And it could be a range of things, like someone whistling or making sexual comments, making negative comments about gender, race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation, giving unwanted attention, or making inappropriate gestures. You don't need to share any details, you can stop at any time, or you could skip this question. *(yes / no / decline to answer) No*
* If you or your friend was harassed, was it reported? *(no / yes)*
* If so, *how* was it reported? *(phone call / in person / \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_)*
* If it wasn't reported, what were the barriers to reporting it?

How would you prefer to report any future harassment? *(phone call / in person / online somehow / \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_) Current Karen would talk to the person directly to tell them the behavior was inappropriate, and I would be reporting them to our supervisor until the situation was taken care of. The younger Karen would not have been that strong. But I would report them in person to my supervisor because it happened in person.*

*(If they share anything about a harassment experience, say...)*

* I am sorry you (or your friend) had this experience. We appreciate you sharing this with us. Your story will inform how we provide resources to help Veterans in the future.
* If you (or your friend) want to report your experience with harassment, that can be done in person at a VA site or by calling the VA Inspector General Hotline at 800-488-8244.

Is there anything else that we haven't talked about that you think I should know? No it just goes back to how many reports are taken a day how long it will take to get back to our Veterans.

## Thank You and Closing - 5 minutes

We really appreciate you taking the time to share your thoughts with us today. Your feedback is so helpful to us as we continue to work on providing resources for reporting harassment. We're hoping that by providing such resources, we can make VA safer for everyone.

I'm going to stop the recording now. *(STOP recording)*

Before we end this session, are there any questions or concerns that you wanted to express? No none other than what I discussed earlier.

Thank you so much again!

*(if this session didn't appear to trigger a traumatic response)* And I hope you enjoy the rest of your day!