



PROCLAMATION

Recognizing April 2026 as Sexual Assault Awareness Month

WHEREAS, the nonprofit Orange County Rape Crisis Center provides support to survivors of sexual violence, their loved ones, and community professionals and has served Hillsborough, Chapel Hill, Carrboro, and surrounding areas since 1974; and

WHEREAS, the Hillsborough Police Department partners with the Orange County Rape Crisis Center as a resource for residents who have fallen victim to rape or sexual assault; and

WHEREAS, the Orange County Rape Crisis Center works with the county's two school systems and other groups to provide students with age-appropriate information about violence prevention, reaching over 10,000 youth and adults each year; and

WHEREAS, the Orange County Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Response Committee is bringing together members of law enforcement, the medical community, the legal system and other community advocates to improve services for survivors of sexual assault who come forward; and

WHEREAS, one in five American women have been sexually assaulted at some point in their lives; and

WHEREAS, rape is the costliest crime to its survivors in the United States, totaling over \$3 trillion in lifetime costs considering factors such as medical cost, lost earnings, pain, suffering and lost quality of life; and

WHEREAS, 81% of women and 24% of men in the United States have experienced some form of sexual or physical violence committed by an intimate partner; and

WHEREAS, trans and gender non-conforming people, people with disabilities and children face the highest rates of sexual violence in our country; and

WHEREAS, victim-blaming continues to be an enormous problem in instances of rape and sexual assault; and

WHEREAS, the Orange County Rape Crisis Center is working to stop sexual violence and its impact through support, education and advocacy;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Mark Bell, mayor of the Town of Hillsborough, do hereby proclaim April 2026 as Sexual Assault Awareness Month in the Town of Hillsborough and encourage all residents to speak out against sexual violence and to support their local community's efforts to prevent and respond to these appalling crimes.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused this seal of the Town of Hillsborough to be affixed this 23rd day of March in the year 2026.

Mark Bell, Mayor
Town of Hillsborough