

**Obama administration broadens definition of rape**  
**Reuters**  
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WASHINGTON, Jan 6 — The Obama administration today broadened the definition of the crime of rape to include more forms of sexual assaults such as rape of men and oral or anal sex, the first major revision to the definition in more than 80 years.

The new definition will include any gender of the victim and attacker and also assaults in which a victim cannot give consent because the individual has been incapacitated by drugs or alcohol, is under the age of consent, or is mentally or physically incapable of consent, the Justice Department said.

"This long-awaited change to the definition of rape is a victory for women and men across the country whose suffering has gone unaccounted for over 80 years," US Vice President Joe Biden said in a statement.

While reports of rape to authorities are likely to rise, the Justice Department said that will only reflect more accurate reporting rather than the number of actual attacks increasing.

"This new, more inclusive definition will provide us with a more accurate understanding of the scope and volume of these crimes," US Attorney General Eric Holder said in a statement.

Based on reports from law enforcement authorities, the FBI estimated in 2010 that there were almost 85,000 forcible rapes under the old definition, the latest raw data available, and that one occurs in the United States every 6.2 minutes.

Preliminary FBI statistics show that the forcible rape rate declined 5.1 per cent in the first half of 2011 compared to the same period of the previous year.

For years, interest groups have been pushing for a change in the definition of forcible rape, which since 1927 was defined as the carnal knowledge of a woman, forcibly and against her will. That included penetration of a woman's vagina, but excluded oral or anal penetration and the rape of men.

The new definition is: "The penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus with any body part or object, or oral penetration by a sex organ of another person, without the consent of the victim." — Reuters

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