

Information on support,  
sexual assault, consent,  
contacting the police, victim's  
rights, how to make formal  
complaints and more.

# DEALING WITH SEXUAL ASSAULT

IT IS NOT YOUR FAULT

THERE IS SUPPORT AVAILABLE

IT IS NEVER TOO SMALL OF AN EXPERIENCE TO GET  
SUPPORT FOR

IT'S ALRIGHT TO FEEL CONFLICTED, CONFUSED, SCARED,  
ANGRY AND ANY OTHER EMOTIONS

YOU DID NOT DESERVE TO BE TREATED THAT WAY



"Sexual assault is a term used to describe a  
range

- You have the right to take a pause or stop entirely at ANY moment and your partner has to respect that. Your partner has the right to stop at ANY point as well
- Consenting looks like...nodding, smiling, participating, initiating, and verbal consent
- Consenting sounds like..."YES! I like that!"  
(Remember that being forced to say yes is not consenting)
- Not consenting looks like...staying quiet, hesitating, being still, frowning, pulling away, crying
- Not consenting sounds like..."Not today, no, maybe later, I don't want to", avoiding the topic. You cannot consent when unconscious or under the influence of drugs/alcohol
- If you did not consent then you have every right to ask your friends and trusted people for support, to talk to the police and counsellors, or contact helplines like Youthline. You deserve a trusting and consensual relationship; if someone can't provide that basic safety, then it may be best to leave that relationship.

S ( ) - Get to a safe space and call 111

E ( ) - Avoid showering, avoid removing clothing and avoid moving any items from where the assault occurred

Sexual assault can be reported at any point after the incident (even years later). Contact the New Zealand police by phone (call 105 for non-emergency) or in

# What happens in a police investigation

**Victim support** - independent from police, are applied for by specialist support agency, there to support you and help you through the process. Helps with mental support.

**Medical examination** - addresses injuries/sexually transmitted infections/pregnancy and collecting forensic evidence in case you decide to press charges in the future

**Formal interview** - right to request a police officer of your preference of female or male interviewer. This may be recorded on video for the courts. Cannot be copied or shared without the court's consent

**Investigation** - Police talk to people who could have information about case

# Prosecution

**Prosecutions** - It will be decided whether or not you can prosecute (press charges and proceed to the court process) after evidence is collected. You will be consulted by the police before the decision is made and you decide if you still want to continue with the charge.

**Victim Advisor** - Victims of sexual assault will be given access to specialist advisors. They will explain the court process so that you understand, and help you with finding a support system. They are different to victim support.

**Being A Witness** - The formal interview video may be showed to the court and then you will be called in as a witness. An official notice will be sent to your home about when and where you need to be, or a police officer or your sexual violence victim adviser will let you know. They will also talk to you about what you will do in court.

The court will be a 'closed' court, meaning that the public cannot attend when you present your evidence.

**This information was taken from the:  
Information for victims of sexual assault booklet:**

New Zealand Police Nga Pirihimana O Aotearoa. (accessed 2023).

**For victims of sexual violence booklet:**

Victims information, Ministry of Justice Te Tihōte Ture (accessed 2023)

**Media coverage** - “In cases of sexual violence, media are automatically forbidden to report your name or any details that may identify you.”

**Safety at court** - “If at any time you are concerned about your safety at court, talk to a police officer or court security officer.”

**At court** - “The court will be a ‘closed’ court. This means that members of the public cannot be there. [...] Most courts have separate waiting areas for people who have been called as witnesses, but it is likely that you will still see the defendant’s family and friends in and around the court.”

You can do a court visit beforehand to meet the prosecutor and see the layout of the court.

**The verdict and sentence** - At the end of a trial the defendant will be found either guilty or not guilty. Sometimes the jury may not reach a decision, in that case there might be another trial.

“If the defendant was found not guilty it doesn’t mean you weren’t believed. Cases are a matter of law and evidence.”

**This information was taken from the For victims of sexual violence booklet:**

Victims information, Ministry of Justice Te Tahi o te Ture (accessed 2023)



**Appeals** - “Both the prosecutor and the offender have the right to appeal the verdict and the sentence. This means a higher court will look at the case again. If this happens, the

# Your rights in the prosecution process

**The right to information about services and options available to you**, for example medical treatment, financial support and legal services

**The right to be told within a reasonable time what's happening with your case** , for example which charges



# The Victim Financial Assistance Scheme

"The Victim Financial Assistance Scheme (VAS) helps survivors of serious crime in New Zealand to cover some of the costs related to the crime. It is administered by victim support on behalf of the Ministry of Justice. Under VAS, Victim Support can help survivors of sexual violence to contribute to costs that result from when the crime happened, reporting the crime, or for the survivor and a support person to attend court proceedings."

## Support for costs

The Sexual Violence Grant is a one-off cash grant of up to \$500. Eligibility depends on the date of the crime. See below for details: [to tu](#)

# Support for travelling to court

"Travel: return flights (domestic or international)

## Support people

"The survivor can decide whether they wish to travel alone or bring a support person." "The Sexual Violence Court Attendance Grant provides survivors and their support person with a small daily allowance towards other costs when attending court." "The support person must be 18yrs+"

## Other financial support

"If you suffer an injury as a result of sexual assault or sexual violence or would like therapy, ACC may be able to help cover some of your costs. Contact ACC Sensitive Claims on 0800 735 566.

If you suffer an injury as a result of sexual assault or sexual violence, Work & Income may be able to help you with your living expenses. [...] Contact Work & Income on 0800 559 009"



