



# GETTING MEDICAL AND LEGAL HELP AFTER SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Sexual violence causes injury and hurt. You can access medical care, including a medical examination. A medical examination may be needed to collect any physical evidence that can help the police. **You do not have to have a medical examination if you don't want to.**

Sexual Assault Services located within major hospitals can provide you with medical and psychological support.

## Medical Care

Experiencing sexual violence might mean you feel different in your body or have injuries that keep hurting. Visiting a doctor or hospital can help you to get the treatment that you need. If you don't want to or can't visit a doctor or hospital, and it is not an emergency there are other places you can go to get help. You can visit your local community health centre or find your local Women's health centre [HERE](#). Calling Health Direct on **1800 022 222** will connect you directly to a medical professional that you can speak with. If you are from the LGBTIQ+ community you may be able to get support from [ACON's Community Care service](#).

## Mental Health Care

Sexual violence can impact your mental health. There are lots of free support services in Australia that can help you if you are feeling suicidal, depressed, anxious or have other mental health worries. Speak to your doctor about your mental health. If you can't or don't want to speak with a doctor you can call Lifeline on **13 11 14** at any time of the day or night to speak with a trained support worker. You can also visit the [Lifeline website](#) to text or chat online with someone if you don't want to talk on the phone.

## Legal help

If you have been a victim of sexual violence you have rights under the Charter of Victim's Rights. You can view the charter [HERE](#).

Getting legal assistance can help you make choices about what to do before and after you make a report of sexual violence. It can also inform you of your rights and give you information to improve your understanding about the process of reporting and the services that can assist you.

You can read more important legal information [HERE](#)

You may be able to get free legal advice and support through [Legal Aid NSW](#).

Other helpful legal services include the **Refugee Advice and Casework Service – RACS** (Call (02) 8355 7227).

You may also want to contact **Victims Services NSW** (Call **1800 633 063**). They provide information, referrals and programs to victims of crime in NSW.

## For Visa Holders

Survivors of domestic, family or sexual violence who are visa holders are sometimes worried that contacting the police may affect their visa status. They have often been told by the person or people who have hurt them that their visa could be cancelled, or they could be deported. If you have experienced domestic, family or sexual violence and are concerned about your visa, you can seek free, confidential legal advice so you know your rights and can make informed choices.

The Immigration Advice and Rights Centre (IARC) has a free service for survivors of domestic, family or sexual violence who need legal advice about their visa. IARC provides confidential legal advice, assistance and referrals to other support services. IARC provides priority appointments for people who have experienced domestic, family and sexual violence and are on a temporary visa or are unsure about their visa status.

→ You can contact IARC via the enquiry form on the [website](#), by phone on (02) 8234 0700 or by email at [info@iarc.org.au](mailto:info@iarc.org.au). IARC can also provide an interpreter if you need one.

