

LEGAL ADVICE & REFERRAL SERVICE FOR VICTIM-SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL ASSAULT

Answering women's legal questions about Victoria's public disclosure laws

Some victim-survivors of sexual assault have questions about the legal issues around telling their story or being identified publicly.

Women's Legal Service Victoria now provides free, confidential legal advice and referrals for women who want to know how the current laws affect them.

- The legal advice and referral line operates every weekday from 9am to 5pm.
- Our lawyers can advise individual women on how the current laws might affect them.
- Our lawyers are all women.
- Our lawyers work within a trauma-informed framework and specialise in legal issues arising from violence against women.
- Our lawyers can assist women with referrals to other services if appropriate.

How to contact us

- Metro Melbourne callers - phone (03) 8622 0600
- Regional callers - phone 1800 133 302
- If you are not able to contact us by telephone:
 - Please email disclose@womenslegal.org.au with your name only
 - We will email you back to ask for extra information you need to provide so we can assist you

When should victim-survivors get legal help?

If you are a victim-survivor of sexual assault you should speak to a lawyer if:

- You would like to speak publicly about your experience
- You are concerned about the legal implications of speaking publicly

What does the law currently say?

- In Victoria, the law puts limits on people's ability to speak publicly or publish information about a sexual assault.
- Publishing information includes posting on social media, writing an article, speaking at a public event or talking to the media.
- You can apply to the court for permission to publish information or speak publicly about a sexual assault.
- If you speak publicly or publish details of a sexual assault without getting the court's permission first you may be charged with an offence.

Support Services

If you need immediate assistance, call 000

Specialist sexual assault counselling:

Sexual Assault Crisis Line

5pm-9am weeknights, 24 hours a day on weekends and public holidays

www.sacl.com.au

1800 806 292

Counselling, support and information about sexual assault and family violence:

1800 Respect

24 hours a day, seven days a week

www.1800respect.org.au

1800 737 732

Help to achieve safety from sexual assault in the context of family violence:

Safe Steps Family Violence Response Centre

24 hours a day, seven days a week

www.safesteps.org.au

1800 015 188

Advice for men about Victoria's public disclosure laws

Victoria Legal Aid will be providing an advice line for male victim-survivors of sexual assault that will commence operation shortly. We will provide contact information about that service as soon as it is available.

14 September 2020

Women's Legal and our position on the current law

Women's Legal Service Victoria has been advocating for women's rights to live free from violence for almost 40 years.

We wholeheartedly support a change to the law so victim-survivors can tell their stories publicly - or maintain their privacy, if that's what they want to do.