

It is important to understand:

- You are in control of your information and what happens to it
- You can decide if you want the matter investigated
- You can also change your mind
- You can ask questions and express your opinion
- It is our job to make sure that you understand what's going on, and we will explain things as many times as you need
- Your case will be investigated by an appropriately trained police officer
- Nobody, under any circumstances, deserves to be sexually assaulted
- There is no acceptable explanation for sexual assault
- There is no normal or typical response to being sexually assaulted
- Sexual assault is a crime

You are not alone

Sexual assault can happen to anyone regardless of age, ability, social class, gender, ethnic background, or sexual orientation.

Sexual assault can be committed by anyone regardless of their relationship to you. The offender could be a family member, friend, acquaintance, stranger, work colleague, partner or ex-partner.

It doesn't matter who they are or how you know them, sexual assault is a crime.

Sexual assault can happen without violence or threat of violence.

There is help available.

How long will the investigation take?

The length of an investigation varies. The detective in charge of your case will keep in contact with you and make sure you are up to date with the progress of the investigation every step of the way.

If the offender is charged:

- The detective will talk to you about what to expect during the court process
- The length of the court process is different in every case for a range of reasons
- Some cases can take a long time to finalise at court, sometimes more than two years
- Most of the time while the case is going through the courts you will not be required to attend court
- If your case proceeds to a trial, you will have to attend court while the trial is held and talk about what happened to you
- We will ensure you have counselling and/or support through the court process if you want it
- We will keep you informed about what is happening at court, even when you're not there

THE DETECTIVE IN CHARGE OF YOUR CASE IS:

NAME: _____

PHONE: _____

EMAIL: _____

Please call if you have any questions or further information

This command has a Sexual Violence Portfolio Holder (SVPH) who supervises all sexual violence investigations:

SVPH name: _____

SVPH phone: _____

We can also put you in touch with Gay & Lesbian Liaison Officers (GLOs), Aboriginal Community Liaison Officers (ACLOs) or Multicultural Community Liaison Officers (MCLOs).

The local Sexual Assault Service (counselling and support) is:

Name of service: _____

Phone: _____

Full Stop Australia: **1800 385 578**, www.fullstop.org.au



Scan the QR code for more information about support services.



Please consider giving us some anonymous feedback about your experience of reporting to police.

You have reported a sexual assault to the police

What happens next?

We acknowledge that it has likely taken a great deal of strength and courage to report your assault, and we assure you that the response you receive from us will be respectful, non-judgmental, supportive, and understanding.

What happened to you is a crime. It is not your fault.

This brochure is for adult survivors of sexual assault and contains information about:

- Police processes
- Making a statement
- What is an AVO?
- What is a SAIK?
- Police investigation
- Police contacts
- Counselling and support contacts



What will the police do now?

We will investigate your case by gathering evidence. This may include written statements, clothing, forensic material, photographs, CCTV, phone records etc.

Once we have sufficient evidence, we may charge the offender and bring them before the court.

If you don't want us to charge the offender, we won't. And if you change your mind later, you can contact us, and we will resume the investigation.

Many types of evidence, like forensic evidence, CCTV, and even someone's memory of what happened, will degrade or get lost over time. So even if you don't want us to charge the offender, we would like to gather all the available evidence now and preserve it in case you change your mind in future.

We will consult with you about the evidence we collect.

Sexual assault is a serious crime and there is no time limit on reporting it or prosecuting it.

What is an AVO?

AVO stands for Apprehended Violence Order.

An AVO is a legally binding order that restricts the offender's behaviour and/or movements to protect you from them.

Every AVO is different, depending on the circumstances, but may include preventing the offender from approaching you or contacting you.

We may obtain an AVO to protect you if we believe that you are unsafe without one.

What is a police statement?

A statement is a written document that outlines your evidence – what you saw or heard or felt.

It involves a detective typing as you recount, as best as possible, the assault in detail. If you cannot remember all the information, or do not know the answers, that is OK.

Making a statement can often take several hours. You might want to get it all over and done with at once, or you might want to do it in several sessions over time – that is up to you.

We usually take your statement in a private room at the police station, but we can go to your home or a counsellor's office as well.

During the statement we will ask you lots of questions in order to gather all the detail that we need.

Some questions might make you feel embarrassed or uncomfortable. There is no need to feel this way - we are people, we are professionals, and this is our job. Nothing you say will embarrass or offend us, and it is important that we gather detail about what happened to you.

Some questions might make you feel like we doubt you or judge you, but this is definitely not the case. We know that you are not responsible for what happened to you.

We may ask you about things like what you were wearing or what you were drinking because we need to know as much as possible about what happened, and about the offender's behaviour. There is no excuse for sexual assault, no matter what you were wearing or how much you were drinking.

Making a statement could be healing, or it could be traumatic, or it could be a bit of both. Every single person has a different experience, and we will do everything we can to make it as safe and positive as possible.

You can have a support person with you if you want one, but it is best if that person is not a witness to the incident.

If you don't want to make a statement you don't have to.

What is a SAIK?

SAIK stands for Sexual Assault Investigation Kit.

You may be asked if you want to participate in a SAIK if you have recently been sexually assaulted (ie. in the last 7 days).

A SAIK involves collecting potential evidence of the sexual assault from your body, such as obtaining DNA swabs or documenting any injuries. It takes place at a NSW Health Sexual Assault Service (which is usually in a hospital) with a specialist doctor or nurse and a sexual assault counsellor.

You are in control of the examination and can stop at any time.

You can choose whether or not to release the evidence collected in the SAIK to us. If you do, we will have it examined but only use the evidence if you agree.

Many people who have been sexually assaulted worry about their body, sexually transmitted infections, and pregnancy or have symptoms such as pain or bleeding. The sexual assault service is free and can help you with these issues as well, even if you don't participate in a SAIK.

If you don't want to participate in a SAIK you don't have to.

Police investigation

The detective in charge of your case will investigate by obtaining further evidence which may include:

- Written statements from you, and other people who witnessed any part of the assault, or who you have told about the assault
- Forensic evidence like examinations of clothing, bedding, fingerprints, SAIK etc
- Other evidence like CCTV, other recordings, phone records, photographs, medical or other records
- Interviewing the offender. There are lots of legal rules around this, and we can't make the offender talk to us if they don't want to. We will also not interview them if you don't want us to consider charging them.