

AN INFORMATION GUIDE FOR ALL VICTIMS/SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL ASSAULT

**Victim Services Unit
Halton Regional Police Service**

Halton Regional Police Service
2485 North Service Road West
Oakville, Ontario L6M 3H8
Phone: 905.825.4777
www.haltonpolice.ca

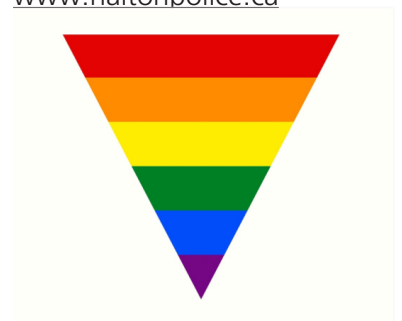


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THE CANADIAN VICTIMS BILL OF RIGHTS

On April 23, 2015, the Victims Bill of Rights Act received Royal Assent. The majority of the provisions and amendments in the Victims Bill of Rights Act, including the creation of the [*Canadian Victims Bill of Rights*](#), came into force on July 23, 2015.

The *Canadian Victims Bill of Rights* provides the following rights to victims of crime:

Right to information

Victims have the right to receive information about the justice system, and about the services and programs available to them. Victims may also obtain specific information on the progress of the case, including information on the investigation, prosecution and sentencing of the person who harmed them.

Right to protection

Victims have the right to have their security and privacy considered at all stages of the criminal justice process, and to have reasonable and necessary protection from intimidation and retaliation. Victims also have the right to ask for a testimonial aid at court appearances.

Right to participation

Victims have the right to present victim impact statements and have them considered in court. Victims also have the right to express their views about decisions that affect their rights.

Victims have been provided with more meaningful participation in the criminal justice system through changes that:

- require judges to include in records of bail proceedings that they have considered the victim's safety and security;
- add the acknowledgement of harm done to victims and the community as a sentencing objective under the Criminal Code;
- allow victims to use a testimonial aid when they present their victim impact statement in court;
- allow victims to bring a photo of the victim to court while giving their victim impact statement;
- provide a standard form for victim and community impact statements to ensure consistency in how victims describe to the court the impact the crime had on them, including any physical or emotional harm, property damage, or financial loss; and
- allow victims to include a picture or a drawing in their victim impact statement if this helps them to better express the impact the crime had on them.

Right to seek restitution

Victims have the right to have the court consider making a restitution order, and having an unpaid restitution order enforced through a civil court. Victims need to request a standard form from the Crown attorney or a police officer to claim losses.

WE ARE HERE TO HELP

We recognize this is a very difficult time for you. The Halton Regional Police Service (HRPS) is here to provide assistance and resources. It is our duty to conduct a professional and thorough investigation. It is our goal to provide you with information and resources to assist you as you move forward in your recovery.

We recognize that it can be overwhelming to navigate the various organizations and phone numbers. Please know that this is normal. The HRPS Victim Services Unit (VSU) can help you with these first steps. The VSU staff and volunteers will be able to discuss your needs and help you find the best service match for your personal needs and situation. They are knowledgeable about all of the community programs, including LGBTQ and support, and financial options. They are available to meet with you in person or over the phone at your convenience.

In this resource guide you will find information on sexual assault investigations, the criminal justice process, community resources, financial assistance programs, professional counselling and support services in Halton Region.



WHAT IS SEXUAL ASSAULT?

Sexual assault is any unwanted sexual touching that occurs in circumstances of a sexual nature and violates the sexual integrity of the victim. It can include many types of touching or activity, from kissing to sexual intercourse. Sexual assault can happen to anyone, of any gender, sexual orientation, race or income level.

Sexual assault can cause trauma. It can result in unpleasant feelings, thoughts, sensations and emotions both during and after the sexual assault. Responses to highly stressful situations vary from person to person and not all people will experience the same reactions at the same level of intensity, nor for the same length of time. However, it is important to recognize that whatever the reaction is, it is **normal** to feel overwhelmed by the process. If HRPS lays criminal charges both the Crown's office and the Victim/Witness Assistance Program will work with police to guide you through the process.

Sexual assault can be committed by anyone; a stranger, a friend, a partner, a family member or a person in a position of authority.

What does it mean to consent to sexual activity?

Consent is the voluntary and ongoing agreement, given equally by participants, to engage in a specific sexual activity. Consent must be given at the time of the sexual activity in question, by the parties involved, and can be revoked by any participant at any time even during the activity. As soon as there has been a revocation of consent, the activity must end. Consent means that the parties understand the activity that is to take place, the identity of their partner, and the sexual nature of that particular activity, and that they are able to say no to anything at any point.

Some examples of when consent **IS NOT GIVEN** are (this list is not exhaustive):

- You are unconscious;
- You are incapable of giving consent by the use/administration of drugs and/or alcohol;
- You fear the consequences of not consenting;
- You feel threatened or intimidated into consenting;
- You are coerced into consenting (compelled through the use of intimidation, threats, misuse of a position of trust or authority, manipulation, trickery, etc.)
- You are physically forced into complying;
- You say "no" through either your words or conduct (e.g. crying, kicking, turning away, saying "not right now", putting your clothes back on, etc.);
- You have a mental or physical disability or health issue that prevents you from providing valid and lawful consent;

Do I have to say "no" to show that I do not consent?

No. You can show that you do not consent by your words or actions, such as struggling, trying to leave or making excuses to try and get out of the situation. If it is necessary to use reasonable force to protect yourself from being sexually assaulted — use it.

What if I agree to the sexual activity at first, and then I change my mind?

You can say NO to anything at any time.

What about intoxication?

A person has to have the capacity to consent to sexual activity. A person who is extremely intoxicated by drugs or alcohol *may* not have the capacity to consent to sexual activity. A court would look at all of the circumstances to determine whether that person had the mental capacity to consent to the sexual activity.

YOUR OPTIONS

What are my options after I have been sexually assaulted?

The following options are available to all victims/survivors of sexual assault, with the exception of a sexual assault within a current or former intimate heterosexual or LGBTQ relationship (see page 9):

1 REPORT

You may choose to report the assault to police and provide a statement by calling the non-emergency number at 905-825-4777 ext.5239. In all non-emergency reports, you will be contacted by a member of the Victim Services Unit to review your options to ensure that you have an understanding of the process going forward. You will be offered medical care including the sexual assault evidence kit through the Regional Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Treatment Centre (Nina's Place) at Joseph Brant Hospital. Do not wash your clothing or bedding as it could compromise any available forensic evidence such as bodily fluids that could assist in the investigation now or a future date.

2 KIT

You may choose to have a Sexual Assault Evidence Kit completed at the hospital. You then have the choice of requesting police involvement or not. The kit will be held for up to one year.

3 LEGAL ADVICE

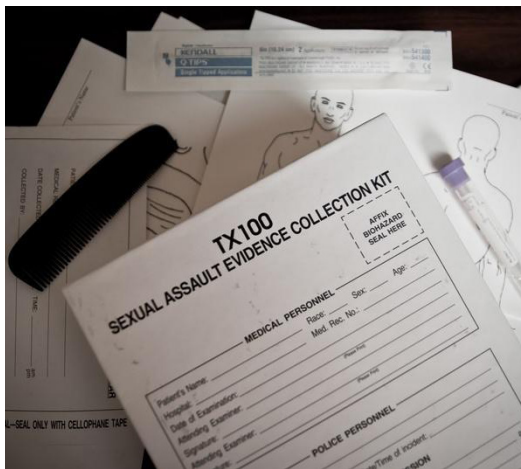
You can contact 1-855-226-3904 by phone or go on line at [Ontario.ca/page/independent-legal-advice-sexual-assault-victims](https://ontario.ca/page/independent-legal-advice-sexual-assault-victims) to access 4 free hours of independent legal advice. This legal advice can inform you of the different options such as reporting to police, suing in civil court or applying for compensation. It is available to anyone 16 years of age or older and, whether or not you have already reported to Police.



4 NO LEGAL ACTION

You may choose to refrain from taking any action. It is recommended that you reach out for help through your personal support network, community sexual assault resource staff, LGBTQ and community resources trained professional counsellors, your family doctor and/or peer support groups.

What is a Sexual Assault Evidence Kit?



The Sexual Assault Evidence Kit (SAEK) is a kit that contains various supplies used to collect evidence from your body, which may be analyzed by the Centre of Forensic Sciences. This evidence can be helpful in the police investigation and potential prosecution of your case. This evidence is collected at hospital by a specially trained Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE). They will meet you in ER and bring you to their specialized unit within the hospital where your care will take place. You will be informed of all the samples that are required and you are able to guide this process. A sexual assault evidence kit can be completed within 12 days of the

assault. However, it is important to know that as time passes physical evidence will likely be lost as a result of natural bodily processes including the healing process. Therefore, it is highly encouraged to present sooner rather than later. Clothing and related items may still be accepted for forensic analysis after the 12 days.

You may find it beneficial for an emotional support person to accompany you during this time. You can decide to stop at any time.

If I proceed with reporting to the police, what happens next?

Once dispatched to a complaint of a sexual assault, the uniformed officer will:

- Upon arriving at the location of the victim/survivor, assess their physical and emotional condition and/or transfer to hospital
- Uniformed officers will respectfully work with the victim/survivors identities and social status (sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, faith, culture, ability, etc.)
- Secure the scene to preserve and protect all physical evidence
- Conduct a brief interview with the victim/survivor in a private environment, to ascertain basic details about the incident
- Advise the victim/survivor that they may have the assistance of a support person of their choosing during their disclosure (this could include a person from SAVIS, etc.)
- If the suspect is present and grounds exist to arrest, the officer will arrest the suspect and transport them to the police station

- You have the right to request a police officer of the gender you feel most comfortable with

Can I report a sexual assault years after it occurred?

In Canada, there is no statute of limitation for sexual offences, which means you can report to police no matter how long ago it happened and someone can be charged with sexual assault. The passage of time does, however, impact on the police ability to gather evidence.

What if I work in the sex trade?

Anyone can be sexually assaulted at anytime, anywhere by anyone. This means a sex trade worker can be sexually assaulted by a client. Any sexual contact that was not consensually agreed to is a sexual assault. Working as a sex trade worker is not an offence, so you will not be arrested for that if you report a sexual assault to police.

What if the sexual assault involves my former or current heterosexual, gay, lesbian, bisexual, two-spirited, transgender intimate partner?

Domestic violence is any use of physical or sexual force, actual or threatened, in an intimate relationship (current or former). It also may include harassing behaviour. Anyone can be victims/survivors of domestic violence.

Intimate relationships include those between the opposite sex, same-sex and transgender partners. These relationships vary in duration and legal formality, which can include current and former dating, common-law, polyamorous and married couples.

There is a provincial mandate that directs all police officers in Ontario to proceed with charges specifically related to domestic violence. If, in the course of a domestic violence investigation, it is determined that a sexual assault has been committed and reasonable grounds are established to lay charges, the police **shall** proceed with charges regardless of the victim/survivor's wishes.

Officers will explain to the victim/survivor and the accused that it is the duty of the police to lay a charge. Only a Crown Attorney can withdraw a charge, but only after careful review of the investigation, including victim input.

SEXUAL ASSAULT INVESTIGATIONS

Who will investigate my case?

All sexual assault cases are investigated by police officers who are specifically trained in the area of sexual assault investigations. The training that sexual assault investigators receive is focused on creating a consistent and thorough investigation into sexual assault cases, while respecting the needs of the victims and witnesses. The training is designed to enhance investigations of sexual assault by promoting best practices, in addition to victim sensitivity.

A Sexual Assault Investigator/Detective will be assigned to the investigation and will:

- Investigate the incident fully
- Investigators will sometimes ask questions that you may feel are repetitive, personal in nature or judgmental such as “What were you wearing at the time?”, or “How much alcohol had you consumed?”. It’s important to remember the Investigators are not passing judgment but rather seeking clarification to ensure they gather all of the facts and will not have to re-interview you at a later date.
- Work with victims/survivors in a manner that acknowledges identities such as LGBTQ+ etc.
- Lay charges when appropriate as per Provincial Policing Standards
- Ensure the victim/survivor has access to medical care
- Encourage the collection of all evidence including a SAEK, as necessary
- Consult with the Victim Services Unit
- Assess and discuss with the victim/survivor where and when an in-depth interview will take place
- Advise the victim/survivor that they may have the assistance of a support person of their choice during this process (this could include a person from Victim Services or a community sexual assault service)
- Keep the victim/survivor informed of the progress of the investigation in a timely manner.

If required for the investigation, police may need to interview others who were aware of the incident or in the vicinity, and/or review cell phone and social media records (sometimes even seizing the cell phone).

The majority of evidence (e.g. video interview or the Sexual Assault Evidence Kit) is required by law to be disclosed to the defence. The Crown will review all evidence before this occurs and redact out clearly irrelevant material including your phone number and address if present.

* If you wish to proceed and make a statement to the police, but do not wish to participate in the court process, it is important that you take the time to consider the following options;

1. The police may have the option to formally caution the suspect for sexual assault. A caution may or may not prevent further incidents in the future however a permanent record of your complaint and formal caution will remain within the Halton Police database.
2. You may also ask the police to keep your case open pending your approval to move forward at a later date. Delays in investigations often compromise the ability to gather evidence. In addition the Criminal Code of Canada limits the ability of the Crown to determine the court process if charges are not laid within 12 months of the events.

What happens after charges are laid?

At this stage the Crown Attorney's office becomes involved and a Crown is assigned.

The police investigator will refer the victim/survivor to the Ministry of the Attorney General's Victim Witness Assistance Program who will be contacting them to assist them with an array of services related to the criminal justice process (see court process section for details).

Once a person has been arrested and charged with a crime, they become the 'accused.' Depending on the circumstances, the police can hold the accused in custody for a bail hearing or release them with conditions.

The victim/survivor input into the bail process including possible conditions of release at a bail hearing can be provided to the Crown through the Victim/Witness Assistance Program.

If the police have not released the accused, the accused must go before a Justice of the Peace (JP) or a Judge within 24 hours of the arrest for a bail hearing.

If an accused is granted bail, this means they are released but may be subject to certain conditions while on release, may have to be supervised by a surety and/or may have had to pledge or pay money (either alone or with a surety) to gain their release.

The victim/survivor will only have to attend court if there is a preliminary hearing and/or a trial, if subpoenaed. Although the identity of the victim/survivor is always protected, police may issue a media release in relation to the investigation in certain circumstances. Your name will not appear in any media release.

What if the offender is not located?

Sexual assault cases remain open if the accused has not been located or "at large".

Do police always charge the accused?

Sometimes the police will decide not to lay a charge. This does not mean that the police do not believe you or that the sexual assault did not happen. It may mean that there is not enough evidence to prove a criminal charge in court. If this does occur, the investigators can explain why this has happened in your case. The investigators can tell you of other assistance available to you, some of which are listed in this guide.

Will everyone know what happened to me?

Your privacy is very important to us. When a sexual assault is reported to the police, a review of all the information is done to determine if a news release is required. Generally a news release is issued if:

- there is a risk to public safety;
- information from the public may help solve the case;
- it is believed that more victims might come forward.

General information about the sexual assault, including the date, time, and location of the assault will be included in the news release. The news release will also include a description of the person alleged to be responsible, if that person is not yet known, or it will include the name and age if the person has been identified.

Your name will never be released to the media by police. However, your initials may be used in court documents to help further protect your identity.

Close of Investigation Letters

At the end of your investigation you will be contacted by a member of the Victim Services Unit to ask whether you would like to receive a ***close of investigation letter***. This letter outlines specifics about your investigation such as how it was coded and closed. A list of resources in the community is also provided. If you choose to accept the letter, you will then select the delivery method of your choice; mailed to your residence, sent electronically through email or, left in a confidential envelope at the front desk of the closest Halton Police detachment.

THE COURT PROCESS



If criminal charges have been laid but you feel overwhelmed or that you do not wish to continue, the Crown Attorney will work with you to address your concerns and provide support. While decisions about the prosecution, and whether to discontinue it, are ultimately those of the Crown Attorney, your input is critical and your well-being a foremost consideration.

Disclosure

The Crown is required to disclose most evidence gathered in the police investigation to the defence. Anything you say to the police or other justice officials may be disclosed. You have the right to your own lawyer if Defence seeks to gain access to your private records. If that happens, the Crown can bring an application to have the court fund your counsel on the application for you.

How long does the court process take?

In 2016, the Supreme Court of Canada released a decision impacting unreasonable delays in court. This is important as it provides the Crown Attorney a clear mandate to ensure a fair but expedited court process. The length of time a case is tried has significantly been reduced by the Crown Attorney's office, which is also able to provide guidance and support through the legal process.

The length of the court process varies widely, depending on a number of factors. If the accused pleads guilty, the court process will finish more quickly than if there is a trial. Generally speaking, court matters that go directly to a trial should be completed within 18 months. Court matters that proceed to a preliminary hearing and a trial should generally be completed within 30 months.

This extended period may be difficult for you. It is important to get support during this time.

There are many services available in your community. Please refer to the Resources page.

Once Charges are Laid

Once charges are laid, your case will be referred to a worker in the Victim Witness Assistance Program (VWAP) located at:

Milton Court House
491 Steeles Avenue East
Milton, Ontario L9T 1Y7
905-878-6292

(also serving the Burlington Court House at 2021 Plains Road East, Burlington)

The Victim/Witness Assistance Program (VWAP)

Assistance begins once police have laid charges and continue until the case is over. VWAP is based in the courthouse for the purpose of guiding you through the court process. The role of your worker will be to inform you of the status of the criminal court case and answer your questions about the criminal justice system, courtroom procedures and your role in court.

The Victim/Witness Assistance Program (VWAP) will:

- Help you understand what to expect at each court date and keep you informed about case progression
- Provide you with copies of court papers such as bail conditions and probation orders upon request
- Provide referrals to community agencies
- Offer ongoing emotional support throughout the court process
- Be sensitive to your identities (sexual orientation, gender, gender identification, faith, culture, ability etc.)
- Act as a liaison on client's behalf with Crown and police, including providing your input to the Crown
- Help you complete a Victim Impact Statement
- Coordinate with the Crown Attorney's office to have you meet with the Crown Attorney, should you be required to testify
- De-briefing and follow-up service



What happens between the time charges are laid and trial?

Once charges are laid, the accused attends court for “set date” appearances. During this time, the accused will receive disclosure of the contents of the police investigation, they may obtain a lawyer or the assistance of legal aid duty counsel, and they will usually decide whether to plead guilty or set a date for trial, or preliminary hearing and trial. It may take several court appearances for the accused to complete these steps.

The Crown Attorney's Office

A Crown Attorney will be assigned as soon as possible to review the police investigation. Once a preliminary hearing or trial date is set, it is their responsibility to meet with you and prepare you for the process. The preparation is usually done with the investigating officer and VWAP representatives. This is done to be able to disclose any new information that you may provide at such meetings.

If there is a finding of guilt or a firm indication of a guilty plea prior to sentencing, the Crown Attorney, VWAP or investigating officer will advise you that a Victim Impact Statement may be prepared for consideration at the time of sentencing.

If the accused chooses to plead not guilty, you will most likely be required to testify at the preliminary hearing (if there is one) and at the trial. VWAP will be available to provide assistance, in addition to community services such as SAVIS, etc.

The assigned Crown Attorney is responsible for the case and will make many of the decisions about the conduct of the prosecution. Your input is valuable to the assigned Crown. The Crown Attorney is employed by the government and, unlike the Accused who does have their own lawyer, is not your personal lawyer. As a result, what you say to the Crown is not privileged or confidential and is disclosable to the defence.

What is a publication ban?

At the first court appearance, the Crown, in most cases, will often apply for an Order banning the publication of any evidence that may tend to identify the victim/survivor, which includes not publishing your name.

Under section 486 of the Criminal Code, a Judge may prohibit the publication of identifying information about a complainant or witnesses in certain proceedings related to sexual offences (among other things).

If you do not want a publication ban then advise the police and VWAP as soon as possible who will communicate your wishes to the Crown.

A 486 publication ban does not apply to you if you are only discussing your particulars (not another victim's), and in doing so you did not intentionally or recklessly reveal any other person whose identity is protected by a publication ban.

If there is a publication ban on your identity and you do not wish it to remain, you should speak with your VWAP worker and have them set up a meeting with the assigned Crown to discuss this. The Crown will make sure you are making an informed decision and, absent your request identifying another victim who does want the publication ban removed, will ask the court to remove the ban on your identity. Once this application is made by the Crown, the Court must remove the pub ban unless to do so would identify another victim who wishes their publication ban to remain in place. This only applies to a very small percentage of cases so please speak to your VWAP worker about this should you wish your publication ban removed.

Preliminary Hearing/Trial

A preliminary hearing is a hearing in front of a Judge. It is not required in every case. In a preliminary hearing, the Judge will decide if the Crown Attorney has enough evidence to proceed to trial. You will most likely have to testify in a preliminary hearing. Other witnesses may have to testify as well.

If the accused does not plead guilty, and wishes to have a trial, the matter will either proceed to a preliminary hearing and then a trial, or directly to a trial. If you have any questions about this speak to the Crown or your VWAP Worker.

Finding of Guilt

The accused may choose to enter a plea of guilty to the charge or charges. In other words, they may choose to acknowledge in court that they committed the offence or part of it.

If the accused pleads guilty, or there is a firm indication of a guilty plea prior to sentencing, VWAP or an investigating officer will advise you so that a Victim Impact Statement may be prepared for consideration at the time of sentencing.

If the court finds the accused guilty, the Crown Attorney will invite you to complete a Victim Impact Statement. This form is your opportunity to share how the sexual assault has affected your life. This statement is taken into consideration by the Judge for sentencing. Your VWAP worker can help you with completing this form. Completion of a Victim Impact Statement is optional.

Please note that your Victim Impact statement must be received in a timely fashion ahead of the sentencing date and will be disclosed to defence counsel and shared with the accused.

You may read your statement aloud in court or through alternate formats (discuss with your Victim Witness Services Worker) or it can be filed with the Judge.

What kind of sentencing can a Judge order?

Absolute or Conditional Discharge: A Discharge is a finding of guilt but no formal registration of a conviction. It permits people found guilty to indicate they don't have a criminal record. If the sentence is an Absolute Discharge – there is no other sanction and the "sentence" is at an end. If the Court imposes a Conditional Discharge – the offender is subject to a period of probation.

Suspended Sentence: A conviction is formally registered. The offender will be subject to a period of probation.

Fine: Can be imposed as a standalone sanction or in conjunction with a period of probation

Custody: The Canadian criminal justice system has several types of custodial sentences.

An intermittent sentence refers to a jail sentence that allows an offender to still work for periods of time – while entering a custodial facility for prescribed short periods. Typically offenders serve their custodial sentence on weekends and are in the community during the week. A probation order will run during this timeframe so the offender is always subject to a Court order – whether or not in custody.

A reformatory sentence is served in a provincial jail within Ontario. The maximum sentence is 2 years less a day. Often there will also be a probation order in effect once someone is finished the custodial sentence. The maximum period of probation allowed is three years.

The Court can order, in some circumstances, that the offender serve their time in the community rather than attend a custodial facility. During this time the offender will be subject to various restrictions on their liberty. This is called a conditional sentence and cannot exceed 2 years less a day. Probation may follow this sentence.

A penitentiary sentence is when an offender is ordered to serve 2 years or more in jail. There cannot be any probation order once a custodial sentence exceeds 2 years.

Probation: Offenders will be supervised by, and in most cases must visit a probation officer. An offender usually has rules to follow that are listed on the Probation Order. These rules, known as conditions, may include: not

VICTIM IMPACT STATEMENT

A victim impact statement is a statement from a victim of crime that describes the physical or emotional harm, property damage or economic loss they have suffered as the victim of an offence.

A victim of crime has the right to present a victim impact statement and to have the Court or Review Board take it into account.

A victim can choose to present their victim impact statement by:

- reading it aloud
- reading it with a support person close by
- reading it behind a screen or outside the courtroom by closed-circuit television

A victim can also ask the Court to allow them to present their statement in another way such as having the prosecutor, the Court, or a victim service worker read it.

A victim may also include a drawing, poem or letter as part of their victim impact statement to express how the offence has affected the victim.

For more information about victim impact statements, read the factsheet at canada.ca/victims
Document: This infographic contains general information only and is not intended as legal advice.

Canada

using alcohol; staying away from certain areas or people; attend counselling; seeking or maintaining employment; obeying a curfew. A Probation Order cannot last more than three years.

If the offender violates any one of the conditions of probation, he/she may be arrested and charged with a new offence "Breach of Probation".

For more information about Victim Impact Statements, visit canada.ca/victims.

COPING STRATEGIES



A traumatic incident falls outside of normal everyday life and you may need some new strategies to cope. For some people, the traumatic event can get stuck in the brain and body, and you may need assistance from a trained professional counsellor to move through this experience. Do not be afraid to ask for support through your family members, friends, LGBTQ community and networks, doctors, clergy and/or counsellor.

Helpful things to do may include:

- Talk to someone you trust — it is important to reach out at this time
- Give yourself permission to reach out for professional help through community sexual assault resource staff, trained professional counsellors, the Employment Assistance Program (EAP), your family doctor and/or peer support groups, LGBTQ and networks
- Spend time with supportive family, friends and/or peers
- Try to avoid over use of alcohol, drugs and/or caffeine
- Acknowledge your response to the situation and give yourself permission to have difficult moments (peer support groups may be beneficial)
- Try to avoid self-blame, guilt and defeating thoughts — replace them with positive affirmations instead
- Resist making life changing decisions following a serious incident
- It takes time to heal so be gentle and patient with yourself
- Try to maintain your regular routine to help prevent feelings of isolation
- Try to eat healthy foods and exercise
- Be aware that traumatic events can sometimes bring back memories of other sad or traumatic events that have happened in your life, **and this is normal**
- Practice deep breathing exercises, meditate or try other activities that may enhance your emotional well-being
- Don't try to fight dreams or flashbacks. They are normal and usually become less intense and painful over time. If they do not appear to be decreasing over time, you may need to seek assistance as there are many useful strategies to work through these.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

As a victim/survivor of a sexual assault there are financial options available:

Victim Quick Response Program+ (VQRP+) **Halton Regional Police Service – Victim Services Unit** **905-825-4810**

Made available by the Ministry of Children, Community & Social Services and delivered through the Victim Services Unit of the Halton Regional Police Service, this program provides short-term financial assistance to victims in the aftermath of specific crimes such as sexual assault, historical child sexual abuse, non-consensual distribution of intimate images and voyeurism.

Eligible expense categories that can be accessed through the VQRP+ include:

- Safety expenses
 - Home safety
 - Cellular phones
- Practical assistance expenses
 - Basic necessities
 - Meals and groceries
 - Emergency dependent and pet care
 - Eyeglasses & Exams
 - Dental
 - Aids for victims with disabilities
 - Interpretation services
 - Government and medical documents
- Travel and associated expenses
- Crime scene clean-up
- Counselling services, traditional Indigenous health services and associated transportation expenses and;
- Supports for victims with serious injuries and for families of homicide victims

There are specific eligibility guidelines for this program. To find out whether this program is right for you, contact the Victim Services Unit at 905-825-4810.

HELP & COUNSELLING IN HALTON REGION

There are a number of options for counselling in Halton Region and area.

Sexual Assault & Violence Intervention Services (SAVIS) of Halton **24 Hour Crisis/Support Line: 905-875-1555**

www.savisofhalton.org

If you have experienced sexual violence, including sexual assault, childhood sexual abuse or sexual harassment, at any time in your life, you are not alone. SAVIS is here to help. SAVIS services are free, confidential, non-judgmental and based on the belief that survivors are the experts of their own experiences.

Programs include:

- 24-hour support line
- Face-to-face counselling in Acton, Burlington, Georgetown, Milton and Oakville
- In addition to face-to-face counselling, SAVIS also offers telephone and online (Skype™) sessions to those unable to travel to the office locations
- Counselling and advocacy
- Diverse communities outreach
- Public education
- Court, police and Nina's Place accompaniment



Nina's Place

The Regional Sexual Assault & Domestic Violence Care Centre of Halton Joseph Brant Hospital

905-632-3737 ext. 5708

www.ninasplace.ca

If you or someone you know has experienced a recent sexual assault or domestic violence situation, you can access Nina's Place through the Emergency Department at Joseph Brant Hospital 24/7 or any other Emergency Department in Halton. If accessing another hospital in Halton due to a recent sexual assault or domestic violence situation you will be medically cleared by an Emergency Room Physician and provided with transportation to Joseph Brant Hospital free of charge. Nina's Place has a team of specially trained nurses and social workers who are experienced in providing care to survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault. At Nina's Place you will be offered options of care such as: Emergency Medical and Nursing Care, pregnancy testing and providing "the morning after pill", testing and treatment of STI's (sexually transmitted infections) and giving antibiotics to prevent STI's, giving HIV prevention medication, giving hepatitis B vaccinations, crisis intervention, safety planning, collection of Forensic Evidence (Sexual Assault Evidence Kit), forensic documentation and photography of injuries, providing information about navigating the legal system and reporting options, counselling/referral to community resources and follow up care. At Nina's Place the victim/survivor guides their own care, they can accept all or parts of service provided. We are committed to providing services with dignity and respect to all individuals, while striving to support, welcome, and advocate for survivors of all genders, sexualities, races, abilities, religions and cultural backgrounds.

Nina's Place counselling services are provided by social workers specifically trained in the area of sexual assault, abuse, intimate partner violence and trauma. Counselling is available by appointment, please call 905-681-4880 to inquire about our counselling services or to book an appointment.

RESOURCES

The following resources may be of assistance throughout the duration of your recovery.

Halton Regional Police Service Victim Services Unit Victim Quick Response Program + Telephone: (VSU) 905-825-4777 ext. 4923 (VQRP+) 905-825-4810 www.haltonpolice.ca/victimservices	Capillary Wave Community (for men) capillary-wave-community.org/contact/
Elizabeth Fry Society — Southern Ontario Region Telephone: 905-459-1315 www.elizabethfry.ca	Halton Women's Place Telephone: (North) 905-878-8970 (South) 905-332-1593 www.haltonwomensplace.com
Independent Legal Advice for Survivors of Sexual Assault Telephone: 1-855-226-3904 Ontario.ca/page/independent-legal-advice-sexual-assault-victims	The Ironwood Project info@theironwoodproject.ca http://www.theironwoodproject.ca/
Kids Help Phone Telephone: 1-800-668-6868 kidshelpphone.ca/	LBGTQ Youth Line Telephone: 1-800-268-9688 www.youthline.ca/
Reach Out Centre for Kids (ROCK) 400 Bronte St S, Milton ON L9T 0H7 Telephone: 289-266-0036 https://rockonline.ca/	Savis of Halton — Sexual Assault & Violence Intervention Services 24 Hour Crisis/Support Line: 905-875-1555 www.savisofhalton.org
Survivors Voices www.survivorsvoices.ca <p>If you have accessed sexual assault supports in Halton, please share your feedback at www.survivorsvoices.ca. Your feedback is confidential and will be used to help improve services and responses to sexual violence in Halton.</p>	Thrive Counselling Telephone: (Burlington) 905-637-5256 (Georgetown) 905-845-3811 (Milton) 905-845-3811 (Oakville) 905-845-3811 www.thrivecounselling.org
Women's Centre of Halton Telephone: 905-847-9104 thewomenscentrefhalton.com	

MY CONTACTS:

Officer in Charge		
Name:		Position:
Business Phone:	Cell Phone:	E-mail:
Office Location:		HRPS Incident Number:

Victim Services Unit Crisis Worker(s)	
Name(s):	Position:
Business Phone: (905) 825-4777 ext.4923	E-mail(s):
Office Location: 95 Oakwalk Drive Oakville, Ontario L6H 0G6	Notes:

Reminder:

Have you provided your updated contact information to the Officer in Charge and your VSU worker?

For more information, please contact:

Victim Services Unit

Halton Regional Police Service
95 Oakwalk Drive
Oakville, Ontario
L6H 0G6



Telephone(s): (905) 825-4777 ext. 4923 (VSU) / (905) 825-4810 (VRRP+)

Website: www.haltonpolice.ca/en/services-and-reporting/victim-services.aspx