

Someone sexually assaulted me. Now what?

We know this is a very difficult time for you. It's important for you to know that we're here to help.

The decision to report to police is entirely yours. Some survivors say that reporting and seeking justice helped them recover and regain a sense of control over their lives. Understanding how to report and learning more about the experience can take away some of the unknowns and help you feel more prepared. If you choose to file a police report, call **902-490-5020**. Call **911** in an emergency. Below is a high-level overview of what will happen in the majority of cases.

STEP 1: INITIAL REPORT TAKEN BY PATROL / REFERRAL TO VICTIM SERVICES

A patrol officer will respond and take a brief initial report. An automatic referral will be made to HRP Victim Services, who will contact you to offer emotional support, provide general information about sexual assault investigations and set up referrals to other agencies. You can also contact Victim Services directly at **902-490-5300** to discuss your options. The highly trained staff can help you decide whether or not you want to file a police report. Contacting Victim Services doesn't mean you have to file a report. The choice is always yours.

Continued on reverse side.



HALIFAX

STEP 2: FILE ASSIGNED

In most cases, the file will be assigned to the Sexual Assault Investigative Unit (SAIT). A SAIT investigator will contact you for a formal, detailed interview that will be recorded on video. If you're under the age of 16, police will partner with Child Protection Services for the interview and investigation.

STEP 3: INVESTIGATION

Our job is to conduct a thorough investigation which may involve taking witness statements and collecting evidence (forensic analysis, medical records, phone records, etc.). We'll also provide you with ongoing support and keep you informed throughout the entire process. Our goal is to identify, arrest and prosecute the person(s) responsible. If at any point you no longer want to participate in the investigation, we will respect your wishes. You are in control.

STEP 4: SUSPECT IDENTIFICATION

If a suspect is identified and there is sufficient evidence, the suspect will be interviewed. If a suspect isn't identified, the case will proceed once further information about the suspect is received.

STEP 5: ARREST/CHARGES

If there is sufficient evidence, charges will be laid. Sometimes police decide not to lay a charge. This doesn't mean police don't believe you or that the sexual assault didn't happen. It may mean that there isn't enough evidence to prove a criminal charge in court.

FOR MORE INFO ABOUT HRP VICTIM SERVICES AND SEXUAL ASSAULTS, VISIT:

www.halifax.ca/fire-police/police/programs-services/victim-services-halifax



HALIFAX