



## Reporting to police

You have the option to report to police if you have been sexually assaulted. You also have the option to make the report and request that no further action is taken.

You are not required to report to police immediately after a sexual assault. However, the advantage of making a report soon after the incident is that it is easier for the police to gather evidence, investigate and charge the offender. If an assault is reported within three days a forensic medical examination will be performed, with your consent, to see if there is any evidence that can be collected. This examination may assist to identify an offender

There is no time limit on reporting sexual assaults. Survivors of childhood sexual assault may report years after the abuse and sometimes are successful in having the offender charged and convicted.

People often decide to report

- So the offender is accountable for the crime
- To seek justice
- To protect themselves
- To protect others
- To make the community aware of the problem
- With encouragement from family and friends
- To regain a sense of control
- To make the police aware of an offender

Reasons why people may decide not to report

- Think it would not do any good
- Fear of not being believed
- Fear of the offender
- Shame and embarrassment
- Self blame
- Not wanting family and friends to know about the sexual assault.
- Fear of having to go to court and facing the offender and recounting the sexual assault.
- To protect the offender
- Fear of hostile treatment in the justice system

- Fear of police

Counsellor/Advocates at a Victorian CASA are available to talk to you about your options for reporting to the police.

The Victims of Crime Helpline can also assist with information, advice and referrals. Contact 1800 819 817 between 8.30 am and 5.00 pm weekdays.