

Fact Sheet: Supporting a person who is deciding whether to report to Police

Reporting a sexual assault to police is not an easy option. It can be re-traumatising to go over details, and, consequently, the person may be very anxious and reluctant to report.

The decision to report a sexual assault to Police is the decision of the person who has been assaulted.

Your role is to support the person in their decision-making; it is not to make the decision.



If you can help the person feel safe and in control of their situation during this time, they will find reporting less stressful.

If the person wants to discuss with Police prior to reporting, they can contact their local police station or phone Tasmania Police on 131 444. They can also make an appointment to speak with a Police Officer in person.

You can accompany the person when they make a report, if they wish. Alternatively, a support worker from the regional sexual assault service can accompany the person when they make a report.



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The person does not have to report immediately following an assault, but early reporting may result in effective collection of evidence. They can always provide more information later.

Note that there are no time limitations on reporting sexual abuse to Tasmania Police.



At any time in an investigation, the person can choose not to proceed.

Contact details for Police and support services can be found at the end of this document.

Communication issues

If the person needs a support person with them to make a report, arrange that immediately.

If the person routinely uses communication aids, make sure they are available to help them discuss options and make their decision.



If the person wishes to report to the Police and has communication needs, you can contact:



Witness Intermediary Program

Phone: 6165 4802

Email: intermediary@justice.tas.gov.au

After hours: contact Tasmania Police, Ph: 131 444

Make sure communication aids accompany the person to the Police interview.

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Decision-making capacity

If you are concerned that the person may lack decision-making capacity, refer to the Decision-making Guide.



Where the person can be supported to make the decision themselves then this should always be the option taken.

CONTACT DETAILS

Tasmania Police: Phone 131 444

Laurel House Sexual Assault Service

Launceston Ph: 6334 2740 (9am-5pm)

Burnie: Ph: 6431 9711 (9am-5pm)

After hours: 1800 MYSUPPORT (1800 697 877)

Southern Sexual Assault Service (SASS)

Ph: (03) 6231 0044

After hours: 1800 MYSUPPORT (1800 697 877)

