

**A guide for sex workers
who have experienced
sexual assault**

The New Zealand
Prostitutes' Collective



what to do



Sex workers have
the right to be
safe at work.

If you have not
agreed to sex,
you have not
given consent.

Without consent,
sexual contact
is sexual assault.

The following guide
details what to do
after a sexual assault
has occurred.

It equips you with the
information you need
to support yourself
and others who have
been sexually assaulted.

The New Zealand Prostitutes' Collective

The New Zealand Prostitutes' Collective (NZPC) is run by sex workers, for sex workers, and advocates for the rights, health, and well-being of all sex workers. We are committed to working for the empowerment of sex workers, so that sex workers can have control over all aspects of their work and lives.

Our services focus on workers' rights, HIV and STI prevention, and education. We also provide safer sex supplies to sex workers, and offer free sexual health clinics at our community bases.

NZPC has long been at the forefront of reforming the law for sex workers. We helped draft the Prostitution Reform Act which decriminalised sex work in New Zealand, and built support for it as it passed into law.

NZPC provides expert advice to those with an interest in law and policy surrounding sex work in New Zealand. We are also a crucial point of liaison between government and non-government civil society, and the sex industry.

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It can be a big deal to come forward as a sex worker and speak up. I know the safety, health and well-being of sex workers depends on a strong infrastructure of many agencies working together. It is important every sex worker knows they can reach out and will be supported by a full range of services when confronted by sexual violence. I am pleased NZPC has been able to collaborate with the New Zealand Police to develop this resource for sex workers.

DAME CATHERINE HEALY

Founder
New Zealand Prostitutes' Collective

The New Zealand Police and the NZPC are working collaboratively with other support agencies to ensure the well-being of sex workers. Our aim is to provide all victims of sexual assault with the best possible support services we can, and to work with the industry to make it as safe as possible for sex workers.

SAM HOYLE

District Commander, Wellington
New Zealand Police

No matter
your situation,
we'll support
you.

What is sexual assault?

Sexual assault is any intentional sexual contact that happens without your consent. If you have not agreed to a sexual act, you have not given consent.

If you first agreed but change your mind and the sexual contact continues, it is happening without your consent.

Sexual assault can happen to a person of any gender or age, and can happen in any setting, including work.

Your right to be safe at work

Sexual assault is not an occupational hazard, it is a crime committed against you. It is illegal for anyone to sexually assault you.

You have the right to say no, to stop a booking at any point, and to not give any reason. Even if you said yes at first, you are allowed to change your mind.

No one else has the right to make you do something sexual that you do not want to do.

If sexual assault occurs

It is not your fault. Do not blame yourself.

Your immediate reaction to rape or sexual assault may vary.

It can be a difficult time. You may not feel like telling anyone. You may look for support straight away from fellow workers, managers, or receptionists.

Take a moment to consider your options and your well-being.

It is your choice who to tell and what kind of support you want.

Other people should respect your choice. Some people may advise you to immediately call the NZ Police, NZPC, or a sexual violence support agency. Support agencies will respect your wishes and help you through any path you choose to take. They will not force you to do anything you don't want to do.

The priority of the Police is your safety and well-being. Police will independently investigate all sexual assault complaints.

The earlier you feel able to report a sexual assault to the Police, the better the chances are of Police obtaining corroborative evidence and subsequently holding the offender accountable. Such evidence includes identifying witnesses, forensic scene examinations, and obtaining CCTV.

Immediately Afterwards

Wherever you are:

- The number one priority is your safety.
- Do not confront the person who assaulted you; it could be very dangerous to do so.
- Gather as much information as possible about the person who assaulted you. Write everything down. Do they have any distinguishing features (scars, tattoos, facial hair, accessories, accent, etc.)
- Write down the contact details of others who are present so they can be contacted later.
- Make sure other workers know to keep the details of the assault confidential. They may warn others about the client but must not identify the sex worker.
- Photograph the immediate scene using your phone if it's safe to do so.

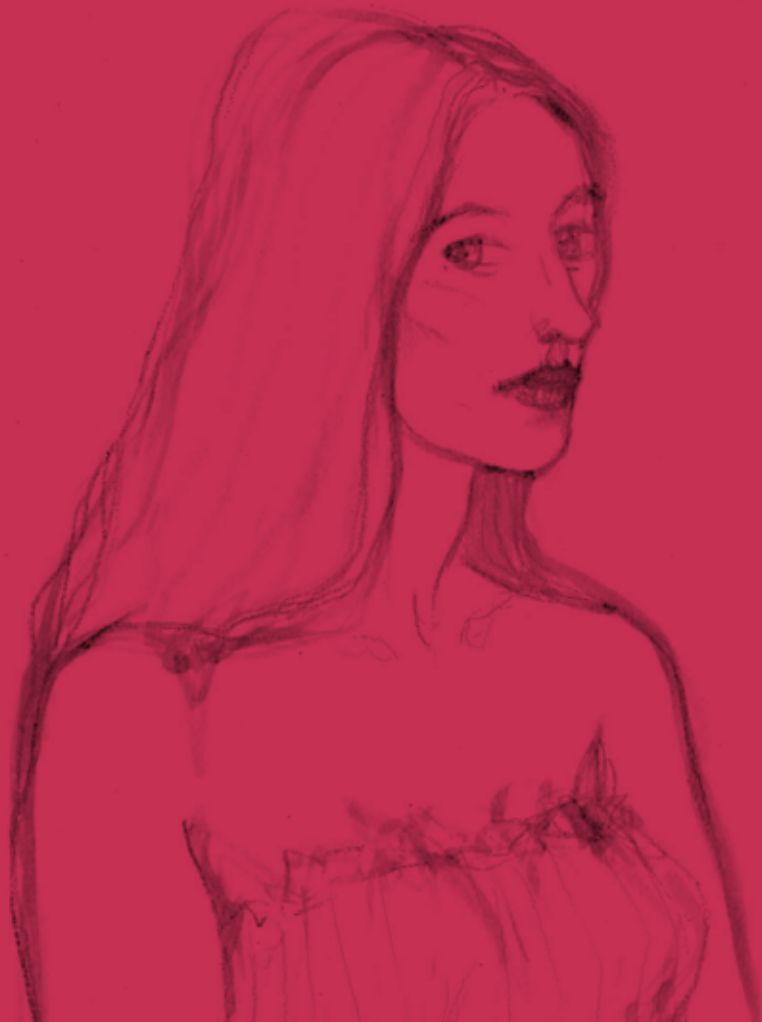
In the workplace:

- Close down the room where the assault took place. Do not move any items such as towels or sheets as they may be used for evidence.
- Check if your workplace has their details on record (name, phone number, or texts).
- Ask if there have been past complaints about the person who assaulted you. Write down who made those complaints.
- Ask your workplace for a copy of CCTV footage, if available.
- Ask those present to help with your description of the person who assaulted you.

On the street:

- You may want to go somewhere quiet and safe, off the street, to talk about what has happened, or to just have a private space.
- Discreetly leaving your fingerprints or hiding your DNA by placing chewed gum in a client's car, on the corner of a window, or under a seat, can be useful later as evidence. However, it is important to not endanger your immediate safety.
- Even in a public space it may still be possible to obtain forensic evidence, no matter where you were assaulted.
- Record the registration numbers of any cars nearby which Police may be able to investigate.

Supporting Someone Else



Listen, Believe.

When supporting someone else, don't define the experience for them. They may need time to come to terms with it and work out what has happened.

The most important thing you can do is listen closely and believe them. Do not say "That's rape!" or "Are you sure?"

Your focus is on making them feel safe and supported. Give them space to decide what they want to tell you.

Ask if they have support and a safe place to go outside of work. Ask if they want any information about what options are available to them. If they want help, find them support.

Respect their privacy and keep their details confidential. Do not tell their story to anyone without their consent. However, you can share information about the client to warn others.

Let them know it's their decision what happens next.

G.O.S.S.I.P.

Tell others, text, and share descriptions about the client.

However – keep the sex worker’s identity confidential.

Ongoing Care

Safety

Your safety is the most important thing.

If you are working at a brothel you should be able to talk to management or another worker and have the client removed.

Self-Care

Don't blame yourself. Give yourself time and space to recover, and don't push yourself too hard.

This may affect you in ways that you don't realise at first or that you may not have expected. Everyone reacts differently to experiencing sexual assault – there is no right or wrong way to feel.

Support

Having someone to talk to can make all the difference. This can be someone from your family, a friend, a colleague, a counsellor, or whoever feels like the safest person for you.

Sometimes people who care about us may not know the right things to say, or may have ideas about sexual assault or sex workers that aren't great. It's important to find someone who will listen and support you in a way that feels right for you.

Remember

You are entitled to apply to ACC for funding to see a free counsellor.

If there are constructive things that make you feel good – even small things, such as taking a bath, spending time in the sun, or watching your favourite shows - it's important to care for your well-being and do kind things for yourself.

Control of Your Situation

You have the right to choose which service providers (if any) to engage with, who to tell about your sexual assault, and what happens with your personal information. Those supporting you should support your right to make your own choices. If you feel like your power to choose is being taken away, try to re-balance this by making even small choices about your life. This can be especially helpful during this time.

Common Questions

Is sexual assault just part of the job?

No. Sexual assault is illegal regardless of occupation. It is not 'part of the job' or 'an occupational hazard'. Under the Prostitution Reform Act (2003), as well as criminal law, you have the right to refuse any form of sexual contact at any point, even if you have started a booking – you don't need to give a reason why.

Can men be sexually assaulted?

People of any gender can be sexually assaulted. The law takes sexual assault seriously, regardless of gender. Everyone has the right to say no.

Do the Police care about what happens to sex workers?

The Police take sexual assault very seriously, and will always respond to your complaint with professionalism. The role of Police is to keep everyone in the community safe - and sex workers are part of the community.

If I report my assault to Police, will my name be in the newspaper?

If you report a sexual assault to the Police, the Police will keep your identity confidential and won't provide your name to the media. All sexual assault victims' identities are protected and it is illegal for the media to publish any details of an assault that would identify any victim.

If I leave the booking, will I be fined by the brothel manager?

The Prostitution Reform Act (2003) clearly states that a sex worker may refuse to provide a sexual service at any time, for any reason, or for no reason. Managers, owners, or receptionists cannot force you to do any job. They are not allowed to 'fine' you, take money from your earnings, threaten you, or take any other action to try and make you do the job. Punishing you for saying no and pressuring you to provide sex is legally called 'inducing and compelling' – a crime which carries up to 14 years' imprisonment.

NZPC Support

The New Zealand Prostitutes' Collective has female, male and transgender peer support workers. We can offer you peer support and counselling, as well as support with forensic medical examinations, reporting your assault to Police, and assisting you throughout the court process.

We can also support you in accessing other sexual violence agencies, ACC, WINZ, NZ Police, and social workers.

NZPC and NZ Police

NZPC has a great working relationship with Police. If you wish to make a Police complaint, we can help with the following:

- We can liaise with Police and support you through the Police process.
- We can support you with your legal and court appointments.
- We can help to ensure your name remains confidential (and where possible, your occupation). We also can assist with name suppression if there is a chance the media may become involved.

There are other ways NZPC can support you too:

- We can come to you, or pick you up if you are unable to drop into one of our centres.
- We can pick you up immediately after a sexual assault.
- Our centres have phones available for you to use.
- We can assist in listening to and recording details of your assault.
- We can provide you with information and guide you through all of the options available to you.
- We can arrange health checkups.
- We can arrange counselling (sometimes free), and assist with getting you to your appointments.
- A specialist sex worker sexual health clinic is available, which includes pregnancy testing, emergency contraception, STI testing and treatment.
- We can assist with getting WINZ support if you need a break from working. The waiting period is reduced for people leaving sex work.
- We can help you be better supported at your workplace, or help you to change to a different workplace inside or outside of sex work.

Other Support

Support Agencies

Sexual violence support agencies can offer social workers, counselling, advocacy, and information. They can help you with a range of things including WINZ, ACC, reporting a sexual assault to the Police, and support with court processes.

If you have experienced sexual violence at any time you could be entitled to support from ACC. This can cover costs of things such as counselling, social workers, and other relevant health services.

You do not have to prove the assault happened or have reported it to Police to access these services. They are available to all survivors and in most cases they are free of charge.

Contact details for sexual violence support agencies are located at the back of this booklet.

Financial Support

You may be entitled to a grant if you need to replace clothing or other personal belongings which were lost, stolen, damaged, or taken for evidence.

Health Checkup

You may wish to have a health checkup to address any medical concerns relating to the sexual assault, or to get an ECP (Emergency Contraceptive Pill).

Forensic Medical Examinations

Whether you want to make a complaint to Police right now, or are unsure but may want to in the future, it is a good idea to have a Forensic Medical Examination to gather DNA and other evidence.

A medical examination can be done independent of Police. Police will only be notified if you decide to make a complaint.

A Forensic Medical Examination can take place up to seven days after an assault, but the sooner it takes place, the better the chances are of finding evidence.

The examination can be arranged by the NZPC, NZ Police, another specialised support agency, or by an individual.

Examinations are carried out by a specially trained doctor, who will explain the procedure and let you choose every step of the way. You can stop at any point.

You don't have to have DNA swabs taken from your genital area unless you choose. DNA can be found on the rest of your body and your clothing. You may be asked to give your underwear or other clothing items as evidence.

The Victims' Rights Act

The Victims' Rights Act (2002) ensures that those who suffer harm as a result of an offence will be treated with courtesy and compassion and have their dignity and privacy respected. It also ensures victims receive assistance with any welfare, health, counselling, medical or legal needs.

It requires Police to:

- Treat you with courtesy and compassion.
- Respect your dignity and privacy.
- Advise you of the available services.
- Keep you informed of progress in the investigation.
- Advise you whether charges have been laid and what the charges are, or the reasons for not laying charges.
- Provide you with information about the Victims' Notification Register.

If you prefer to meet discretely with Police at an NZPC community centre, NZPC can arrange this for you.



Reporting a Sexual Assault to the NZ Police

Police's priority is your safety and continual well-being.

You can report a sexual assault to the Police whether it has just happened, or happened a long time ago.

Regardless of whether it is a recent or historic sexual assault, the Police can help you decide what to do next.

Police can give you advice and take steps to help keep you and others safe.

Once you have reported a sexual assault, Police will organise specialist interviewers to record your account of what happened. This is where you can explain what happened in an uninterrupted and sensitive setting.

The interview will be recorded to allow your words to be preserved. If the matter goes to court, a copy of your interview may be played instead of you having to tell the story again. If the offender is arrested and charged with the sexual assault, they will be provided with a typed transcript of your DVD. Under no circumstances are the defence counsel able to make copies and distribute your DVD interview.

Once Police have your information, an investigator who is appropriately trained in adult sexual assaults will investigate your complaint. Police encourage you to ask any questions that relate to your assault, which may include questions about the Police investigation, the prosecution of the offender and about any court processes.

Police will investigate complaints in a professional and empathetic manner. They will speak to people who may have information about the sexual assault and seek corroborative evidence. Police will protect your privacy throughout an investigation and prosecution.

Your name will not be provided to any media, and details of your complaint will not be discussed with your family, whanau, or employer, without your permission to do so. Police can assist you in applying for occupation suppression if needed.

Police will keep you regularly informed as the investigation progresses. You will be provided with the contact details of the officer in charge of your investigation, so you can contact them for information if you wish.

If you are worried about your safety at any time, please contact Police. In an emergency, call 111.

Support Directory

In an emergency,
contact Police
– Dial 111

NZPC Centres

You can contact us at our national office in Wellington, or from any of our regional offices located throughout New Zealand.

National Office

Phone	04 382 8791
International	+64 4 382 8791
Mobile	027 496 0700
Email	info@nzpc.org.nz
Web	www.nzpc.org.nz

Regional Offices:

Northland
027 496 0700
04 382 8781

Auckland
09 366 6106
3/2 Canada St
Auckland CBD

Tauranga
07 571 0640
Unit 36a
Historic Village
17th Avenue
Tauranga

**Palmerston North,
Manawatu**
06 357 3150

Hawke's Bay
06 835 1400

**Waikato,
Hamilton,
Taranaki,
Taupo,
Whakatane,
Gisborne**
07 839 5519

Wellington
04 382 8791
Level 4,
204 Willis St,
Te Aro Wellington

Christchurch
03 365 2595
157 Waltham Rd
Sydenham
Christchurch

Dunedin
03 477 2517
411 Princes St
Dunedin

24-Hour Crisis Lines

National

National Collective of Rape Crisis

National 24-hour helpline
0800 883 300

Women's Refuge

National 24-hour crisis line
0800 733 843 (0800 refuge)

Auckland

Help Auckland Sexual Abuse Help Foundation

09 623 1700

Counselling Services Centre

Charitable Trust
09 277 9324

Korowai Tumanako

Auckland, Whangarei, Kaikohe,
Hokianga, Whangaroa
09 277 9324

Hamilton

Rape And Sexual Abuse Healing Centre

027 278 5331

Whangarei

Miriam Centre

09 437 6010

Te Awamutu

Mahuika House

Te Awamutu Healing
and Rape Crisis Centre
07 871 8132

Bay of Plenty

Bay of Plenty Sexual Assault Support Service

0800 227 233

Wellington

Wellington Sexual Abuse Help Foundation

04 801 6655 (push 0 at the menu)

Mosaic

All Genders
022 419 3416

HV SASH

Hutt Valley Sexual Abuse Support and Healing
0800 22 6694

Wairarapa

Rape and Sexual Abuse Collective

06 370 8446
0800 61 4614

HELP Wellington

All Genders
04 801 6655 (push 0 at the menu)

South Island

West Coast Rape Crisis

0800 274 747

Survivor Support Services

Northland

Korowai Tumanako

Whangarei, Kaikohe,
Hokianga, Whangaroa
027 422 6282 (24-hour crisis line)
027 370 2091 (24-hour crisis line)

Miriam Centre

09 437 6010 (24-hour crisis line)
www.miriamcentre.co.nz

Mid North Family Support

09 407 7511
027 448 8159 (After-hours crisis line)
0800 883 300 (24-hour helpline)

Support of Sexually Abused (SOS)

09 439 6070 (Kaipara phone)
After hours connects to a crisis line

Whangarei Rape Crisis

09 438 6221
0800 883 300 (24-hour helpline)

Auckland

Korowai Tumanako

027 422 6282
027 370 2091 (24-hour contact line)
www.korowaitumanako.org

Tu Wahine

09 838 8700

Better Blokes Support Services for Men & Family Group Work

021 174 9252

Auckland Sexual Abuse Help Foundation

09 623 1700 (24-hour crisis line)
www.helpauckland.com
www.gr8mates.org.nz

Counselling Services Centre

Charitable Trust
09 277 9324 (24-hour crisis line)
cscnz.org.nz

Family Action

09 836 1987
www.familyaction.org.nz

Project Restore

09 308 97125

Waikato

Korowai Tumanako

www.korowaitumanako.org

Male Survivors of Sexual Abuse Trust (MSSAT)

0800 677 289
www.waikatosurvivors.org.nz

Rape and Sexual Abuse Healing Centre

07 839 4433
027 278 5331 (24-hour crisis line)
www.rasahc.co.nz

Mahuika House - Te Awamutu

Healing and Rape Crisis Centre
07 871 8132 (24-hour crisis line)

Caps Hauraki

07 868 8644
0800 883 300
027 732 7000 (Toll-free text)
www.capshauraki.co.nz

Bay of Plenty

Kite Rapu | Te Ora Trust

07 315 8429
027 726 3183 (mobile)

Bay of Plenty Sexual Assault Support Service

07 577 0512
0800 227 233 (24-hour crisis line)
www.bopsass.org.nz

Hawke's Bay

Hawkes Bay Rape Crisis

021 227 6622

Central

Abuse & Rape Crisis Support (ARCS)

Manawatu – 06 356 586
Horowhenua – 06 3688 348
Taranua – 027 7558867
www.arcsmanawatu.org.nz

Te Ara Pae Trust

06 278 6399

Wellington

HV SASH (Hutt Valley Sexual Abuse Support and Healing)

04 566 5517
0800 22 6694 (24-hour crisis line)
www.hvsash.org.nz

Help - Wellington Sexual Abuse Help Foundation

04 801 6655 (24-hour crisis line)
press 0 at the menu

Wellington – 04 801 6655
Porirua – 04 237 8822
Facebook – [wellingtonhelp](https://www.facebook.com/wellingtonhelp)
www.wellingtonhelp.org.nz

Wellington Rape Crisis

04 801 8973
www.wellingtonrapecrisis.org.nz

Mosaic (all genders)

Wellington, Porirua, Wairarapa
04 389 5050 (Monday - Friday)
022 419 3416 (Confidential line)

Facebook – [mosaicwgtm](https://www.facebook.com/mosaicwgtm)
Skype – [mosaicnz](https://www.skype.com/en/contacts/mosaicnz)
www.mosaic-wgtm.org.nz

Wairarapa Rape and Sexual Abuse Collective

06 370 8446
0800 614 614

Tasman

Sexual Abuse Support and Healing (SASH-Nelson)

03 548 2407
sash@sash.co.nz
www.sash.co.nz

Women's Refuge, Sexual Assault Resource Centre (Marlborough)

03 577 9939
0800 733 843 (24hr crisis line)

Southern

Southland Help Rape and Abuse Support Centre

03 218 4357
www.southlandhelp.nz

Rape Crisis Dunedin

03 474 1592
rccrisis@xtra.co.nz
www.rapecrisisdunedin.org.nz

Male Survivors of Sexual Abuse Trust (MSSAT)

Oamaru – 021 106 4598 (mobile)
Dunedin – 021 198 7878 (mobile)
www.survivor.org.nz

Canterbury

Te Puna Oranga

0800 222 042 (24hr crisis line)

Male Survivors of Sexual Abuse Trust (MSSAT)

03 377 6747
www.survivor.org.nz

Sexual Assault Support and Service Canterbury (SASSC)

03 377 5402 (24hr support line)

START

03 355 4414
PO Box 21022,
St Albans, Christchurch 8143
www.starthealing.org

Stop Trust

Dunedin, Invercargill, Nelson
03 339 4567
PO Box 6236,
Upper Riccarton,
Christchurch 8442
www.stop.org.nz



This document has been produced in a joint effort between the New Zealand Prostitutes' Collective and New Zealand Police, to better support victims of sexual abuse.

For further information, please contact:

New Zealand Prostitutes' Collective

Level 4, 204 Willis St, Wellington

04 382 8791

info@nzpc.org.nz

nzpc.org.nz



NEW ZEALAND
POLICE
Ngā Pirihimana o Aotearoa