



South East Sexual Assault Centre
HELPING SOUTH EAST NEW BRUNSWICK SURVIVORS SINCE 2017

Reporting Sexual Violence to Police

A Guide for Survivors





A super important note



This booklet is meant to show people what the basic structure of reporting to the police may look like. Each experience will be unique.

If you are still considering your options, and decide that the legal path is not for you, that is okay too.

Choosing not to report does not invalidate your experience.

Make sure you take care of yourself and your mental health.

We created this booklet as a way for survivors to be fully informed on all options available.

You can choose not to report to the police if that is what's best for you.

Do what is best for you, not for anyone else.



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About us

Here at the South East Sexual Assault Centre (SESAC), our mission is to support anyone impacted by sexual violence in a trauma-informed approach, as well as educate members of the community on gender-based violence and sexual violence prevention - by doing so, we hope to develop societal changes within South East New Brunswick to end sexual violence.

Within our framework here at SESAC, we recognize that sexual violence can happen to anyone, especially marginalized groups such as cis and trans women, 2SLGTBQIA+ people, people of colour, Indigenous women, immigrant women, sex workers, youth, and others.



A note on Language

"complainant"

Reporting an experience of sexual violence is often called "making a complaint". This is why you may hear police officers, lawyers or other legal professionals use the word "complainants" when talking about survivors.

Survivor or Victim

You may identify with the word "survivor", "victim", both, or neither.

The criminal justice system may refer to you as "victim", "complainant", or "witness", even though you may not identify with those terms. This is the language used by the court and does not mean you or your reaction to the incident is being judged.

In this guide, we will use the term "survivor". However, we know that not everyone who has experienced sexual violence will identify this way.



About this document

SESAC's "Reporting Sexual Violence to Police: A Guide for Survivors" has adapted this resources from similar guides provided by Family Plus (Saint John, NB), and the Journey Project (NFLD & L)



What to expect

If you report in person

- At your local police/RCMP station, you can go to the front desk and ask to make a report of a sexual assault
- You may have to wait in the main lobby, depending on whether there is an officer available to take your statement
 - You can always bring a support person with you, or something to busy your mind while you wait (your phone, a book, etc)

If you call 911 or the police station

- A uniformed officer may be sent to your location. If you need medical assistance, they may ask to take you to the hospital. This is only done with your consent. The officer will take your information + details surrounding the assault for their report.
- In most cases, you will be asked to make a formal statement at the police station.
- In Moncton, the Moncton City Hospital has a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner program (SANE)

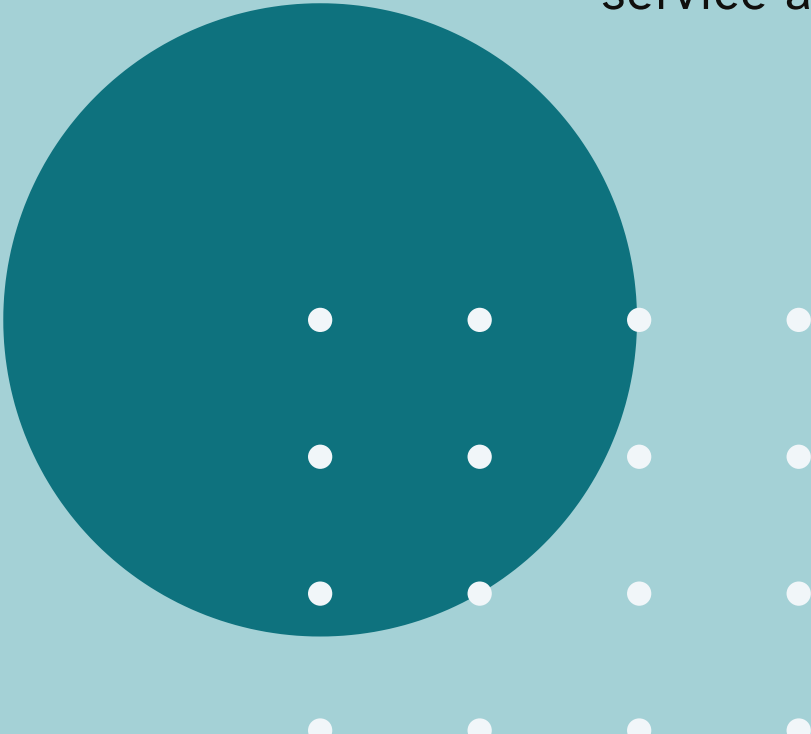
Initial Contact

When you first contact the police, there may be an initial interview. This is when an officer will ask you for basic information such as:

- Your name and date of birth
- Perpetrator's name and date of birth
- Location of the assault
- Details of the incident

The police will ask for more information during the official statement.

Before you start your official statement, mention to the officer any accessibility or accommodations you need. This could look like translation services, interpretation, transportation, having a support person** with you, or a service animal.



****If you want a support person, but you don't want your support person to be your loved one, you can always ask SESAC to accompany you to the police/RCMP station for support. Call or email us! (contacts at the last page)**

Official Statement

After waiting a while in the lobby, the investigating officer will meet with you and give you an opportunity to describe, in your own words, what happened and why you're at the police station.



You will give your statement in a small private recording room, so that your statement can be videotaped and audiotaped for court purposes, as it can be entered as evidence.

The officer will take notes while you tell your story, and they will ask many questions to get as many details as possible about the incident.

Take as much time as you need - you can also ask the officer to repeat themselves or explain the question in a different way.

This may feel like the officer is asking personal and invasive questions about what happened. It will probably feel as though you're telling the same story and the same information numerous times. The purpose of this is to make sure that the police have a full understanding of the events.

You should answer all questions as completely and truthfully as you can. **If you don't know or cannot remember the answer to a question, it is ok to tell the officer that.** If you are making a guess at an answer, tell the officer that. It's best not to try to fill in blanks if you don't know the answer.



Official Statement (cont.)

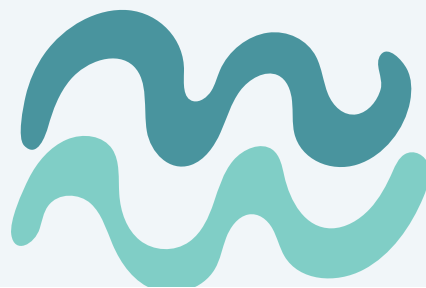
What the investigating officer might ask you during the official statement:

- Name and physical description of the suspect
- Details about the incident (date, time, location)
- Events prior to the assault (for example: what you did before going to the location of the incident)
- What happened? You may be asked to give a very detailed description of the assault
- Whether you sustained any physical injuries
- If you got medical treatment (or did a forensic kit with the SANE nurse)
- If there were any witnesses* to the incident

*If there were any witnesses, the investigating officer may want to speak to them, as they may have relevant information about the crime. They may ask them to make an official statement as well, and they may appear in court to provide their testimony.

If you can't remember all the details, that's ok. Trauma can impact memory and our ability to recount incidents in chronological order.

If you had a negative experience reporting to the police, you can always make a complaint or reach out to us.

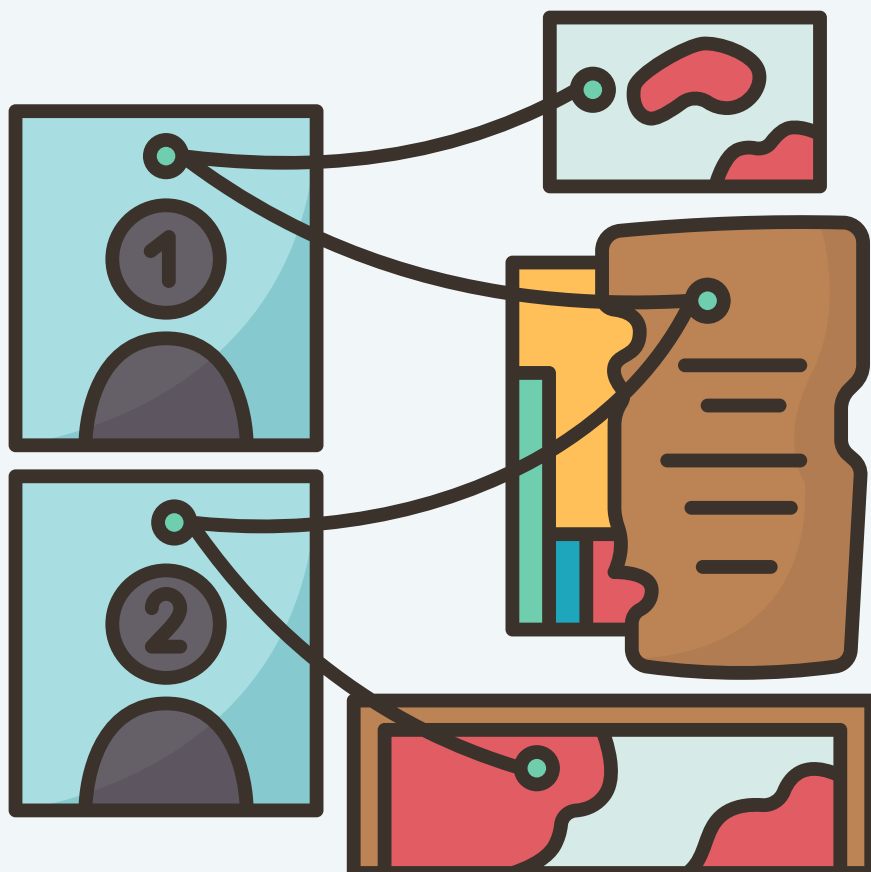


During the Police Investigation

Police investigations can take time, depending on the case (it can take weeks to months). The investigating officer will usually tell you how long they think the investigation will take.

Moreover, if you want to learn information or updates about your case, you can always contact the investigating officer or Victim Service (the officer will usually give you their contacts for this purpose).

They will also let you know once they have decided to lay charges (or not) against the offending party.



What happens if charges are laid (or not)?

If charges are laid

A charge is laid when the investigating officer has completed the investigation and has enough evidence to formally accuse the suspect of committing a crime. The police will then send the your case file to the Crown Attorney's office.

The person charged (now called "accused") will either stay in jail until the case is finished, or they can be released back in the community under certain conditions.

If the latter happens, the court will most likely place a **"No Contact Order"** on the accused, which means they are **not allowed to contact you** or any person connected to the case.

If you fear for your safety, you can also apply for a **Peace Bond**. This is a court order that places specific conditions on the accused's behaviour.

If charges are not laid

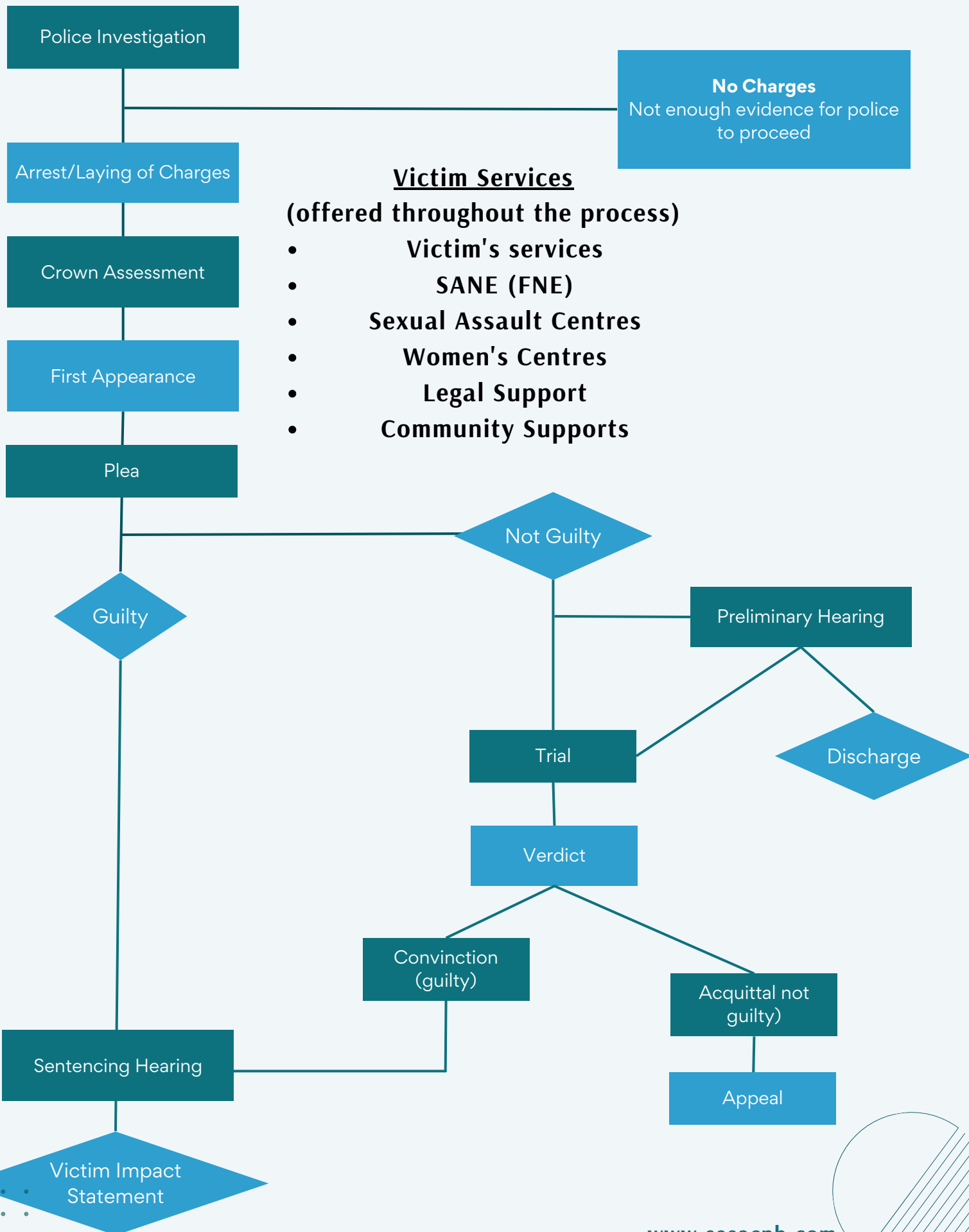
If charges are not laid, it's because the police were not able to find/collect enough evidence to proceed. **This does not mean that the sexual violence did not happen or that the police didn't believe you.** This can leave you feeling very much defeated or re-traumatized.

The investigating officer can explain to you why charges were not laid.

If charges are not laid, the survivor can apply for a Peace Bond or Emergency Protection Order if they fear for their safety.

Sexual Assault Trial Process

EACH CASE IS DIFFERENT AND MAY NOT FOLLOW THIS EXACT FLOW OF EVENTS.
 THIS IS MEANT AS A GUIDE.





Contacts

Description	Phone	Email
RCMP (Moncton Office)	<u>(506) 857-2400</u>	N/A
RCMP (Shediac Office)	<u>(506) 533-5151</u>	N/A
RCMP (Sackville Office)	<u>(506) 364-5023</u>	N/A
Victim Services (Moncton Office)	<u>506-856-2875</u>	DPS-MSP.Information@gnb.ca
Victim Services (Elsipogtog)	<u>506-523-4747</u>	DPS-MSP.Information@gnb.ca
South East Sexual Assault Centre NB	1-844-853-0811	sesac.casse@crossroadsforwomen.ca
Jessica Gallant <i>SESAC MANAGER</i>	(506) 295-0151	jessica@crossroadsforwomen.ca
Samuelle Saindon <i>LEGAL SUPPORT NAVIGATOR AT SESAC</i>	(506) 688-5689	samuelle@crossroadsforwomen.ca
Boreal Child & Youth Expertise Centre <i>DIEPPE LOCATION</i>	(506) 383-8300	directrice@centreboreal.com

