

Money to Help You After Sexual Assault

MAKING
RIGHTS
REALITY



Victims of Crime Assistance Tribunal



If you are sexually assaulted



Sexual assault is when someone gets you to do sexual things that you do not want to do.

- It is not your fault and you are never to blame.
- It can happen to girls, boys, women and men.



- It is never OK.
- It is against the law.



If you are sexually assaulted:



- It can hurt.
- Your body may be injured, for example cuts and bruises.
- It can make you feel bad for a long time.



You can feel better with help and support.

What help might you need?



If you are sexually assaulted, you may need help from:

- A doctor or nurse, to look after your body if you are injured.



- The police, to find the person who hurt you and take them to court.



- A counsellor, who is specially trained to talk with you to help you.



The counsellor can:

- Support you when you see the doctor and talk to the police.
- Be with you if you need to go to court.



The counsellor can also:

- Work out what other help you may need.
- Talk with you as many times as you want, to help you understand what has happened to you, and work out what will help you feel better.

You may need help to pay for things



If you are sexually assaulted, and you talk to the police and go to court, you may need:



- Transport to get to these appointments



- A communication support worker or an attendant carer to be with you.



A counsellor can arrange for the Making Rights Reality Program to pay for these things.



You may also need help to pay for:

- Medical and doctor bills



- Clothes to replace what was damaged when the person hurt you.



- Lost wages if you are unable to work because of the sexual assault.



- Things that will help you recover (feel better) from the assault, such as a short course or going to the gym.



Victims of Crime Assistance Tribunal

You can make a claim to the Victims of Crime Assistance Tribunal (VOCAT).



- If you are sexually assaulted, the law says you are the victim of sexual assault.
- A victim is someone who is hurt by a crime



- A crime is something that is against the law.



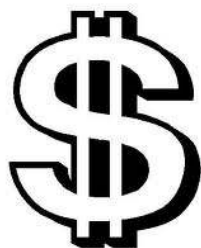
VOCAT hearings are held in Magistrates' Court buildings around Victoria, but they are less formal than a court hearing.

A hearing is a kind of meeting.

VOCAT is run by the Victorian Government.



A counsellor can help you to work out what things you need help paying for, and decide if you want to ask for this help from VOCAT.



You have the right to ask for help to pay for things.



If you were sexually assaulted in Victoria you can make a claim to VOCAT if you:

- Have made a statement to police about what happened to you, or there is a good reason why you did not do this.
- Ask for help from VOCAT within 2 years of the sexual assault happening. Even if it is longer than two years, sometimes you can still ask for help from VOCAT if the Tribunal agrees.



Asking for help from VOCAT

South Eastern CASA Centre Against Sexual Assault & Family Violence

Your CASA counsellor can help you ask for help from VOCAT.



SPRINGVALE MONASH
LEGAL SERVICE Inc.



The counsellor who has been supporting you will ask if you agree for them to help you contact a legal service.



If it is hard for you to get to the legal service, they may be able to meet you at your counsellor's office, or at your home.



If you agree:

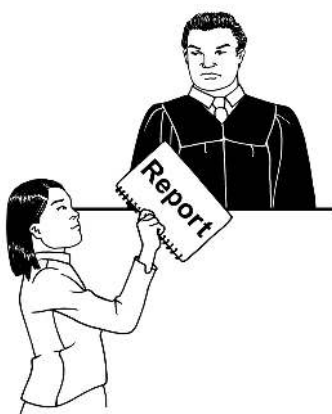
- The counsellor will ask the legal service for an appointment for you.



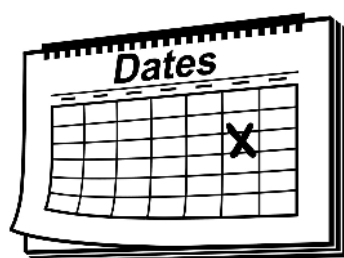
- The legal service will talk to you about what happened to you and what sort of things you might need to help you feel better.



- The legal service will help you fill in a form to ask for help from VOCAT. They will ask you to sign it.



- The counsellor will write a report to VOCAT saying how the sexual assault has affected you.
- The legal service may make an appointment with a psychologist who will also write a report



It may take one year or more for VOCAT to finish deciding what help the Tribunal can give you.

VOCAT hearing



A Hearing

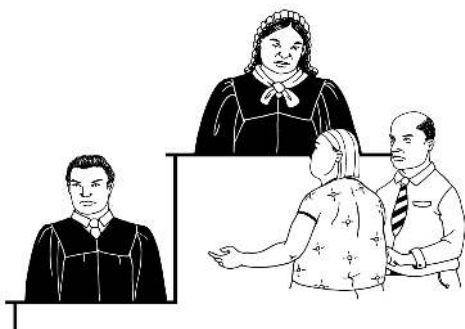
Sometimes claims are decided without a hearing (meeting).

Other times VOCAT will want a hearing.

If there is a hearing, a magistrate called a “Tribunal Member” will hear about what happened to you, and how it has affected you.



- The legal service will send a special lawyer, called a barrister, to speak for you.



- You will go to the Tribunal and sit with the barrister. The Tribunal Member may want to ask you questions.



- The counsellor can be with you to support you, if you want this.



The Tribunal Member will decide if the government will pay for your expenses and things to help you recover.



If VOCAT has decided that you should get help to pay for things, you will get a cheque or some money in your bank account up to six weeks after the hearing.

This happens when the Tribunal Member finishes deciding what help VOCAT can give you.

Who else can make a VOCAT claim?



Sometimes a parent can make a claim to VOCAT if their child is sexually assaulted.

The legal service helps families to decide when a claim like this can be made.

Making Rights Reality Program

This is a SECASA program that gives extra help to adults who have been sexually assaulted and who have an intellectual disability or Acquired Brain Injury, or use aids to communicate. It is called 'Making Rights Reality'. It can help you with seeing a counsellor.

It can help you with things you might need when you have appointments with the police, or if you go to court. For example, you may need a Communication Support Worker or an Attendant Carer to be with you or help you with transport.

It can also help you ask for help to pay for things you might need to help you recover and feel better. A Counsellor can help you to work out what you might need. Springvale Monash Legal Service is working with SECASA Counsellors to help people with this.

Brokerage assistance is available for CASA clients in all regions. To find out more about Making Rights Reality call SECASA on 03 9594 2289.

Booklets in this Series

Crisis Care After Sexual Assault
Having a Health Check After Sexual Assault
Making a Statement to Police
Counselling After Sexual Assault
Going to Court
Money to Help You After Sexual Assault
Sexual Assault and Family Violence- Getting Help
Sexual Assault: When Sex is Not Ok

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Images from CHANGE: www.changepeople.co.uk

For help phone the Sexual Assault Crisis Line: 1800 806 292 any time