

Independent Legal Advice Program for Adult Survivors of Sexual Assault

To better support adult survivors of sexual assaults, Nova Scotia will provide up to four hours of free legal advice.



Sexual assault is not alright. It is a violation of a person's human rights and it causes serious health, social and public safety issues in our communities.

To help adult sexual assault survivors understand their rights and legal options, the Province of Nova Scotia has created a new program that gives survivors up to 4 hours of free advice from a lawyer.

The program respects survivors' privacy and their right to make their own decisions. Registration is done through an independent agency, 211 Nova Scotia, and participants do not have to report to police or take legal action if they use the service.

ELIGIBILITY

- **Participants must be 16 years or older**
In Nova Scotia, there is a duty to report suspected sexual abuse of anyone under 16. There is also a duty to report suspected sexual abuse by a parent or guardian for people aged 16-19 and any sexual abuse where another person under the age of 16 may be at risk.
- **The assault took place in Nova Scotia**
Laws and rules can be different from province to province. Nova Scotia lawyers can only give advice on laws, programs, and services that exist in Nova Scotia but may not be able to advise regarding other Provinces.

REGISTER FOR THE PROGRAM

- To use the service, call 211 NS, an independent agency, and register (dial 2-1-1 on your phone).

- You do not need to provide details about what happened. You only have to say that you were sexually assaulted in Nova Scotia, and that you would like to speak with a lawyer.

USING THE SERVICE

- Once you are registered, you will be sent a package with a certificate number for up to 2 hours of legal advice.
- The package will also contain a list of participating lawyers. Choose any lawyer on the list and contact them with your certificate number to make an appointment.
- If more time is needed, call 211 NS and they will send you another certificate number for up to 2 additional hours of legal advice.
- Clients are welcome to select any lawyer from the list, regardless of region, who they feel best meets their individual needs. However, clients and lawyers are encouraged to explore all options to avoid the need for travel (e.g. video conferencing, Skype, telephone, etc.). The cost of a lawyer's travel will only be reimbursed where special circumstances exist to support traveling for a face to face meeting.
- Prior approval must be granted from the department for a lawyer to travel to meet with a client. Each lawyer's profile indicates if they are willing to travel to meet a client.

CONFIDENTIALITY

- Before you share what happened to you, the lawyer will explain any limitations of confidentiality. Once you understand these limits, you can through with the session or not.
- The program was created by Nova Scotia's Department of Justice, but the Department does not have access to participants' names or contact information.
- The only information that 211 NS will share with the Department of Justice is non-identifying data. This information will be shared to measure that the program is being used.

CONTACT 211 NOVA SCOTIA

Dial **2-1-1** on your phone.

Go to the 211 NS website at **ns.211.ca** and use the form on the "Contact Us" page.

novascotia.ca/sexualassaultlegaladvice



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