



Reporting

A step by step guide
to making a report to the Police

There are many different ways you can report a sexual violence offence to the Police. You might not be completely sure what happened or how to talk about it. The Police understand that this can be difficult and have **Specially Trained Officers (STOs)** who specialise in helping people to report sexual offences.

You can contact Nottinghamshire Police in a number of ways:

- **Call 999** (emergency number) this should only be used if the abuser is still present, or nearby, or returning to where survivor is located.
- **Call 101** (non-emergency number)
- Visit a Police Station
- Online crime reporting service

Contacting the Police

If you contact Nottinghamshire Police via 999 or 101, their call handlers will answer, not a Police officer. Call handlers are highly-trained and skilled members of Police staff. They're used to speaking to people in a variety of difficult situations. They will take details from you, create an incident number and ask for a **uniformed officer** to visit you. The uniformed officer will complete the early stages of an investigation before passing the case to a **Specially Trained Officer (STO)**. If you don't want the Police to come to your home, you can go to a Police station or they can meet you somewhere where you feel more comfortable.

Can someone be with me when I speak to the Police?

You can have anyone with you, who will make the process more comfortable for you; this could be a friend, family member, or an ISVA. However, if they are a potential **witness** they won't be able to sit with you while you give your statement.

Will the Police ask about my sexual history or preference?

The Police officers may ask some personal questions, such as whether you've had consensual sex with the person before. They will only ask questions which are relevant to the investigation. Your sexual history or preferences will have no impact on the way your case is handled or the support offered by the police and other services.

Will the Police officer examine me?

If the sexual assault happened within the last seven days, the Police officer will seek your consent to use an **early evidence kit**. This is a quick and non-invasive procedure, for example they may take a mouth rinse/swab, urine sample.

The Police have Specially Trained Officers who specialise in helping people to report sexual offences.

Can I report an offence on behalf of someone else?

Please encourage the survivor to attend the Topaz Centre. If this is not an option, then please report it to the Police as a third party and try to provide as much information as possible. The Police will record the incident. If in the future the survivor wishes to inform the Police themselves, the Police will already have a record of it. If the survivor did attend the Topaz Centre, any **forensic evidence** will have been secured, which will assist in the Police investigation going forward.

Making a Report to the Police

The circumstances behind any report of sexual violence are unique, so the way the Police investigate each one can vary. However, every investigation will start with the same steps to make sure they gather as much evidence as they can, as quickly as they can, whilst giving you all the support and advice you need.

First Police Visit

As soon as possible after you report a sexual offence, the Police will arrange for a uniformed officer to talk to you. Their first priority will be to check on your welfare and find out if you need any emergency medical assistance. If you're comfortable talking about what happened, the officer will have four main questions:

- Who did this?
- What happened?
- Where did it happen?
- When did it happen?

The Police understand you may not be able to answer all of these questions. However, the more you can tell them, the better their chances of identifying the perpetrator.

For something that has happened in the last seven days

It's natural to want to wash and try to make yourself feel more comfortable, but the Police will ask your permission to use an early evidence kit. This is a quick and non-invasive examination to gather forensic evidence. If possible, the Police will ask you to not:

- Shower or bathe
- Wash your hands
- Brush your teeth or hair
- Use the toilet or discard sanitary towels/tampons
- Drink or eat anything (other than essential medication)
- Smoke
- Remove or wash any clothing worn at the time

If you've already done any of these things please don't worry.

The Police may support you to make a visit to the Topaz Centre (Nottinghamshire's Sexual Assault Referral Centre) who can help with medical needs and collecting of forensic evidence.



Your Police Statement

The Police can either take your statement in writing or they can film the interview and use that as your statement. You will hear this called a **Video Recorded Interview (VRI)**. They will explain each choice so that you can choose which you are most comfortable with.

The Suspect

If the Police can identify and locate the **suspect**, they may arrest them. The decision to make the arrest will be based on a Necessity Criteria (threat and risk) which is applied by the Police and is on a case by case basis. The Police will take a number of factors into account, including ongoing threat and risk to yourself or others.

Your officer in the case (OIC)

The **officer in the case (OIC)** for these types of offences will be a Police Detective who has received or is receiving training into the investigation of serious and complex crimes. The OIC will be assigned to your case with the responsibility of investigating and securing all of the evidence. The OIC will explain to you what is happening at each step, answer any questions you might have and, with your consent, refer you through to specialist sexual violence advocacy services.

Support from Specialist Services

Based on your individual needs, the Police may make referrals on your behalf to specialist sexual violence support agencies working independently of the Police.

In Nottingham they are:

The Topaz Centre –
Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC)



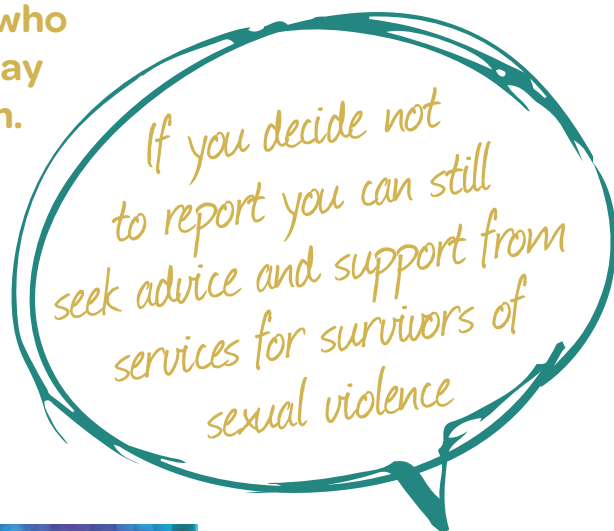
**Nottinghamshire Sexual
Violence Support Service**
(Notts SVS Services)



Your sexual history or preferences will have no impact on the way your case is handled or the support offered by the police and other services.

In Nottingham there are specialist sexual violence support organisations, who support people who have experienced sexual violence and you may benefit from making contact with one of them.

Some people choose not to report an offence to the Police and that is entirely your choice.



Topaz Centre
- Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC)

24hr Helpline Number: 0800 085 9993

www.topazcentre.org



Nottinghamshire Sexual Violence Support Services (Notts SVS Services)

0115 947 0064

www.nottssvss.org.uk



Nottinghamshire Police

Emergency Number: **999**

Non Emergency Number: **101**

www.nottinghamshire.police.uk



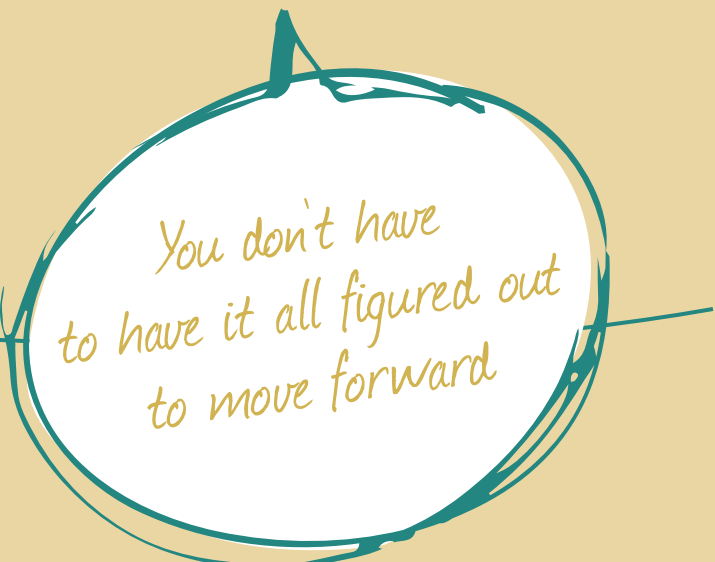
NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
POLICE
PROUD TO SERVE

Nottingham and Nottinghamshire's 24 Hour Domestic & Sexual Violence Helpline

0808 800 0340

www.junowomensaid.org.uk





*You don't have
to have it all figured out
to move forward*

Please feel free to visit the Consent Coalition website
for more information and support nottssvss.org.uk/consent-coalition/

