

After sexual assault

It is important for sex workers to be clear that sexual assault is not a part of a sex worker's job.

Sexual assault, or rape, is about violence, power and control - not sex or intimacy. Sex work is about providing a service (sex) in return for payment. Violence has no place in a sex worker's work conditions.

Immediately after sexual assault

- Get yourself to a safe place.
- Make contact with a trusted friend or sexual assault service. Be aware that some sex workers who have accessed support services and resources have faced barriers and discrimination. This may further compound any issues you are experiencing as a result of sexual assault.
- You will need to decide whether to seek medical attention and/or report the assault to the police.

Coping with sexual assault

- Identify how you want to be treated and how you don't want to be treated by your partner, friends, and clients.
- Address issues of trust and the need for personal control. Make decisions at your own pace based on your needs.
- Identify and deal with panic attacks and flashbacks.

- Identify potential triggers and implement practical strategies (eg. avoid oral sex if this triggers a memory).
- Identify and validate coping strategies, external supports and resources that you may use to cope with the assault.
- Explore self care strategies:
 - talk to a sexual assault counsellor
 - take time off
 - reduce appointments
 - incorporate WPH&S conditions into your work (eg. four weeks annual leave or one weeks leave per month)
 - self care rituals and or treating yourself
- Explore different levels of intimacy.

Protecting yourself

- Debrief with someone you trust after each shift.
- Explore safety strategies with other sex workers (eg. letting someone know where you are and when you will be back).

Useful contacts

Statewide Sexual Assault Help
Line 1800 010 120 (24 hours)