



# INTRODUCTION TO THE JOURNEY PROJECT

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A Guide For Survivors

This resource provides an overview of the Journey Project and the different supports available to survivors of sexual violence and/or intimate partner violence.

This information is general in nature and does **not** constitute legal advice.

Language is important. It holds a lot of power. You may identify with the word “survivor,” “victim,” both, or neither. Legal systems may refer to you as a “victim,” “complainant,” or “witness,” even though you may not identify with any of these 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 use the term “survivor.” However, we know that not everyone who has experienced sexual violence and/or intimate partner violence will identify this way, and that’s ok.

A note on Language: Language is important. It holds a lot of power. You may identify with the word “survivor,” “victim,” both, or neither. Legal systems may refer to you as a “victim,” “complainant,” or “witness,” even though you may not identify with any of these 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 use the term “survivor.” However, we know that not everyone who has experienced sexual violence will identify this way, and that’s ok.

If you would like to speak with a Legal Support Navigator (LSN), you can reach us through email, text, phone, or our social media pages. We are available Monday to Friday, 9:00am - 4:00pm.

TEL: 1-709-722-2805

TOLL-FREE/VRS: 1-833-722-2805

TEXT: 709-986-2801

EMAIL: [support@journeyprojectnl.com](mailto:support@journeyprojectnl.com)

[www.journeyproject.ca](http://www.journeyproject.ca)

Twitter: @JOURNEY\_NL

Facebook: @THEJOURNEYPROJECTNL

Instagram: @JOURNEYPROJECTNL

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# WHAT IS THE JOURNEY PROJECT?

The Journey Project was created in 2017. It is a joint project between the Public Legal Information Association of NL (PLIAN) and the NL Sexual Assault Crisis and Prevention Centre (NLSACPC) with a goal of enhancing supports for survivors of sexual violence and/or intimate partner violence. The Journey Project is provincial in scope, meaning people living anywhere in Newfoundland and Labrador can access our services. It also means that anyone who has experienced sexual violence and/or intimate partner violence in Newfoundland and Labrador can access our services - even if they are not living in another province, or even another country.

Knowing where to turn, or what happens next can be overwhelming when you have experienced sexual violence and/or intimate partner violence. The Journey Project exists to help you navigate this process.

The Journey Project has a small but dedicated team of Legal Support Navigators who offer legal information and system navigation to survivors of sexual violence and/or intimate partner violence. This might look like going with a survivor to court, the hospital, or the police station. It might also include offering community connections and referrals to resources, organizations, or professionals that offer support around the unique aspects of your experience.

The Journey Project runs the Journey Project Legal Support Service (JPLSS), where participants can receive free legal advice.

# WHAT IS SEXUAL VIOLENCE?

Sexual violence is a non-legal term that is used to describe any form of unwanted sexual contact. It includes a broad range of actions, words, and behaviours. It is carried out through sexual means, is of a sexual nature, and targets sexuality. Some common forms of sexual violence are sexual assault, distribution of intimate images without consent, and sexual harassment in the workplace.

Each survivor will interpret sexual violence differently based on their own personal and unique experience. What all forms of sexual violence have in common is that consent was not present. Consent is a voluntary agreement, given willingly, for a specific sexual act, at a specific time.

The Journey Project is open to any individual who has experienced what they consider to be sexual violence, not just what the Criminal Code definitions are.

# WHAT IS INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE?

It may not always be easy to figure out if certain behaviours or actions are considered abuse or violence. Different people experience and respond to intimate partner violence differently, and each of these experiences are valid. You are the expert of your own life and hold valuable knowledge, skills, and strengths.

Intimate partner violence (IPV) refers to multiple forms of harm caused by a current or former intimate partner, boyfriend, girlfriend, dating partner, sexual partner, or spouse. There does not need to be sexual intimacy in the relationship to be considered an intimate partner, for example in cases of online relationships. IPV can occur in both private spaces, such as the home, or public spaces such as at work. It can also take place online through social media or online apps. Intimate partner violence can include both criminal and non-criminal activity, however, the abuse is frequently intended to control, intimidate, and harm an individual.

Intimate partner violence can include physical abuse, criminal harassment, sexual violence, emotional or psychological abuse, financial abuse, spiritual abuse, coercive and controlling behaviour, and technology-facilitated violence. Intimate partner violence can also include litigation abuse whereby an abuser misuses the court system to maintain power and control.

The Journey Project is open to any individual who has experienced what they consider to be intimate partner violence, not just what the criminal code definitions are.

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# WHAT IS THE JOURNEY PROJECT LEGAL SUPPORT SERVICE?

The Journey Project Legal Support Service (JPLSS) is a lawyer referral program of The Journey Project. It provides free legal advice and system navigation to survivors of sexual violence and/or intimate partner violence.

It includes:

- Access to services of Legal Support Navigators who can provide legal information and supportive referrals to both legal and non-legal resources.
- Free legal advice from a Journey Project lawyer.
- It is available to people of any gender who have experienced sexual violence and/or intimate partner violence.
- It is available to people currently living anywhere in NL or who live elsewhere and experienced sexual violence and/or intimate partner violence in NL
- It is available to people who have already started a legal process and to those who are interested in exploring what their legal options may be.



Lawyers who register with The Journey Project do so voluntarily, and are required to complete training in trauma-informed practice. If you meet with a lawyer through the Journey Project, you are the client. The lawyer will act in your best interest. All conversations with the lawyer are confidential, except when there is a legal duty to report.



## HOW DO I CONTACT A LEGAL SUPPORT NAVIGATOR?

If you would like to speak with a Legal Support Navigator (LSN), you can reach us through email, text, phone, or our social media pages. We are available Monday to Friday, 9:00am - 4:00pm.

**TEL: 1-709-722-2805**

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# WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT WHEN I CONTACT THE JOURNEY PROJECT?



**When you reach out to The Journey Project, you are going to connect with someone who believes you and who will not pressure you to go any particular legal route. We hope to provide the kind of support that works for you.**

We try to answer every initial call, email, or message as soon as possible. When you reach out you'll be connecting with someone who is here to support survivors and their individual needs, because we know that each survivor and their experience is unique.

To access our services, criminal charges do **not** need to be laid, there is no time limit/time frame with regards to how long ago the incident happened, you do not need to have reported to police, and there is no pressure to go any particular legal route. Even if you are \*thinking about\* thinking about your legal options, we can support you.

When you reach out to The Journey Project, you can connect with us over the phone, through email, or arrange a time to meet in person, when possible.

Our staff might begin by asking what your goals are, and explaining the different supports and services available at The Journey Project. This process is about providing you with information and options, and letting you choose the best one for you.

We will never ask you to disclose details of your experience(s) of sexual violence and/or intimate partner violence, how much you share is entirely up to you. You can provide us with as little or as much information as you are comfortable sharing.



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# HOW CAN THE JOURNEY PROJECT SUPPORT ME?

## **Emotional Support**

Sometimes having someone listen to your story can be healing, meaningful, and comforting. We are here to hold space and listen, however there is never any expectation or pressure to disclose details of your experiences with sexual violence and/or intimate partner violence. If you are feeling overwhelmed, triggered, or in need of support around what happened to you, we can share resources on coping skills, counselling options, and other supportive referrals when needed.

## **Accompaniments**

When possible, a member of our team can accompany you to the police station, hospital, court, legal appointments, and other matters related to your legal issue. This support may be available on a case by case basis, depending on scheduling and your location in the province.

## **Lawyer Referral through the Journey Project Legal Support Service**

If you are interested in speaking with a lawyer, we will explain how the program works, and then gather some information that helps us pair you with the right lawyer with your informed consent. We sometimes refer to this as 'intake' but it often feels more like a conversation. Depending on your situation, we may have to ask for some information related to your experience, but you will not have to disclose any explicit details about what happened. This is so we can match you with a lawyer who practices in an area of law related to your situation and provide the lawyer with information for their conflict search. A conflict search is when a lawyer checks their system to see if they have had previous contact with you or the perpetrator. We will do our best to refer you to a lawyer in your region.

If you change your mind and no longer want a lawyer referral, or would like to take a break during the intake process, that is ok. There is never any pressure to continue, or follow any particular legal route.

## **Legal Clinics**

Our team regularly schedules free legal clinics throughout the province. These are advertised through our social media platforms and community partners. They are appointment based and usually available for any legal matter.

## **System Navigation**

Experiences of sexual violence and/or intimate partner violence can sometimes impact different parts of our lives, for many different reasons. The Journey Project can help you navigate these different areas that may include legal systems, healthcare, income support, housing, family violence systems, etc.

## **Sexual Harassment in the Workplace**

The Journey Project has staff with expertise on sexual harassment in the workplace. If you have experienced any form of sexual violence in the workplace, you have rights as an employee. There are lawyers with the JPLSS who have expertise in labour and employment related law, human rights, conflict resolution, and mediation.



## WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

**After you have connected with a Legal Support Navigator, next steps are largely determined by you. Next steps may include continued support from an LSN, speaking with a lawyer, or taking some time to think about your options. It is completely up to you. You may also decide you no longer wish to explore your options, and that is absolutely ok.**

**You deserve to be listened to, believed, and supported.**

**If you are in need of immediate support, you can speak with a volunteer on the NLSACPC's 24/7 Support and Information Line at 1-800-726-2743.**



**The Journey Project** exists to strengthen justice supports for survivors of sexual violence and/or intimate partner violence. It was established in 2017 as a collaborative initiative of Public Legal Information Association of NL (PLIAN) & the NL Sexual Assault Crisis and Prevention Centre (NLSACPC).

**[www.journeyproject.ca](http://www.journeyproject.ca)**

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**PLIAN** is a non-profit organization dedicated to educating Newfoundlanders and Labradorians about the law. PLIAN provides public legal education and information services with the intent of increasing access to justice.

Contact PLIAN's Legal Information Line by calling toll-free/VRS **1-888-660-7788** or e-mail

**[info@publiclegalinfo.com](mailto:info@publiclegalinfo.com)**

To reach the St. John's office call **709-722-2643**

To reach the Happy Valley-Goose Bay office call **709-896-5235**

**[www.publiclegalinfo.com](http://www.publiclegalinfo.com)**

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The **NLSACPC** is a non-profit, community-based, charitable organization that exists to support individuals of all genders who have been impacted by sexual violence.

To contact the St. John's office call **709-747-7757**

To reach the Happy Valley-Goose Bay office call **709-896-6758**

The NLSACPC operates a 24-hour Support and Information Phone Line that can be reached at **1-800-726-2743**

You can also text/chat with the **NLSACPC** Monday 2pm-8pm, Wednesday 2pm-8pm, and Friday 12pm-8pm by texting 1-800-726-2743 from your mobile phone, or using the "Get Support Now" button on the NLSACPC website,

**[www.endsexualviolence.com](http://www.endsexualviolence.com)**

