

Safety & Legal Guide for Survivors of Rape and Gender-Based Violence

Digital Safety Tips

1. Use strong passwords and two-factor authentication on all accounts.
2. Turn off real-time location sharing on social media.
3. Review privacy settings on Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, etc.
4. Avoid posting personal routines or locations publicly.
5. Use Signal or WhatsApp for encrypted communication.
6. Regularly check for spyware or stalkerware on your devices.
7. Browse in Incognito Mode for sensitive searches.
8. Be cautious of phishing emails or messages from unknown people.
9. Screenshot abusive messages before blocking/reporting.
10. Only share your location with trusted individuals.

Personal Safety Tips

1. Trust your instincts and leave uncomfortable situations.
2. Share your live location with trusted friends when necessary.
3. Use a safety word or code phrase with someone you trust.
4. Carry a whistle, pepper spray, or personal alarm (if legal).
5. Walk confidently and avoid dark or isolated areas.
6. Use official transportation apps and verify rideshare details.
7. Know your exits in social settings.
8. Prepare an emergency bag if in an unsafe home.
9. Have emergency contacts saved and ready.
10. Know local helplines and shelters in your area.

Legal Protections

- Constitution of South Africa: Guarantees the right to freedom, dignity, and protection from violence.

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- Sexual Offences Act: Covers all forms of sexual abuse and rape. Includes both men and women.
- Domestic Violence Act: Lets victims get Protection Orders from a Magistrate's Court.
- Protection from Harassment Act: Protects against stalking and cyber harassment.
- Children's Act: Protects minors from abuse or exploitation.
- Thuthuzela Care Centres (TCCs): One-stop centres for medical care, police help, and counselling.
Located in many public hospitals.
- Legal Aid SA: Offers free legal advice to survivors.
Call: 0800 110 110
SMS: "HELP" to 079 835 7179
- GBV Command Centre: 0800 428 428 | Dial *120*7867# (Free USSD access)

Important Resources

- SAPS Emergency: 10111
- GBV Command Centre: 0800 428 428 / *120*7867#
- Legal Aid South Africa: <https://www.legal-aid.co.za>
- POWA (People Opposing Women Abuse): <https://www.powa.co.za>
- Namola (safety app): <https://www.namola.com>
- Thuthuzela Centres Info: <https://www.npa.gov.za>

Visit these sites for more information and support.