

# Empowerment Toolkit: Navigating Legal Rights and Protections in Sri Lanka

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**A Resource for the Residents of the  
Emerge Centre for Reintegration**



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### **Disclaimer**

This toolkit is intended for general information purposes only. While this toolkit is intended to serve as a practical guide, it is not a substitute for professional legal advice. If required, iProbono can connect you with legal experts who can provide pro bono support. The toolkit should not be reproduced for commercial use.

This toolkit has been crafted to be accessible for young women who are survivors of trauma, and specifically for those reintegrating into society after such experiences.

This toolkit is accurate as of January 2025. The information contained in it is subject to amendment by the relevant authorities.



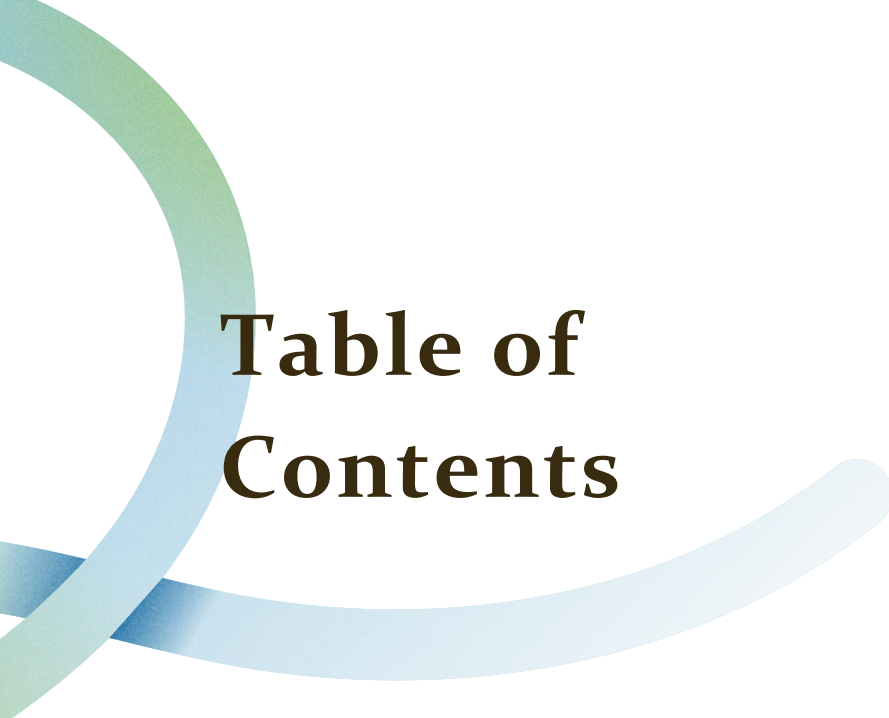
# Introduction

This toolkit is a comprehensive guide for individuals who have experienced abuse in Sri Lanka and are on the path to recovery and empowerment. Created by our team of lawyers, activists, and mental health professionals, it provides practical advice and legal information to help navigate this journey.

Understanding that healing is a deeply personal process, we have designed this resource to address a variety of needs and circumstances. Building a sense of safety is paramount to the healing process. It lays the foundation for reclaiming one's sense of self, and feeling secure is an essential element of that foundation. Whether you are just beginning your journey to recovery or have been actively pursuing it for some time, we hope this toolkit will help foster a sense of well-being and contribute to building a stable and fulfilling future.

This toolkit is just one of many resources available. Please reach out to professionals and support networks listed here for more support. As you explore this toolkit, take your time to absorb the information and apply what feels right for you. Healing is not a linear process, and it is okay to progress at your own pace. Remember, every step you take towards recovery is a victory. We believe in your resilience and your capacity to create a new chapter filled with hope and possibility.





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## Physical Abuse

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This is when a person physically hurts another person on purpose, like hitting, pinching, kicking, or burning them. It can sometimes leave bruises, cuts, or broken bones.

# Understanding Abuse

## Recognising the different forms of abuse

## Emotional Abuse

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This is when someone says hurtful or demeaning things to another person repeatedly, making them feel bad about themselves. This can include humiliating, isolating or ignoring a child which can make a child feel sad or scared.

## Sexual Abuse

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This is sexual activity with another person without their consent. If an adult engages in any sexual activity with a child, that is sexual abuse. This includes someone inappropriately touching or looking at another person's private parts or body.

## Neglect

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This is when an adult doesn't take care of a child properly, like not giving them food or a safe place to live. It can make the child feel hurt, lonely, or unloved.





# Common Myths About Abuse

**Myth: Abuse only happens in families that are broken or to certain types of people.**

**FACT**

Abuse can happen in any kind of family, no matter how rich or poor they are, or where they come from.

**Myth: If someone is abused, they will always become an abuser too.**

**FACT**

While some people who have been hurt might struggle with hurting others, many of them go on to live happy, peaceful lives without hurting anyone.

**Myth: It's easy to tell if someone is being abused because the signs are clear.**

**FACT**

Abuse can be sneaky and hard to see, especially emotional abuse or neglect. It is important to pay attention and look for signs that someone might be in trouble.

# Common Offences and How to Identify Them



Abuse can take on many forms. It is important to know what these kinds of harm are so that they can be recognised and addressed.

In Sri Lanka, anyone under 18 years old is considered a "child" or a minor, which means someone underage.

# Offences Relating to Abuse

## ✓ Cruelty to Children - Section 308A of the Penal Code of Sri Lanka

**What it means:** When a child's parent or guardian does something to hurt the child, like hitting them, not taking care of them properly, leaving them alone, or not giving them what they need to live. This could hurt the child. The hurt could be to their body, their feelings, or even how they see or hear things.

**For example:** Saman is 10 years old and his mother leaves him at home with no food or water. On some occasions, she leaves him unattended for days. This makes him feel sad and scared. Saman's mother may be guilty of this offence.

Shirley's school teacher shouts at Shirley every day. One day, he hit her with a stick on her arm and told her she is stupid. Now Shirley is afraid to go to school and feels unsafe. Shirley's teacher may be guilty of this offence.

## ✓ Assault - Section 342 of the Penal Code of Sri Lanka

**What it means:** When someone intentionally does something to hurt another person, or makes them feel afraid that they are going to get hurt. The fear does not have to be about physical pain; it could also be emotional pain or distress.

Does someone just saying hurtful things without actually doing anything count as assault?

Normally, no. But if those words are part of a situation where someone is also doing something threatening, then it might count as assault.

**For example:** Manjula makes a fist and moves it like he is going to hit Shehara while shouting that he is going to beat her up. There was no physical contact but Shehara was afraid that Manjula would physically assault her. Manjula may be guilty of this offence.

## ✓ Sexual Harassment - Section 345 of the Penal Code of Sri Lanka

**What it means:** This law says that no one can do things that make someone uncomfortable or upset in a sexual way. It could be saying things that are inappropriate, or touching someone when they don't want to be touched.

**For example:** An employee, Rupika, works in a corporate office. Her colleague, Yohan, frequently makes comments about her appearance, which makes her uncomfortable. Despite her clear indications of discomfort, Yohan continues to make suggestive remarks and occasionally touches Rupika's shoulder while speaking with her. Yohan may be guilty of this offence.



## Sexual exploitation of children - Section 360B of the Penal Code of Sri Lanka

**What it means:** This includes situations like

- Using a child for sex or making them partake in a sexual activity.
- Making a child have sex with someone or doing something bad to them.
- Convincing someone to partake in a sexual activity with a child by putting up ads or using other ways to influence them.
- Taking advantage of a relationship with a child to make them do sexual acts.
- Scaring or hurting a child to make them do sexual acts.
- Giving money, gifts, or other things to a child or their parents to make the child do sexual acts.

This law is there to make sure children are safe and no one can hurt them in these ways.

**For example:** Kapila is a 14-years-old boy and lives next door to Piyal who is 53-years-old. Piyal invites Kapila to his house and performs sexual acts on Kapila. In return, he gives Kapila money and a new phone as gifts. Piyal may be guilty of this offence.



## Trafficking - Section 360C of the Penal Code of Sri Lanka

**What it means:** This is when

- A person buys, sells, or trades a person, or persuades someone to do the same. This includes doing anything to help, encourage, or make this happen, in exchange for money or other benefits.
- A person recruits, moves, transfers, hides, or obtains any person by using threats, force, lies, or deception. This is done to make them work against their will, become slaves, give up their organs, become prostitutes or face other sexual exploitation, or for any other illegal act.
- A person recruits, moves, transfers, hides, or receives a child, whether or not the child agrees, to make them work against their will, become slaves, give up their organs, become prostitutes or face sexual exploitation, or for any other illegal act.

**For example:** Malika, an 8-year-old child was taken from the hospital by Anula who pretended to be her mother. Anula then took money to sell Malika to a foreigner named Josh who wished to adopt her. Anula and Josh both may be guilty of this offence.

**In another example:** Mathew tells Sarah that he can give her a great job in Colombo where she can earn a lot of money and have a better life. Sarah agrees and travels from Indonesia to Colombo. However, when Sarah gets there, she finds out that Mathew lied. Instead of a good job, she is forced to work very hard without pay. She is also hurt or forced into dangerous situations, and made to perform sexual favours for people. Matthew may be guilty of this offence.



## **Soliciting a Child - Section 360E of the Penal Code of Sri Lanka**

**What it means:** This is when an adult tries to make a child do sexual acts. It is against the law, whether it happens in Sri Lanka or from another country.

**For example:** Chamara, a 40-year-old man befriends Sneha, a 12-year-old girl. He then requests her to touch his genital area. Chamara may be guilty of this offence.

**Another example would be:** John, a 26 year-old man in America connects with Sachini, a 15 year old girl in Sri Lanka, through Facebook. John starts sending Sachini sexual messages and images. He then proceeds to ask Sachini to video call him. John may be guilty of soliciting Sachini.



## **Rape - Section 363 of the Penal Code of Sri Lanka**

**What it means:** This is when a man has sexual intercourse with a woman without her consent. This can also include situations where the woman is in detention at the time, or if she was of unsound mind, or under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Rape can happen to anyone, boys or girls. It can be committed by anyone, men or women. The law in Sri Lanka has a specific definition where it says only a man can rape a woman/girl, but it's important to remember that sexual violence can affect people of all genders.

**For example:** Amal meets Kamala at a party. He gives Kamala alcoholic drinks and takes her to a secluded area and attempts to rape her. Amal says he will kill Kamala if she does not engage in sexual intercourse with him. Kamala submits to Amal's demand out of fear. Amal may be guilty of this offence.

It is important to note that consent must be freely given:

- Agreeing to have sexual intercourse out of fear is not consent
- Consent obtained from a mentally ill person is not valid

Consent obtained under the influence of drugs or alcohol is not valid



## **Incest - Section 364A of the Penal Code of Sri Lanka**

**What it means:** This is when someone has sexual intercourse with a person that they are related to, like their parents, siblings, or children.

**For example:** Namal is Pooja's father's brother. Namal forces Pooja to engage in sexual intercourse with him stating it is her duty to do as he says as she is his niece. Namal may be guilty of this offence.



## ✓ **Grave Sexual Abuse - Section 365B of the Penal Code of Sri Lanka**

**What it means:** When any person uses their genitals, other body parts, or objects, on any part of another person's body without their consent, with the intention of gaining sexual pleasure. This includes anything that does not constitute rape but still cause significant harm, including physical and psychological trauma.

This could include actions such as fondling, forced oral sex, or penetration with objects, resulting in both physical injuries and psychological trauma for the victim.

**For example:** Yohan is a 50-year-old man who is Malini's neighbour. Malini is 17-years-old. When Malini was walking on the road, Yohan grabbed her and fondled her breasts which caused minor bruising. Yohan may be guilty of this offence.

## ✓ **Criminal Intimidation - Section 483 of the Penal Code of Sri Lanka**

**What it means:** When someone threatens to cause harm to a person's body, reputation, property, or close person of interest, in order to make that person do something they do not want to do.

**For example:** Damith was in a relationship with Rupa. Rupa broke up with Damith after a few months. Unable to handle this break up, Damith calls Rupa continuously. Rupa ignores these calls. Damith then shows up at Rupa's house and threatens to burn her house down if she does not resume their relationship. Damith may be guilty of this offence.

## ✓ **Wrongful Confinement - Section 348 of the Penal Code of Sri Lanka**

**What it means:** When someone assaults a person, or uses criminal force to wrongfully confine them .

**For example:** Marie is Jagath's daughter and is 18 years old. Jagath is unhappy that Marie is in a consensual relationship with Kamal. Jagath, in an effort to separate Marie from Jagath, physically drags her to a room in his house and locks her there with no way to communicate with any outsiders. Jagath may be guilty of this offence.



# Offences Relating to Money and Property

## ✓ Theft - Section 366 of the Penal Code of Sri Lanka

**What it means:** To dishonestly take someone else's belonging without their consent.

**For example:** Ashok sees a ring belonging to Yohani on a table at Yohani's house. Ashok picks up the ring and hides it in a drawer in her house with the intention of removing the ring from Yohani's house when Yohani is not home. Ashok later visits Yohani's house when she is out and takes the ring. Ashok may be guilty of this offence.

## ✓ Extortion - Section 372 of the Penal Code of Sri Lanka

**What it means:** To scare or intimidate someone into providing something valuable.

**For example:** Palitha threatens Chamila with bodily injury, and induces her to sign a cheque that he can cash. Palitha may be guilty of this offence.

## ✓ Robbery - Section 379 of the Penal Code of Sri Lanka

**What it means:** When someone committing a theft causes or attempts to cause death, hurt, or wrongful restraint, or fear of these things, to a person.

**For example:** Shashi is sitting at a bus stand and is approached by Lal. Lal pulls a knife out and cuts Shashi's arm, demanding Shashi give him her purse. Lal may be guilty of this offence.

## ✓ Criminal Misappropriation Of Property

**What it means:** When someone dishonestly takes and uses another's property for themselves.

**For example:** Ravi and Fathima were joint owners of a laptop. Fathima informed Ravi that she will be taking the laptop to her house for a week and Ravi agreed as they were joint owners. Without Ravi's knowledge, Fathima sold the laptop to a buyer and kept the money for herself. Fathima may be guilty of this offence.

## ✓ Criminal Breach of Trust - Section 388 of the Penal Code of Sri Lanka

**What it means:** When someone who is entrusted with a property misuses or disposes of the property in a way that they are not supposed to according to the rules of the trust.

**For example:** Kavitha and Rani are friends. Since Kavitha is working in India, she sends money to Rani requesting her to purchase a washing machine for her home while she is away. Rani agrees to do so but uses the money to buy herself a smartphone. Rani may be guilty of this offence.

# Cyber Crimes



## What are cyber crimes?

Cyber crimes occur when people use computers, networks and digital technology, such as the Internet, to engage in illegal activities that cause harm to others. This can include sending hurtful or sexual messages, sharing intimate photos without permission, hacking someone's email to obtain personal information or data, or spreading rumours to embarrass someone because of their gender or sexuality. This may be considered online bullying or harassment.

# Types of Cyber Crimes



## Blackmail

When someone threatens to share damaging or private details about another person if they do not do what is asked of them. These can include messages, photos, or videos, on any app or website.

**For example:** Chandana gets access to Mariam's computer illegally and finds an embarrassing photograph of her. He threatens to publish it on social media unless Mariam gives him money. Chandana's behaviour amounts to blackmail.



## Cyber Harassment

When people use the Internet to harass others and make them feel bad or uncomfortable. This can take place over emails, social media, or through websites.

For example: Kapila sends intimidating messages repeatedly to Chamila, threatening to expose her home address and phone number on a website. Kapila has also created a fake social media account pretending to be Chamila. Kapila's behaviour amounts to cyber harassment.



## Cyber Stalking

When someone keeps track of where another person goes and what they do on the Internet, infringing on their privacy and making them feel unsafe or uncomfortable.

Multiple provisions of the Computer Crimes Act No. 24 of 2007 can be used to prosecute behaviour related to cyberstalking. The Act makes it illegal to secretly access someone's computer or online accounts.

For example: Manjith tracks his friend Natasha's location through an app, to keep track of where she goes and who she meets. Natasha is not aware of Manjith tracking her. Manjith's behaviour constitutes cyber stalking.



## Cyberbullying

When people say mean or hurtful things about another person online, share embarrassing or false information. This can happen through phone conversations, social media, games, and at other online locations.

For example: Theruni posts hurtful comments on Kasuni's Instagram photos, commenting on her body image and weight. Theruni's behaviour amounts to cyberbullying.

### ✓ **Cyberflashing**

Sending inappropriate material (often nude or sexual images or videos) to someone without their permission.

For example: Prashan sends nude photos of himself to Wasanthi via text message. Prashan's behaviour constitutes an offence of cyberflashing.

### ✓ **Grooming**

When an adult tries to establish an emotional connection with a child or younger person online, with the intention of training, manipulating or preparing the child or young person to exploit or abuse them.

For example: Kamani, an adult, pretends to be a 15-year old girl on Facebook and becomes friends with other girls this age. She starts conversations about sex and persuades them to talk about their sexual experiences and fantasies. Kamani's behaviour amounts to grooming.

### ✓ **Identity Theft**

When someone pretends to be another person online. They might use their name or personal information to trick people, steal money, or do illegal things.

Section 18 of the Online Safety Act No. 9 of 2024 makes it illegal to pretend to be someone else online to trick people. This includes pretending to be a different person, using someone else's identity, or making people think you are someone else.

If you find out that someone is pretending to be you online, you can use this law to protect yourself.

For example: Samadhi pretends to be a banker and emails Priyanthi asking for her bank details including PINs and passwords. Samadhi then uses this information to steal money from Priyanthi's account. Samadhi is guilty of identity theft.

### ✓ **Image-based Sexual Abuse**

Sharing private or intimate images of someone without their permission.

Section 2 of the *Obscene Publications Ordinance* No. 4 of 1947 states that it is illegal to make, produce, possess, import, export, distribute, or display in public any obscene writings, drawings, pictures, films, or other materials, or to run a business involving these items, as well as to advertise or promote ways to access or trade such materials. Additionally, section 286A of the *Penal Code* states that any person who develops photographs or films and discovers that they contain indecent or obscene images of a child must immediately report this to the officer in charge at the nearest police station.



For example: Kasun shares intimate photos of his ex-girlfriend Kavindi with his friends and on websites. Kasun's behaviour amounts to image-based sexual abuse



### **Sextortion**

When someone threatens to share intimate pictures or videos of another person with the intention of demanding money, more images, or with other demands.

For example: Ahmed threatens to share nude photographs of Pavani, unless Pavani pays him money. Ahmed's behaviour amounts to sextortion.



### **Online Trafficking**

When people use the Internet to find and trick others into unsafe or inappropriate situations, like trafficking them or hurting them.

For example: Nipuni got a job offer from a man named Priyanga through email, who promised her a lucrative job at a hotel in Malaysia. Excited, she agreed to move to Malaysia. When she arrived, Priyanga took her passport and forced her to work as a sex worker in terrible conditions. She had no way to leave or contact her family. Priyanga's behaviour amounts to trafficking.



### **Online Child Sexual Abuse**

When an online account or platform is used to commit or help commit child abuse.

Section 52 of the Online Safety Act No. 9 of 2024 states that the commission of child abuse offences online is illegal and punishable by the law. This includes publishing photos, audio, or videos online that are abusive or pornographic in nature and involve a child.

For example: Mahinda has a group on WhatsApp with his friends Kamal and Piyal where they share pornographic content. Mahinda takes a photograph of his neighbour's 10 year old daughter changing her clothes and sends it to the group. This is considered child pornography and Mahinda's behaviour amounts to online sexual abuse.

## Doxxing

Doxxing is when someone shares private information about another person on the Internet without their permission, like their home address, phone number, or where they go to school. This is usually done to embarrass, scare, or harm the person.

Section 20 of the Online Safety Act No. 9 of 2024 states that it is illegal to share someone's private information online with the purpose of making them feel ashamed, unsafe, or scared. Private information includes things like home address, phone number, photos or videos, and personal details about their family or friends. Sharing this information can be considered harassment if it makes the other person feel threatened, alarmed, distressed, or humiliated.

This law can help people who have been bullied or harassed online. For example, it might apply if someone shares your private information after a relationship breakdown or a disagreement.

For example: Ramani is a well known actress in Sri Lanka. She breaks up with her boyfriend Nimal and in an effort to harass her, he shares her home address on his Facebook page. Nimal's behaviour amounts to doxxing.



## Are there laws to protect people from cyber crimes?

Yes, there are multiple laws to protect people from cyber crimes.

These include the Penal Code, Computer Crimes Act No. 24 of 2007, Obscene Publications Ordinance No. 4 of 1947, Online Safety Act No. 9 of 2004, and the Personal Data Protection Act No. 9 of 2022.

## Reporting of cyber crimes

If you or someone you know is targeted online, here are some steps you can take to seek immediate assistance:

- Before reporting the content, take screenshots as evidence.
- Report the post on the social media platform where it was shared.
- File a complaint at your nearest police station or the Women and Children's Bureau, located in Grandpass, Colombo. They can offer specialised support and guidance in such situations.
- Remember to print out the screenshots of the evidence and hand them over to the police.
- Speak to a lawyer or trusted adult who can guide you through the process.

## How to protect yourself online

- If you use social media like Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp, TikTok, or Snapchat, take control of your privacy settings. Set your account to private if you want only trusted contacts to see your posts and information.
- Personal information like addresses or phone numbers should never be shared on public profiles.
- Exercise caution when accepting friend requests or messages from strangers. It is perfectly acceptable to ignore or block unfamiliar contacts.
- Before posting anything online, consider the potential consequences, as once something is shared, it remains accessible even if deleted later.
- Avoid sharing anything that could potentially damage your reputation or that could compromise your safety.
- Choose strong, unique passwords for online accounts and never share them with anyone, even friends. Regularly updating passwords adds an extra layer of security.
- Location services should be disabled on mobile phones to prevent apps from tracking your whereabouts without your consent.

## Legal implications of sharing nude images in Sri Lanka

In Sri Lanka, sending, distributing, and storing nude images (regardless of who shares them and what the relationship between the parties is) is an offence under section 2 of the Obscene Publications Act.

**It is important to remember that it is illegal for anyone to send, receive or store nude images, even if these were sent, received or stored consensually.**

This means that if a girl willingly shares a nude image of herself with her romantic partner, she too will have committed an offence, unless she was forced or blackmailed to do so in the first place.

If you have shared your explicit images, the person who receives them can complain against you under the Obscene Publications Ordinance. In practice, this rarely happens. If explicit images of you are shared, it is advisable to file a police report to prevent them being shared further.

## Working with the Police

Entering a police station can be overwhelming, and becoming a victim of a crime can be stressful and confusing. Here's a simplified guide to a person's rights at the police station.



## How to file a complaint at the police station

**Visit your nearest police station, preferably with an adult if you are a child.**

**Have a lawyer present if possible. They can help ensure that your statement is accurate, and that you are treated fairly and get support throughout the process.**

**Ask to speak to the Women and Children's Desk. Be ready to tell them the whole story. You might need to write it down before you visit the police station.**

**If you feel upset, you can ask for a break.**

**When giving a statement, it is important to explain everything clearly. If possible, ask the lawyer to review it for accuracy before signing.**

Ask the police for a receipt of the statement. This is very important, so do not lose it. This receipt is known as the "1/B Form". Sometimes, the police station may claim to not have the proper paper to write the form. No matter the circumstances, you must be given a receipt referencing your complaint or statement.

Ensure that the receipt they provide includes the following details:

- Name of the police station
- Date
- Name of the complainant
- Nature of the complaint
- Information Book reference
- Name, rank and badge number of the recording officer

**Ask them what's going to happen next and how you can find out, ask for your inquiring officers name and phone number.**



## Important things to remember

- You have the right to tell them what you would like to achieve as an outcome and for them to take you seriously.
- You can request that the conversation with the police officer be private.
- You can ask for information about organisations or people who can help you. They should make sure you are protected from your perpetrator to prevent any other crimes being committed against you.

## If you feel the police aren't following proper procedures, you can:

- File a written complaint : Write to the Police Commission, Inspector General of Police, and copy the Officer-in-Charge (OIC) of the police station.
- Contact the Human Rights Commission : Everyone has the right to a fair legal process. The Human Rights Commission can help ensure your rights are protected.

# Making a complaint at the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka

Complaints can be made in Sinhala, English, or Tamil.

## Complain via the hotline

- You can call their hotline on 1996, or 0112505575.
- Make sure to provide all relevant information accurately, like you would at the police station.
- Request a reference number for the complaint and the name of the recording officer so that you can follow up on the progress.

## File a Complaint Form

- Download and print the complaint form in your preferred language from the 'Make a Complaint' tab on the Human Rights Commission of Sri Lanka [website](https://www.hrcsl.lk/make-a-complaint/). (<https://www.hrcsl.lk/make-a-complaint/>)
- You can also get a complaint form from a Human Rights Commission office in Colombo 4.
- You can lodge the complaint form in person or via email to [sechrcsl@gmail.com](mailto:sechrcsl@gmail.com)

# Know Your Rights: Victim and Witness Protection

In Sri Lanka, special laws such as the Assistance to and Protection of Victims of Crime and Witnesses Act No. 10 of 2023 (re-enacted subsequent to Act No. 4 of 2015), exist to safeguard individuals who have experienced harm (victims) or have witnessed distressing events involving others (witnesses). Under this Act, the National Authority for the Protection of Victims of Crime and Witnesses and the Police Victims of Crime and Witnesses Assistance and Protection Division have been established to provide support and protection for victims and witnesses, in line with international standards and best practices.

## Key Rights of Victims

- **Fair Treatment:** Victims have the right to be treated equally and fairly. No one should treat you badly because of what happened to you.
- **Respect for Dignity and Privacy:** Feelings and privacy are important. Law enforcement should respect victims' feelings and not invade their privacy.
- **Protection From Further Harm:** Any attempt to intimidate or threaten you as a consequence of your experience is unacceptable. You have the right to protection from such actions.
- **Medical Help:** If you are physically injured or emotionally distressed due to an incident, you should seek assistance from a medical professional or someone equipped to provide care and support.
- **Getting Help:** You are encouraged to confide in authorities, such as police officers, about your experiences. It is imperative that your complaints are taken seriously, and appropriate measures are taken to investigate the matter thoroughly.
- **Having a Lawyer:** If someone has caused harm, and an investigation is underway, you have the right to be accompanied by a lawyer. The presence of legal representation ensures your perspective is articulated effectively and helps you comprehend the proceedings.

## Key Rights of Witnesses

- **Fair Treatment:** When you are asked about what you witnessed, you should be treated with respect. Every person who makes a complaint or statement should be treated equally.
- **No Harassment or Intimidation:** No one should attempt to intimidate or coerce you into divulging information you're not comfortable sharing.
- **Protection from Harm:** If there are concerns about potential harm due to disclosing what was witnessed, safeguards should be in place to ensure protection. Whether you have spoken to law enforcement, appeared in court, or voiced their account through other means, you should not fear retaliation.

These rights serve to ensure that individuals can contribute to rectifying situations without fear or mistreatment. If anyone attempts to induce discomfort or fear because of your assistance, it is crucial to confide in a trusted individual or organisation. They can offer support to ensure safety and well-being.

Seek a lawyer's assistance in reaching out for more support in ensuring safe proceedings.

## Attending Court

If your case has progressed to court you will become a party to court proceedings as a witness and/or victim.

You are required to attend court during the first few hearing dates and on the dates you are called to give evidence. Your lawyer will attend court to ensure the proper completion of your case.

If you are called in to give evidence:

- Make sure you are well-versed on the incident and events that transpired. Create a note with all the details to help you remember the facts till the end of your case. Study these notes well before giving evidence.
- When being cross-examined, the opposition will try to intimidate you. Try not to let this affect the accuracy and consistency of your story.
- Speak slowly and allow yourself time to think and remember the facts accurately.

If you are unsure what to wear to court, you can discuss it with your lawyer.

# Services

## Legal Support and Protection

- iProbono (Free legal support and representation) - 070 170 6200
  - Police Emergency - 119
  - Police Women and Children's Bureau - 011 244 4444 or 109 (hotline)
  - National Child Protection Authority - 1929
  - Women's Helpline - 1938
  - Home for Human Rights - 011 257 7962
  - Complaints to the Inspector General of Police - <https://telligp.police.lk/> OR 118
- 

## Psychological Support

- Emerge Psychologist - 0776744111
  - Shanthi Margam - 071 763 9898
  - National Mental Health Helpline - 1926
  - Women's Helpline - 1938
  - Dr Darshani Hettirachchi - Lady Ridgeway Hospital for Children
  - Dr Anuradha Herath - Kalubowila Teaching Hospital
  - LEADS Child Care Hotline - 075 712 1212
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## Other Resources for Support

- Emerge Lanka Foundation - 077 081 9133, 077 298 9484
  - Family Planning Association of Sri Lanka - 0112 555 455
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## Emergency Support

- Child Protection Force - 0114848856
- Women in Need - 0775676555
- Sambol Foundation - 0776772848





## Contact Us

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