

## Resources

### What is sexual assault? Sexual assault is when there is sexual contact:

- Without consent.
- With the use of coercion, physical force, deception or threat.
- When the victim/survivor is mentally or physically incapacitated, intoxicated or impaired, asleep or unconscious.
- Sexual assault can be touching or any type of sexual penetration (oral, anal or vaginal) with any body part or object.

*SafeHouse Center recognizes that sexual assault occurs by and against all genders and across all sexual orientations. We work to end the oppression of all people as well as value and celebrate the diversity of our community. SafeHouse Center also strives to protect the rights of everyone.*



SafeHouse Services are all **free, confidential,** and **inclusive.** We provide:

- 24 Hour HelpLine: 734-995-5444
- Help getting a protection order
- Legal advocacy
- Counseling
- Safety Planning
- Support Groups
- Shelter

#### Local Resources:

- **Jim Toy Community Center**  
734-995-9867  
<http://www.wrap-up.org/>
- **The Neutral Zone**  
(734) 214-9995  
<http://www.neutral-zone.org/>
- **Pride Zone at Ozone Center** (734)662-2265  
<http://ozonehouse.org/programs/queerzone.php>
- **Spectrum Center**  
734-763-4186  
<http://spectrumcenter.umich.edu>  
(U of M affiliate resource)

#### Michigan Resources:

- **Michigan Coalition to End Domestic Violence & Sexual Violence** 517-347-7000  
[www.mcedsv.org](http://www.mcedsv.org)
- **Equality Michigan** 313-537-7000  
[equalitymi.org](http://equalitymi.org)

#### National Resources:

- **National Sexual Assault Hotline:** 1-800-656-HOPE  
<http://www.rainn.org/>

*Information provided by SafeHouse Center and the Michigan Coalition to End Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault*

## Sexual Assault in LGBTIQ Communities

A Resource for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer, and Questioning Survivors of Sexual Assault



**Building communities free of domestic violence and sexual assault**

## What can I do if I have been sexually assaulted?

- **Talk to someone you trust:** You can ask for what you need from them, “I just need for you to listen” or “I just need someone to be here while I sleep so I can feel safe.”
- **Sexual assault exam/health care:** A Nurse Examiner Program can provide a forensic exam, pregnancy prevention, antibiotics to treat some STIs, information about sexual assault support services and the criminal justice process, and future testimony in a sexual assault court case. They can help you figure out what steps you might like to take initially since making a decision right after an assault can be difficult. If you believe you could have contracted HIV during the assault, talk to the nurse or emergency room. If you are not given assistance, call your local HIV/AIDS agency. (HIV/AIDS Resource Center 734-572-9355)
- **Criminal Prosecution:** If you are interested in criminal prosecution the first step is to file a police report. You can always change your mind about participation later.
- **Report Discrimination:** Contact Equality Michigan (equalitymi.org) at 1-866-962-1147 or (313) 537-7000 to get legal assistance and report a hate crime. You can also call the SafeHouse Center Hotline, 734-995-5444 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

## Common fears of LGBTIQ survivors of sexual assault:

- Not being taken seriously or having their experience minimized.
- Having their experience sensationalized.
- Having to explain how the assault happened in more detail than necessary.
- Being blamed for the assault.
- Being treated in a homo, trans or bi-phobic manner by police, hospital or rape crisis center.
- Mistakenly being perceived as the perpetrator.
- Being “outed.”
- If the survivor’s community is small, the fear of other’s skepticism or people “taking sides” may cause the survivor to keep silent.
- The survivor’s guilt and self-blame may lead them to question their sexual identity and sexuality.
- Gay/bi male survivors may fear reporting due to the stereotype that they are promiscuous
- Lesbian/bi women survivors may fear reporting because women are not typically viewed as perpetrators of sexual violence.

*Sexual assault is not bound by sexual orientation or gender. It is a matter of consent. It is not defined by you saying or NOT saying “no.” If someone forces or coerces you to do something sexual you don’t want to do, that is sexual assault. Sexual assault can happen by a stranger, friend, family member, date or partner. The person who CAUSES sexual assault is the perpetrator/assailant. It is NEVER the survivor’s fault.*

## What are your rights?

### You have the right to:

- Be treated with dignity and respect in regards to your gender identity and/or sexual orientation and as a survivor.
- Sexual assault survivors have the right to an immediate and comprehensive medical–legal examination by a trained professional. Every survivor should be given respectful care from the healthcare system.
- Sensitivity towards you as a survivor of sexual assault by medical and legal personnel.
- Turn down an interview with the police or reschedule for time when you feel better to participate
- Not participate with the criminal justice process
- Ask questions to the police, sexual assault nurse examiner, and attorney.

## How can I help my friend or partner?

- Believe they have been sexually assaulted.
- Respect their need for confidentiality.
- Avoid judgmental comments/jokes.
- Ask how you can assist rather than giving advice.
- Respect their decisions even when yours may be different.
- Be a good listener.
- Avoid pressure to resume sexual activity. Let the survivor initiate sexual contact.
- Offer your unconditional love and support.