



Empowering survivors of

Gender-Based Violence

EVIDENCE PRESERVATION CHECKLIST

If You May Want to Report Abuse or Assault

Evidence can be important, but your safety and medical needs come first. If possible, use this checklist to help preserve evidence in the hours and days following an incident.

DO NOT WASH OR CLEAN

- ☐ Do not shower or bathe
- ☐ Do not wash your hands
- ☐ Do not brush your teeth
- ☐ Do not use mouthwash
- ☐ Do not wash your face
- ☐ Do not comb or brush your hair
- ☐ Do not clean under your fingernails

DO NOT CHANGE OR DISCARD CLOTHING

- ☐ Avoid changing clothes if possible
- ☐ Do not wash clothing worn during or immediately after the incident
- ☐ Do not throw away underwear
- ☐ Do not throw away shoes or accessories
- ☐ If you must change clothes, place worn items in a clean paper bag (not plastic)

DO NOT CLEAN THE AREA

- ☐ Do not clean bedding
- ☐ Do not wash sheets or blankets
- ☐ Do not clean furniture or surfaces
- ☐ Do not remove items that may contain evidence
- ☐ Do not throw away tissues, condoms, wrappers, or other items related to the incident

KEEP DIGITAL EVIDENCE

- ☐ Save text messages
- ☐ Save emails
- ☐ Save social media messages
- ☐ Save voice notes
- ☐ Save photographs
- ☐ Take screenshots where appropriate
- ☐ Back up evidence to a secure location
- ☐ Do not delete call logs or message histories

RECORD IMPORTANT DETAILS

- ☐ Write down what happened as soon as you feel able
- ☐ Record dates and times
- ☐ Record locations
- ☐ Record names or descriptions of people involved
- ☐ Note any witnesses
- ☐ Keep all notes in a safe place

SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION

- ☐ Obtain medical care as soon as possible
- ☐ Tell medical staff that you may wish to preserve evidence
- ☐ Ask about available forensic examinations
- ☐ Seek treatment for any injuries or health concerns

IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER

- If you have already showered, cleaned up, changed clothes, or deleted something, **evidence may still exist.**
- You can still seek medical care and support.
- You can still report the incident.
- What happened was **not your fault.**