

Report into the experiences of victim-survivors of sexual assault in the legal system. NSW commits to better understand sexual assault victim-survivors rights to privacy in counselling.

Date: 26 July 2026

Note to Editors: The contents of this press release can be used as quotes attributable to Full Stop Australia CEO, Karen Bevan.

Full Stop Australia welcomes the Minns Governments plan to commission independent research focused on how to better protect the counselling notes of sexual assault victim-survivors navigating the criminal legal system.

"After almost 53 years of providing sexual assault telephone counselling in NSW, Full Stop Australia is keen to see serious consideration of this issue. Change to the law in NSW to further protect counselling notes is required to ensure victim-survivor's most private counselling conversations are protected. This needs to be done carefully, with victim-survivor experiences at the centre. It is unacceptable for the legal system to routinely retraumatise victim-survivors.

Sexual assault incidents reported to NSW Police have increased by an average of 10% each year over the 10 years to March 2026 despite the fact that most sexual assault still goes unreported. This means that law reform and increased resourcing for support services must be a top priority for NSW." said Full Stop Australia CEO, Karen Bevan.

This announcement comes after a 2025 report by the Australian Law Reform Commission¹ into the experiences of victim survivors of sexual assault in the legal system found a system that is failing victim survivors and not fit for purpose.

Trauma-specialist counselling for victim-survivors of rape and sexual assault is a vital service and without law reform, victim-survivors feel that they need to decide between seeking justice and their healing.

Victim-survivors' safety, privacy and recovery is at the core of what Full Stop Australia does, which is why we do not record audio or video counselling calls.

Putting a **Full Stop** to sexual, domestic and family violence.



Our team works above and beyond funded contracts to ensure we are alongside victim-survivors when they need it most. We support victim-survivors to seek independent legal advice about their options as well as seeking our own legal advice on subpoenas issued to Full Stop Australia.

"Governments need to grapple with the true scale of sexual violence and act urgently to increase our prevention efforts, adequately resource specialist sexual violence support services and take bold steps to improve access to justice for victim-survivors." said Full Stop Australia CEO, Karen Bevan.

This announcement follows advocacy to strengthen the Sexual Assault Communications Privilege in NSW by the 'Don't Subpoena Our Support: Keep Counselling Confidential' campaign. The campaign highlights the experience of victim-survivors who, while seeking justice and navigating legal proceedings, had their most private thoughts subpoenaed and exposed in the court.

¹ [Safe, Informed, Supported: Reforming Justice Responses to Sexual Violence \(ALRC Report 143\) | ALRC](#)

Full Stop Australia operates the NSW Sexual Violence Helpline. Anyone in NSW impacted by sexual violence can access 24/7, free and confidential, trauma-specialist counselling. We believe you. You are not alone. Help is available.

Contact the NSW Sexual Violence Helpline on **1800 424 017** or webchat with our counsellors at **fullstop.org.au**

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0448 716 265
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24/7, free and confidential trauma-specialist counselling for anyone in Australia impacted by sexual, domestic and family violence.
1800 385 578