

## Support Options

For support and information about anything that may come up for people who have experienced sexual violence (and their supporters) from 9am to 9pm daily:

 SACE Support & Info Line  
**780.423.4121**

 Alberta ONE LINE Chat  
**sace.ca**

Alberta ONE LINE Text,  
Long Distance & Interpreter  
Assisted Line **1.866.403.8000**



**Listen. Believe. Support.**  
**sace.ca**

## What is intake like?

The intake worker will gather basic contact, medical, and mental health information, and ask a few questions about history of counselling and sexual assault.

Intake can be a 30-minute phone call, or an in-person appointment that normally takes an hour. Some things to note:

- Intakes are in person or by phone based on client comfort and availability: this doesn't affect their position on the wait list. In-person appointments allow clients to see the space before the first counselling appointment, and tend to run longer by being more conversational.
- If someone wants to stop or take a break, they can at any time.
- A name is important because there needs to be a level of trust within the counselling process for it to be successful, however SACE strives to reduce barriers, so if there is ever information that a person seeking counselling does not feel comfortable sharing, SACE will support them in navigating this.
- Consent of parents or legal guardians is needed for people under 18, and sexual abuse against minors must be reported before they access SACE for counselling. If this is a barrier, SACE will support people in navigating the issue.

- SACE is trans-inclusive, and will never require someone to provide legal or medical information that undermines their gender identity, including a legal dead-name. A legal name is only needed if a client wants support with victim's benefits statements or other government-facing services.

## What is counselling at SACE like?

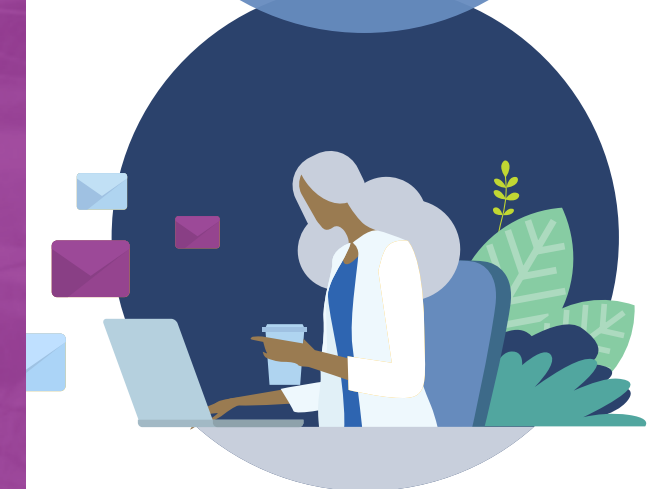
Counselling at SACE is client-led: our counsellors understand that each person is the expert in their own experience, and so counselling focuses on empowerment and on supporting the client's identified needs. Clients will never be forced to talk about the details of their experience in order to engage in counselling. See "Why Refer to SACE?" for more, and for information on some of the modalities we use.

No-fee counselling is available for up to 15 sessions. Because of the limitations in the length of support, these sessions are used to focus on trauma processing (See "Readiness for Counselling").

Anyone over the age of 3 is eligible, and there is no time limit to accessing counselling. Interpreters can be arranged at no fee to support counselling for speakers of languages other than English.



## When should I refer to SACE?



A primer for agencies & medical professionals.

**sace**  
SUPPORT &  
INFO LINE

**780·  
423·  
4121**

## Doctors Note:

- Intakes are self-referrals, and the process is meant to empower the individual seeking support. No need to send a referral letter!
- Should a client want their therapist to consult with their health care provider, they can give consent by signing a release of information form with SACE.

## Why refer to SACE?

SACE provides individual and group counselling and psychoeducation for survivors of sexual violence of all genders, ages 3 and up. We use a client-centred approach to healing and counselling that is non-victim blaming and trauma-centred. Our counsellors are Master's-level professionals, most provisionally or fully registered psychologists.

Modalities that can be incorporated include: Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) • emotion-focused • Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) • feminist • play therapy • somatic experiencing • narrative therapy



SACE also provides crisis support, police and court support, advocacy, and information to help individuals on their healing journeys. All support services are available at no fee.

## When do I refer to SACE?

SACE is not a walk-in counselling centre, and trauma counselling is recommended for clients who have reached a level of stability in their lives.

### Crisis support options

- Call, text or chat with one of the support options listed in this brochure
- Mental health crisis supports can be accessed through the Crisis Response Team (24/7 at 780.342.7777)
- Strategies or tools to manage trauma symptoms can also be accessed through walk-in counselling services at other agencies, or participation in the SACE emotional regulation group, Skills for Change.



### Readiness for counselling

Stability, both in basic needs such as housing and in mental health, is important to the success of trauma processing. If a client is actively dealing with more immediate concerns, it is not the right time for trauma counselling.

- There is no specific timeline for someone to be assessed as stable and ready for trauma counselling. If a counsellor determines that engaging in trauma processing is not safe at the time, they may refer the client to other services, such as mental health treatment or an addictions program.
- If a client needs to discontinue treatment in order to focus on other supports, their counsellor will talk with them about a plan for returning to counselling at a later date. These arrangements are made based on the unique needs of clients, and so determined on a case by case basis.
- Other life stressors that may impact a client's ability to be engaged in a trauma counselling process include work commitments, childcare, active legal cases, transportation, or other schedule availability challenges.
- Sometimes people have no specific memories, but still feel that some form of sexual abuse may have happened. While it is normal for trauma memories to be incomplete, there must be some memory of what occurred to act as a base for moving forward in counselling.

## How do I refer to SACE?

Clients can always self-refer by calling SACE directly, however someone else may call with them if this helps to reduce anxiety or barriers. When clients reach out directly, this reduces complexity and helps them to be engaged in the process.

Whether a client calls independently or a psychiatrist or medical professional calls on their behalf, the process of intake, waitlist, and assessments of crisis are the same. Referrals will not cause a client to bypass the waitlist, however if clients identify any extenuating circumstances they may be dealing with directly, the need for an earlier appointment may be determined.

- People seeking counselling should know that when they call, they don't do their intake right away: they will be booking an appointment for intake.
- Always encourage clients to call and get things started as soon as they are thinking about it: they can decide later if they would like to be taken off the wait list, but in the meantime they can already be advancing on the list.
- Stress that if a person is activated or needs support while they are waiting for intake, they can call, text, or chat with someone on the support line.
- Let clients know that they can call or come in for their intake with a support worker or loved one to help with vocalizing their needs.