

## Province: New funding for sexual assault survivors

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There is more help on the way for survivors of sexual assault through a three-year, \$10-million grant program to support the delivery of co-ordinated emergency sexual assault response services in regions throughout B.C.

“Gender-based violence, including sexual assault, can increase during times of crisis, and that’s why our government continues to prioritize services and supports for survivors of these devastating crimes,” said Mike Farnworth, Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General. “This grant program will help organizations throughout the province provide sexual assault survivors with swift access to compassionate and comprehensive care.”

The Ending Violence Association of BC (EVA BC) has received the funding to administer the grant program, in collaboration with the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General, the Ministry of Finance - Gender Equity Office and the Minister’s Advisory Council on Indigenous Women (MACIW). This grant program will help organizations deliver community-based emergency sexual assault response services that are trauma informed and culturally appropriate. The services will meet the needs of sexual assault survivors around the province, including the unique needs of Indigenous communities and survivors.

Sexual assault disproportionately impacts women, girls and LGBTQ2S+ people. Indigenous women and girls are especially at risk of being targeted.

EVA BC is a longstanding anti-violence organization, supporting community co-ordination in responding to violence against women. It also provides information, training and support to community-based victim service programs, Stopping the Violence counselling programs and outreach and multicultural outreach programs throughout the province. Given its expertise and knowledge of the victim service and anti-violence sector, along with the relationships the organization has with service providers, EVA BC is well positioned to administer this grant program.

The Province funds a range of services to support victims of sexual violence and provides more than \$40 million in annual funding to support over 400 victim service and violence against women programs throughout the province. In addition, the Province recently introduced amendments to the Employment Standards Act to provide up to five days paid leave for people facing domestic or sexual violence, improving on the supports for working people introduced in 2019 that gave employees 10 days unpaid leave.

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