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## **Gender Based Violence against adults: Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Q 1: I'm not sure if what I'm going through is abuse. What is the definition?**

**A:** Abuse is when someone intentionally harms or injures another person. There are many kinds of abuse encountered by adults, including:

- physical abuse
- psychological abuse
- rape
- sexual assault
- verbal abuse
- elder abuse
- financial abuse
- spiritual abuse
- emotional abuse

### **Q 2: If I've only been abused one time, can I report this?**

**A:** Yes, you can speak to our social workers who will assist you. You can also report the abuse at the nearest police station.

### **Q 3: Where can I get help if I am being abused?**

**A: If you or someone you know want help you can contact:**

- Police: 10111
- Department of Social Development Toll-Free Line: 0800 220 250
- Childline: 116
- The Human Trafficking Resource Line: 0800 222 777
- Western Cape Directory of Service for Victims of Crime and Violence
- SASSA 0800 60 10 11
- Western Cape Education Department Safe Schools : 0800 45 46 47
- You may also contact your nearest court for a protection order, clinic, or hospital.

### **Q 4: Must I report the abuser to the police first, in order to get help or be assisted with help in a shelter or by a social worker?**

**A: No, you do not have to report the abuser to the police first before you get assistance. You** will be assisted regardless of whether you report the abuser to the police. If you choose to report the abuser to the police the social worker will assist you.

### **Q 5: What do I do if the person who is abusing me is my relative and/ guardian?**

**A:** You can report the abuse to the police and also obtain a protection order against your relative/guardian. You can contact a social worker who will assess the case and activate the appropriate intervention.

**Q 6: Is there a safe place I can go to after I have reported the abuse and it is not safe for me to return home?**

**A:** Yes, the social worker will assess your case and will find a suitable place for you to be relocated to.

**Q 7: Will my abuser know where I am relocated to?**

**A:** No, the addresses of our shelters are not published to protect the residents. The abuser will not be informed of your location.

**Q 8: I am a member of the LGBTQIA+ community can I also gain access to GBV services?**

**A:** Yes, you can. Services offered by the WCG are **not** based on gender identity, race, sexual orientation or socio-economic situation.

**Q 9: Can I alert a social worker to abuse on someone else's behalf to?**

**A:** Yes, you can. You can report the abuse using the contact details in question 3.

**Q 10: Are there any costs involved in reporting abuse?**

**A:** No there are no costs involved in reporting abuse. Many shelters funded by DSD for victims of gender-based violence offer free services.

**Q 11: Will I be supported after I have reported the abuse?**

**A:** Yes, you will. The social worker assigned to your case will support you by providing you with the necessary information that you need to help you to heal.

**Q 12: If I get help, will I need to face my abuser during the process?**

**A:** In some cases, you may have to face the abuser again especially if you have laid a charge and the case goes to court. It is important to note that a social worker will assist and support you through the process.

**Q 13: Can I only report abuse if it's still happening?**

**A:** No, you can report the abuse after it has happened as well.

**Q 14: Is there a time limit on how long after the abuse took place, that I can report it to the police and/ or to a social worker?**

**A:** There is no time limit for reporting rape or any other sexual offence.