

Independent Legal Advice (ILA) Program

For Adult Survivors of Sexual Assault

Justice Canada Policy Center for Victim Issues

Presented by: Lyndsay Hollett and Manisha Seebalak

History of the ILA Program

2

- Three-year pilot began in 2017, pilot ended in March 2020
- Currently in our fifth-year post-pilot
- Funded by the Canadian Department of Justice

Independent Legal Advice for adult survivors of Sexual Assault

The Independent Legal Advice (ILA) program provides free, independent legal advice to adult survivors of sexual assault. The program respects survivors' privacy and their right to make their own decisions.



Independent Legal Advice for adult survivors of Sexual Assault Eligibility

- participants must be 16 years or older at the time they access the program.
- the sexual assault must have occurred in Nova Scotia.





How to Access Legal Advice

6

- Call, email, live chat, or text 211 Nova Scotia between 8:00am and 8:00pm to speak with someone locally to register for the program.
- Once registered, client will receive a package from 211 including the following:
 - Certificate number
 - A list of Lawyer profiles
 - FAQ's
 - Survey
 - List of resources – for neighbouring counties
- Clients may select any lawyer on the list to contact to make an appointment.

How to Access Legal Advice continued..

7

- Lawyer confirms certificate number with 211.
- Appointment is set and up to 2 hours of free legal advice is received.
- We can provide translation and other accessibility services if required.

Provides a 24/7 connection to the community and government resources, programs, and services people need most. They can be accessed by...

Call 2-1-1

Toll Free 1-855-466-4994

Phones are answered 24/7.

Clients are encouraged to call during local hours of operation 8:00 am- 8:00 pm

Translation service is available in 240+ Languages

Email help@ns.211.ca

Emails are answered within 24 hours from Monday - Friday

Text and Live Chat

Is available Monday to Friday, excluding holidays, from 8:00.a.m. to 8:00p.m, Atlantic Time

Search ns.211.ca

Search the accessible database for more resource options.

Client Satisfaction Survey

- Once an individual has used the certificate there is an optional client satisfaction survey that we encourage service users to complete.
- The survey can be completed online, over the phone with a 211 Community Navigator, or a hard copy can be mailed to you.

ILA Lawyers

10

ILA currently has a roster of 19 skilled lawyers.

Lawyers must:

Be insured

Be a member in good standing with the Nova Scotia Barristers' Society

Have a clear vulnerable sector check.

ILA Lawyers

11

The ILA Roster consists of a diverse team of trauma-informed lawyers:

- from diverse communities;
- from other provinces;
- who have experience with criminal, civil, and other types of law.

ILA Statistics April 2024 – March 2025 Fiscal Year

12

In total there were 201 Certificates issued.

Recap

13

A case is never too old to receive advice.

Clients will not be identified to the Department of Justice.

Clients do not need to disclose details about the assault to 211, there is no obligation to report the incident to the police and clients do not need to act on the advice received.

211 Nova Scotia is a free, confidential, and accessible information and referral service provided to Nova Scotians 24/7.

Help spread the word about the ILA Program

14

Connect with an ILA Coordinator and we can provide:

Pamphlets and Posters

We can attend community events and participate with an ILA booth or table.

Presentations to other community partners

Thank you!

15

Victim Services
Justice Supports and Services Division

Department of Justice

Email: VICSERVICES-ILA@novascotia.ca

Website: <https://novascotia.ca/SexualAssaultLegalAdvice/>

Lyndsay Hollett and Manisha Seebalek- ILA Coordinators