

Guide Eight – After the trial

After the court case has finished you may still feel as if you need support, and **you're still entitled to the same support as you were before the case.** For more information on how to get support, please take a look at Guide Two.

If there was a conviction in the case

If the person who assaulted you is found guilty then you might want to keep track of them as they move through the prison and probation system. You might want to know when the offender is up for parole or you might want to have a say in some of the rules that they need to follow when they get out. As a victim of sexual assault, you can get this information no matter how long the person who assaulted you was sentenced to. You can get this information through the Victim Contact Scheme. You'll be asked if you want to join this scheme when the offender is convicted. **You do not have to join the Victim Contact Scheme if you don't want to.**

If you decide to join the scheme you'll be given a Victim Liaison Officer who will be the person who keeps you informed. If you decide not to join at the time or you were not asked, you can still join later by sending an email to the Victim Contact Scheme at vcenquiries@justice.gov.uk.

Sometimes, the person who assaulted you might be found guilty but you might not be happy with the length of the sentence that they got. Depending on what the offence is, you might be able to appeal the sentence through the Attorney General's Office (AGO) under the Unduly Lenient Sentence scheme. You can contact the AGO by email at uls.referrals@attorneygeneral.gov.uk or by phone on 020 7271 2492.

If you want to appeal the length of the sentence you need to do this within 28 days of the original sentence. The AGO has 28 days to look at your case once they get it. Once the AGO has looked at the case they might send it to the Court of Appeal, if they think there is enough evidence for an appeal. The Court of Appeal might decide to keep the sentence the same or make it longer. Your Independent Sexual Violence Adviser or Witness Care Officer will be able to talk to you about this.

The person who assaulted you can also appeal both the sentence and the conviction. The conviction can only be appealed if there is evidence that the original conviction was 'unsafe', which means not correct, and if the offender pleaded not guilty. The offender can appeal the sentence whether they plead guilty or not. The offender must appeal within 21 days of conviction. The appeal will be heard in court. As with a victim application for sentence appeal, the sentence could be increased as well as reduced on appeal. You will be notified by your Witness Care Officer if the person who assaulted you appeals against their conviction or sentence.

Even if you are content with the conviction and sentence you may still need support and it is still available to you.

If there was not a conviction in the case

If the person who assaulted you was found not guilty you may be frustrated and want to try again. The prosecutor does not have the power to appeal against a not-guilty verdict. Unless new evidence arises, it is not possible for the CPS to re-try the same case, so if the person who assaulted you is found not guilty it may be distressing for you. **You are still entitled to support regardless of whether there is a conviction.** Your Witness Care Officer or Independent Sexual Violence Adviser will be able to help you get support, or you can get for it yourself. Take a look at Guide Two to help you.