

What Happens When I Contact Safe + Sound Somerset's 24/7 Call or Text Helpline?

Safe + Sound Somerset's 24/7 Helpline receives over 4,000 calls and texts each year from people that are in crisis, want to access Safe+Sound Somerset services, or need information about domestic violence, sexual assault, dating abuse, or child sexual assault.

The helpline is the first step to connecting with all the support and resources offered at Safe + Sound Somerset.

We're Here for Everyone

Your call or text is important to us. Our helpline advocates will work very hard to connect you with services and answer your questions.

Here is what you can expect when you reach out, if:

- **You are in crisis:** A trained advocate will assess your situation and help you create a personalized safety plan. They'll talk with you about services that may meet your safety and healing goals. If our services aren't the right fit, we will provide information about other trusted community resources.
- **You want to access other Safe+Sound Somerset services:** If you are interested in counseling, legal advocacy, financial empowerment, and/or housing assistance, the helpline advocate will collect your information and submit a referral on your behalf.

If you are a current client interested in exploring another service, call the helpline to initiate a referral.

- **You have questions:** We can provide information about domestic violence, sexual assault, child sexual assault, and available community resources—with your safety and compassion for you always in mind.
- **You just need someone to talk to:** We provide supportive listening to help you process your thoughts and feelings, even if you're not ready to take any other steps.

Anyone can contact our helpline any time of the day or night. We talk with survivors, family members, friends, teens, concerned parents, professionals, and community partners. Whether you're directly impacted or supporting someone who is, we're here for you.

Confidential Support for Youth

If you're under 18, you can call or text the helpline confidentially—your parents won't be notified. However, if you want to access other services, parental permission may be required.

If you are 13 year of age or older and a survivor of sexual assault, you can explore services without parental notification.

How we answer the phone:

When You Call the Helpline:

Helpline advocates will answer with a simple “Hi! How can I help you?” We don’t mention domestic or sexual violence to protect your safety and confidentiality.

When You Text the Helpline:

You will first receive an automated message from Safe+Sound Somerset explaining our role as mandated reporters and asking if it’s safe to continue texting. Once you reply “Yes,” a trained advocate will begin the conversation.

What To Expect During the Conversation

Our Helpline Advocates are available 24/7. They are specially trained, compassionate, and committed to helping survivors and their families find safety and support.

When calling or texting the helpline, **you may choose to remain anonymous**. However, if you are requesting services, the helpline advocate will need to collect some personal information to make the appropriate referral on your behalf.

All conversations are kept completely confidential, unless we become aware of a situation that falls under mandatory reporting requirements. All adults in NJ are mandated reporters, including our helpline advocates. This means we must report:

- Child abuse or neglect
- Elder abuse or neglect
- Abuse or neglect of individuals with disabilities
- Suicidal or homicidal ideation

Helpline advocates will explain these confidentiality limits at the start of the call and let you know if a report needs to be made. Advocates will get your permission before continuing the conversation.

The helpline advocate will ask a few questions to understand your situation and assess your immediate safety. Then, they will work with you to create a safety plan and discuss safety strategies. Based on the information you provide, we will review available services and provide referrals to Safe + Sound Somerset and other local providers depending on your unique goals and needs.

If You Just Need to Talk

Sometimes, people reach out just to speak about their experiences and be heard. That's okay. Supportive listening is a vital part of what we do. You don't need to be ready to make changes — calling or texting our helpline for the first time is courageous!

All Safe + Sound Somerset services for survivors are free and available in your primary or preferred language.

We're Here When You're Ready

You can contact our 24/7 Call and Text Helpline anytime at 866-685-1122.

To learn more about our services, visit safe-sound.org.