

Technology Privacy Guide

This guide is about how to protect your cell phone and online privacy. If you are experiencing online stalking or image exploitation there are other resources and supports for you. Call Maine's statewide sexual assault helpline - 1-800-871-7741.

Communication with your support system

Advocates think about your confidentiality and privacy all the time. An advocate will talk to you about how they will protect your confidentiality and how to communicate together, including:

- ✓ Consider email like a postcard - it is rarely a private form of communication.
- ✓ If you use email to talk with an advocate, do not include any specific information about your sexual assault. Save all details and questions for phone calls or in person meetings.
- ✓ Talk to your friends and family about what they can and can't post about you online. Let them know what they should and shouldn't put in email.
- ✓ Talk to the advocate you're working with about:

Blocked numbers. Advocates usually block their number when they call you. Some phones do not accept blocked calls and you may have to change the settings.

Identifying information. Find out what name will come up when an advocate calls you.

Voicemail. Talk about whether or not you want them to leave voicemail, and if a voicemail needs to be vague or can be detailed.

Meeting up. How you are going to talk about meeting up? For example: if you are meeting at court at 8:30am, will you talk about where you are meeting in an email, or only on the phone?

Of note: our daytime text/chat helpline is designed to protect your privacy. All text/chat messages are encrypted. This means that no one can view the texts or chats you send except for you and the helpline advocate. There are no records that can be accessed by the public or law enforcement. However, if you text you must delete the texts on your phone for it to be fully private.

Technology privacy tips

When you get a new computer or phone, increase security by turning on firewalls and add anti-spyware and anti-virus software. Then set up your computer or phone to automatically install updates.

Cell phone

- Put a passcode on your phone.
- Turn off location sharing.
- Check all privacy and security settings.
- Do not have it automatically log into your accounts.
- Try not to store sensitive information on your phone.
- Check the privacy settings of apps, and turn off features that automatically post your information.

Passwords & Settings

- Use passwords for all your devices.
- Create email addresses and usernames that don't contain personal information (no full names).
- Use different usernames and profile pictures for each site. Have more than one email account for different purposes like work, school, and social groups.
- Log out when you're done and say no when asked if you want the device to remember your password.
- Change passwords and usernames regularly.
- Be sure location settings are turned off on all your devices and social media apps.
- Enable 2-step authentication on as many accounts as possible.

Other Considerations

If you become involved with the legal system or choose to share your story publicly, privacy changes. This guide is basic, talk more with an advocate about privacy and safety if you are involved in the legal system or public attention.

Source

The Safety Net Project - nnev.org/content/safety-net

The Safety Net is a project of the National Network to End Domestic Violence and has many, many more resources regarding survivors, technology, and safety. Check out their [website](#) for how to: save evidence of image exploitation, make a safety plans if someone is monitoring your computer or phone, manage online abusive behaviors, learn about all social media privacy details, and much more.

