

If there is enough evidence the Police will charge the person who did wrong to you to court.

SUPPORT TO VICTIMS AND WITNESSES

If you are the victim of a crime, or you are a witness of a crime our office will support you from the time you give your story to the Police, when you come to tell your story in court and after you give your story in court. Our office will pay your fares to go to court in any Province where the case will be heard, provide accommodation for you and give you some money for your food on the days you come to court.

If you need counseling our office will make arrangements for you to see a counselor. We will also make sure that you are protected from the person who did wrong to you.

You will have a meeting with the Prosecutor in charge of your case before you go to court. He/she will tell you what will happen in court and may even take you to see the court before the case starts. At the meeting with the Prosecutor you will be allowed to read the statement you gave to the Police to remind you of your story.

If you have any form of disability- deaf , dumb, not able to walk, mentally impaired etc, you will be assisted to tell your story in court, you will be provided interpreters to help you tell your story and you will be assisted to get inside the court if you use a wheel chair. We will try our best to make it easy for you to tell your story in court. Our Witness Support Officers will call you to tell you the dates when you have to come to court, they will give you information about your travel, accommodation and meal allowance. You can also call them on phone number 28427 if you have any questions or need help.

DON'T KEEP QUIET IF ANYONE DOES ANY WRONG TO YOU. YOU MUST SPEAK OUT IMMEDIATELY. IF SOMEBODY TELLS YOU ABOUT A WRONG THING THAT SOMEONE DID TO THEM YOU MUST ENCOURAGE THAT PERSON TO GO AND REPORT TO THE POLICE.



Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions

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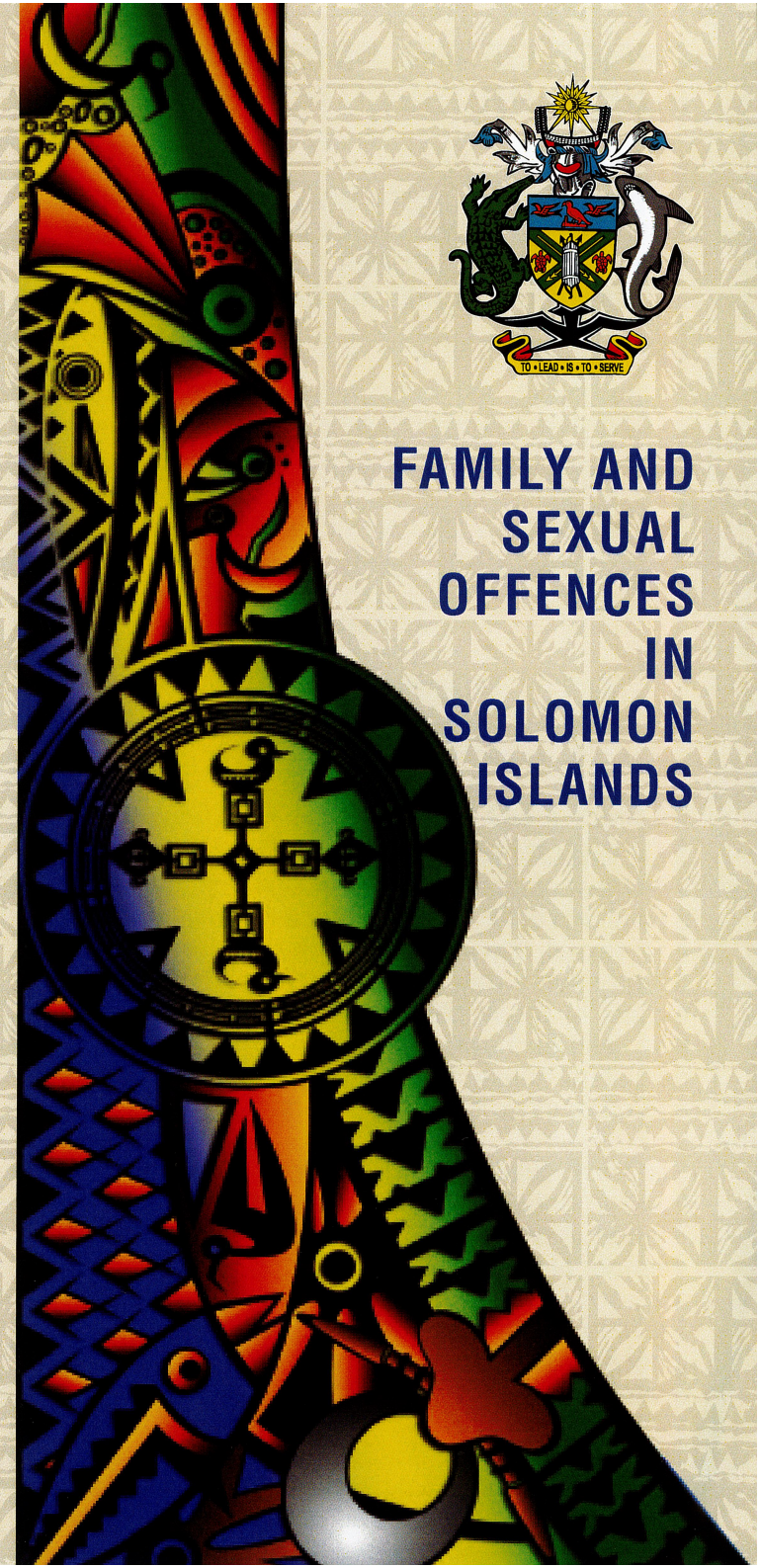
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This small booklet is part of the 7 booklets that provide information to help you understand how the justice system works in Solomon Islands.

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FAMILY AND SEXUAL OFFENCES IN SOLOMON ISLANDS



OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC PROSECUTIONS

VISION

A SAFE AND JUST SOLOMON ISLANDS SUPPORTED BY A CONSTITUTIONALLY INDEPENDENT PUBLIC PROSECUTION SERVICE UNDER THE RULE OF LAW.

MISSION

DELIVERING AN INDEPENDENT, FAIR AND EFFECTIVE PROSECUTION SERVICE.

VALUES

The office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP) values are:

- (a) Independence
- (b) Accountability
- (c) Respect
- (d) Ethical with Integrity
- (e) Efficiency

FAMILY AND SEXUAL OFFENCES IN SOLOMON ISLANDS.

The most common offence in Solomon Islands is sexual and family based offences. Family violence and sexual offences are happening all over the country every day. Women and children are the targets of these offences. A number of women and children have lost their lives as a result of persistent abuse by husbands, partners, fathers and other close family members.

Statistics available in Solomon Islands shows that 1 out of every 3 women and girls in Solomon Islands have been sexually assaulted by a member of their family.

Sexual assault includes rape, defilement, incest indecent assault, internal child trafficking, all forms of sexual exploitations of women and children.

The Parliament of Solomon Islands has made laws to make sure that people who commit these offences will be prosecuted and punished for the

offences they commit.

However the law cannot help victims of these crimes unless the victims report the wrong done to them to the Police. When a witnesses report is made to the Police, the Police will investigate the report and if there is sufficient evidence, a report file will be sent to the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions. When the file gets to the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions it will be handled by the Family and Sexual Assault Unit (FAS0).

The FAS0 Unit

The Family and Sexual Offences Unit is one of the 5 units in the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions (ODPP). It was established to look after family and sexual offences in the DPP's office.

Prosecuting Sexual Offences

The ODPP prosecutes family and sexual offences at the Magistrate's Court and the High Court. The serious cases are prosecuted at the High Court while the less serious cases are prosecuted at the Magistrate's Court. Serious cases are Rape, abduction, Indecent act with person with significant disability, Sexual intercourse or indecent act with a child under the age of 15 years, Sexual intercourse or indecent act with a child under the age of 18 years, Procuration, Persistent sexual abuse of a child, Child commercial exploitation, Possession and distribution of child exploitation materials and Internal people trafficking.

The law on sexual offences in Solomon Islands has become very strict since the Penal Code (Amendment), (Sexual Offences) Act 2016 made by the Parliament of Solomon Islands in 2016 has created some new offences. A woman can now be charged for raping a man. A person can now be charged for Rape if he/she used an object to penetrate another person and having sex with a person below the age of 13 years and not up to the age of 18 years even if the person consents.

That law has also given more punishment for people who are convicted of any offence under that law.

The Punishment for all the offences described above varies from 10 years to Life imprisonment.

Protect our women and children from sexual violence

The ODPP works with other stakeholders to help victims of these crimes to obtain justice in court. Stakeholders include the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force Sexual Offences Unit, the Social Welfare, the Family Support Centre and the Christian Care Center.

What should you do if you are the victim of sexual assault or family violence?

If any man or woman whether a stranger, family member or friend touches your body parts (vagina, breasts etc) in a way that you do not like, get away from that person quickly and go and tell somebody- a friend, class mate, mother, father or family member immediately.

If anyone forces you to have sex with him or her, as soon as you are able to get away from that person, find someone you know and tell them what happened to you.

After telling someone about what happened to you, ask that person to go with you immediately to the nearest Police station, or you go by yourself and report to a Police Officer what happened to you.

The Police Officer will write down your story which is called a statement

The Police Officer will take you to the hospital or clinic where a Doctor or nurse will examine you to see if you got any injuries from the sexual assault. The Doctor will ask you some questions and fill out a medical report about what he or she saw when they examined you. The Doctor will make a report and give it to the Police Officer.

The Police officer will go and look for the person who touched you in a way you did not like or who had sex with you without your consent and will take his statement.

The Police officer will also look for anyone you told about what happened to you and take their statement.