



**ISVA**

Independent Sexual Violence  
Adviser



## What is an ISVA?

**An ISVA** is an Independent Sexual Violence Adviser.

**An ISVA** is a specialist in sexual violence and offers non-judgemental, non-biased emotional and practical support.

**An ISVA** works with a client to provide client-led support and assists them in accessing other specialist support services and aims to meet both their short and long term needs.

## What does an ISVA do?

The nature of ISVA support means that each individual will have specific, tailored support individual to them and their needs.

An ISVA can only offer support around sexual violence so they may refer a client to other specialist agencies. These can include mental health agencies and addiction services.

ISVA support can be provided over the phone, text message, email or face to face.

ISVA support is available to everyone. This means that men, women, and non binary people can access ISVA support.

ISVA support is available to all LGBT+ people.

There is no minimum or maximum age for ISVA support.



## An ISVA can:

- Provide impartial information for those thinking of reporting
- Give clear and non-biased information around the Criminal Justice System, should you wish to report your experience to the police.
- Support you through the Criminal Justice System, from report to court and afterwards (including attending court)
- Work closely with partner organisations (police, courts, CPS) to ensure you always have a voice and that your rights are upheld
- Help you identify other support services and complete referrals where appropriate
- Provide ongoing emotional support (eg. helping to understand the impact of sexual violence and dispelling myths and stereotypes)

## Confidentiality

ISVA support is confidential. We will not tell anyone that you have been accessing ISVA support, unless you ask us to do so.

If you are under the age of 16, we will need to speak to an appropriate adult to gain their consent first.

VFN will not disclose information about a service user to a third party without an individual's consent, unless there is a risk of significant harm to themselves or others or knowledge that something illegal has taken place.

If you have an active police investigation, please be aware that your ISVA notes (amongst others) may be called by the police.

## Contacting your ISVA

When your ISVA first contacts you they will provide you with their direct contact details.

Your ISVA may have their own specific working hours, for example they may be part time. But, this will be explained to you in your first contact.

Usually, your ISVA is available Monday - Friday. ISVAs work flexibly but tend to be available between 10am and 4pm.

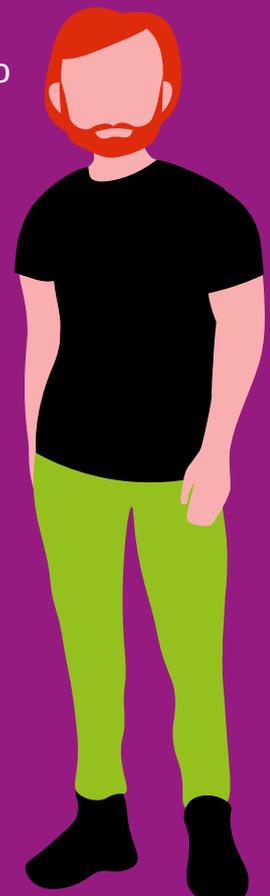
If you are having problems getting in touch with your ISVA, you can contact Victims First Northumbria on **0800 011 3116**, or email **[enquiries@victimsfirstnorthumbria.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@victimsfirstnorthumbria.org.uk)**

ISVA support is not available on a weekend, before 8am or after 6pm.

Although it varies, your ISVA will aim to be in contact with you approximately every 4-6 weeks. This is an arrangement that will be discussed in more detail with you and your personal circumstances will be taken into consideration.

It is important that you do not expect daily or weekly contact from your ISVA.

Your ISVA cannot offer a crisis service. Should you find yourself in crisis, the contact details for your Crisis Team are on the next page.





- **Samaritans** (24hr helpline): 0800 116 123
- **REACH** (24hr helpline): 03333 448283
- **Rape Crisis Tyneside & Northumberland:**  
Helpline: 0800 035 2794  
(Mon-Thur, 6-8.30pm. Fri, 11 - 2pm)
- **Crisis Teams:**  
Northumberland/North Tyneside: 0303 123 1146  
  
Newcastle/Gateshead - 0191 814 8899  
  
Sunderland/South Tyneside: 0303 123 1145

## FAQs

### **Does an ISVA provide legal advice?**

No, an ISVA will provide emotional and practical support and guide you through the Criminal Justice System, but they are not legal advisers.

### **How long will my appointment last?**

This will vary and is flexible to suit your needs, but appointments would usually last around 1 hour. It is important to attend meetings on time and to give as much notice as you can if you need to change or cancel one of your appointments.

### **How long will I have an ISVA for?**

There is no time limit on ISVA support. You can access ISVA support as long as you and your ISVA agree that it is appropriate and helpful.