



Sexual Violence Indigenous Communities

Seeking support when you have experienced sexual violence may at times feel like a difficult task. Knowing where to go and who you can trust with your information is a lot to process. It is even more difficult when you are trying to figure out if the services will meet and respect your cultural needs.

For the Indigenous people in our state, rape and sexual assault are twice as likely to occur when compared to other races. Similar to other marginalized communities in our state, without adequate support, information and access to services that dignify the whole being, survivors are being left underserved. Jurisdictional issues that are unique to members of tribes, have been found to impede access to justice for survivors. In addition to jurisdictional issues, the experience of historical and generational trauma along with the lack of dedicated resources intended to support Indigenous people, survivors are historically deprived of effective services. While Indigenous survivors live throughout the state of Michigan and are not relegated to reservations, access to services that respect the cultural traditions are often found within the specified community Indigenous survivors are a part of.

As service providers, we are required to serve all survivors. The knowledge of those we serve or could serve is our responsibility to get in order to be prepared when a survivor reaches our doors. Being prepared for the arrival of a survivor and having items that reflect their cultural traditions can aid in the healing journey.

In the state of Michigan, there are 12 Federally recognized tribes. This number is not inclusive of all of the Indigenous diversity in the state of Michigan. With the knowledge of the 12 Federally recognized tribes, there are at minimal 12 different tribal communities that we as service providers are to familiarize ourselves with in order to best serve this community.

There are the following 12 Federally recognized tribes in our state: Bay Mills Chippewa Indian Community, Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians, Hannahville Indian Community, Keweenaw Bay Indian Community, Lac Vieux Desert Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians, Little River Band of Ottawa Indians, Little Traverse Bay Bands of Ottawa Indians, Match-E-Be-Nash-She-Wish Band of Potawatomi Indians of Michigan, Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi Indians, Pokagon



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Band of Potawatomi Indians, Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe, and Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians.

For more information on how to provide culturally honoring services to the Indigenous communities in our state, contact Uniting Three Fires Against Violence. Uniting Three Fires Against Violence is a statewide tribal domestic violence and sexual assault coalition serving the Tribes located in Michigan. The organization is available to offer mainstream organizations tools and information to meet the needs of Tribal community members who seek services from your domestic or sexual violence organization. The contact information for Uniting Three Fires Against Violence is:

<https://unitingthreefiresagainstviolence.org/> .

When we all work together, we can meet all survivors where they are. We can provide the resources that are requested from the survivor that is inclusive of their cultural needs.

Advocates, you may contact the State of MI Voices 4 Sexual Assault Hotline in the following ways: call us at 855-VOICES4, text us at 866-2348-1454, or chat with us at <https://mcedsv.org/hotline/hotline-chat/> . We are available to assist you with referrals as well.

Let's work together to meet the needs of ALL survivors.

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