

GIVE VICTIMS TIME



ELIMINATE THE STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS
FOR SEXUAL ASSAULT CRIMES IN CT

CONNECTICUT ALLIANCE
TO END SEXUAL VIOLENCE 
Support. Advocate. Prevent.

VOTE “YES” ON S.B. 3

WHY VICTIMS OF SEXUAL ASSAULT NEED MORE TIME TO REPORT

Reactions to sexual assault are not predictable.

Victims respond in a multitude of ways often contrary to our personal or cultural expectations and may not be taken seriously or believed. Victims’ experiences are often discounted because of their behavior after the assault.

- They may experience a wide variety of symptoms such as emotional numbness, nightmares, flashbacks, difficulty sleeping, anxiety, depression, hypervigilance, and more.
- They may have foggy memory or not remember specific details.
- They may begin to act out of character or behave erratically.
- They may self-blame or internalize the experience.
- They may use alcohol or drugs to self-medicate.

Survivors are ready to report at different times.

Due to the traumatic nature of the crime, the time it takes a survivor to report can vary greatly. A victim goes through many stages on their journey from victim to survivor, such as realizing what they experienced was sexual assault, coming to terms with that experience, learning to cope with it, and more.

False reporting is a small percentage, representing only about 2% of felony cases¹.

Every crime can be falsely reported, and sexual assault and sexual harassment is not immune to this but it should not be the focus of concern. This view perpetuates a culture of disbelief of victims.

The law of evidence will not change by eliminating the statute of limitations.

The burden of proof for this crime remains the same. Prosecutors will use their discretion when taking on cases.

Does evidence go stale after a certain time?

No. There has been an increase in electronic and digital evidence that can be gathered by police. This evidence will never go “bad” and can always be used in a case due to its eternal nature. Images of a sexual assault or related sexual images can be circulated online and may not be discovered until after the five-year window has closed. Witnesses may also choose to come forward to testify or provide critical information. There are a variety of ways in which evidence, old or new, can be discovered.

Every sexual assault case is different, and every survivor reacts differently to this traumatic experience.

#GIVEVICTIMSTIME

¹ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/21164210>

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