

## Chat Services Conditions & Terms of Service

Your privacy and expectations are important to us. For full details on our [privacy statement](#), [terms of service](#), and [general guidelines](#) for Safe Voices Chat Services, click on the links included in this disclosure. By connecting to the chat, you are agreeing to all conditions detailed within these links and summarized below.

We will only collect and share your information 1) in non-personally identifying ways for our funding and reporting purposes or 2) for further services, with your permission or 3) as required by Maine law when abuse or neglect of a child, or a dependent or incapacitated adult, by a caregiver is disclosed. 4) when we have reason to believe you are in immediate danger from harm to yourself or from someone else.

Safe Voices Chat Services is a one-on-one, real time conversation with a trained dating abuse and domestic violence advocate. We offer a listening ear and support to your questions and concerns surrounding the complexities of dating abuse and domestic violence.

Your [safety](#) is our biggest concern. Though we make every effort to ensure your privacy, no technology is immune to security breaches. Please consider the risks of using technology to discuss matters of a personal nature. If you are concerned about the possibility of your technology use being monitored or your privacy being compromised, please use a secure location and device, or call our helpline at 1-800-559-2927.

## **GENERAL GUIDELINES**

### **Hours**

Safe Voices Chat Services is typically available Mondays and Fridays from 12:00-2:00 p.m. and Wednesdays from 2:00-4:00 p.m. When we are unavailable – whether due to scheduling, or being on chat with someone else – the chat link will be unavailable. If you want to talk to someone immediately, please call our 24/7 helpline at 1-800-559-2927.

### **Charges**

This is a free service, used over internet connection. If you use a device to participate in Safe Voices Chat Services that accesses the internet via data connection, usage rates may apply in accordance with your device plan.

### **Expectations**

Safe Voices Chat Services works like other instant messaging services. When you click the link for Chat Services, you will be asked to provide some demographic and situational information in a pre-chat registration survey. You can choose to chat anonymously by checking the corresponding box. During the pre-chat registration and throughout the conversation with an advocate, you can choose what you would like to share or keep private (Please see our [privacy policy](#) FMI).

Once you complete the pre-chat registration and agree to our Terms and Conditions, you will enter a live, private chat session with a trained advocate and begin sending messages to each other. During your chat, the advocate will listen, support you, and help you find resources. When you want to end the chat, click "End Chat." The chat window will disappear, and your conversation will be deleted. No record of your conversation will be kept. You can also choose to click the "Quick Escape" button at the top of the window/webpage anytime during a chat. The button will end the chat and send you to the Google homepage. Once you leave live chat, even if this is due to a loss of mobile signal or internet connection, you will need to start again and the chat session will be considered a new, separate conversation and may be with a different, trained advocate.

### **Reporting**

Under Maine law, our advocates are mandated reporters. That means our advocates have to follow Maine state reporting laws regarding child abuse and neglect. Certain situations require us to make an official report: if you tell us any information that makes us believe a minor child (whether yourself or someone else) is being abused or neglected by his/her parent or guardian, we will have to make a report to help keep the child safe; likewise, if you tell us any information that makes us believe an adult in dependent care is being abused, neglected or exploited by his/her caregiver, we will need to make a report to help keep that person safe.

In the event that we need to make a report, the advocate will explain your options for providing further personal information and how that information can be helpful. Still,

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the choice to share that information or not, is yours. We will make the report based solely on what you share with us.

### **Dating Abuse & Domestic Violence**

The chat platform is meant to provide information and support to individuals utilizing our services in ways that include, but are not limited to: domestic abuse & dating violence, sex trafficking & sexual exploitation and elder abuse information; support to victims or concerned others (those who are seeking support for victims); and those looking for information on other services. Our expertise is in these issues and their effects. If you want support for situations or experiences outside of these areas, we may refer you to other, more appropriate resources.

### **Disclaimers**

Chat sessions are conducted by staff who are advocates but they are NOT professional therapists, social workers or counselors; these advocates are specifically trained to support survivors of dating abuse and domestic violence, as well as their families, friends, and community members. Information shared with you through chat is not intended to be mental health, legal or medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. (Please see our [Terms of Service](#) FMI).

### **Ending Chat**

Advocates will typically end a chat session with you after confirming whether they can help you further. In some circumstances, advocates will advise you to call the helpline or an advocate directly for further services that cannot be completed over the chat. Advocates may have to end a chat service if a chat user is no longer responding to messages and/or it becomes apparent that the user has been disconnected. The advocate will reach out in attempt to reestablish conversation before ending the chat session. You can always start a new session during operating hours if you are accidentally disconnected or the chat session ends before you are ready.

Additionally, an advocate may end a chat session if the user's behavior or language becomes violent or abusive.

### **SAFETY & RISKS**

Abusers can often track what you're doing on the internet, so it is important to clear your browsing history, cookies, temporary internet files, and saved forms and passwords from your web browser when we're done with this chat. For more information on how to do so, please follow this link: <https://www.techsafety.org/resources-survivors>

We have worked with our text and chat provider to make all text and chat communications as secure as possible. However, there are a number of situations that are a reality of digital communication that mean your security and privacy cannot be guaranteed. These situations include an external data breach, a virus or malware on

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your device, the security of the technology on your device and the possibility that someone with access to your devices may have access to your chat messages, call and/or internet usage. We also recommend that you not record or store any sessions in order to protect your privacy. Once you have finished your chat, it is important that you clean your computer's cache and history, then erase the cookies on your computer or mobile device. This may prevent anyone from going into your computer or device and checking up on your internet activity.

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## **PRIVACY STATEMENT & DATA COLLECTION**

### **Confidentiality**

We are required by federal law to keep your information confidential. We will not knowingly release any confidential or personally identifiable information without your express, informed, time-limited consent or as required by Maine or federal law which includes mandated reporting laws.

Safe Voices Chat Services uses end-to-end encryption, which means that as soon as you hit send, no one can intercept your message and after chats are terminated, transcripts self-destruct. However, the most confidential and secure method of communication with us is via our helpline/telephone or face-to-face communication. If you are concerned about confidentiality, privacy, or safety online and wish to speak with an advocate, please call 1-800-559-2927.

### **Aggregate Data Collection**

In addition to any other information you may choose to share, we collect and store demographic information that we use to create aggregate data, which does not identify individual users. We may share this aggregated, non-personally identifiable information with our partners, researchers, or third-parties without restriction. This includes any information you provide when you register for chat, which is stored in an encrypted file. We may also collect information through your device's cookies, to improve technical assistance and optimize tasks on the chat server.

### **Your Information**

Our chat services are intended to be private conversations. You may use online chat without personally identifying yourself by opting to chat online anonymously. If you wish to receive additional services, our advocates may ask you for information such as your phone number or email address so that we may contact you to provide the requested services. We will not share or disclose your personally identifiable information without your permission; however, we do reserve the right to disclose any information to the authorities at our sole discretion and as required or permitted by law.

The personal information that Safe Voices Chat Services collects, processes, and shares by permission includes: personal contact and demographic information; details concerning the nature or incidents of violence or concern; details of individuals' needs, and the support provided to them.

We may disclose such information to other parties: to provide you with further information, referrals or services; to assist in the provision of emergency services when circumstances warrant; for any other purpose disclosed by us when you provide the information; to comply with any court order, law or legal process, including to respond to any government or regulatory request; if we believe disclosure is necessary or appropriate to protect the rights, property, or safety of Safe Voices, our clients or others.

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You are ultimately responsible for choosing how much personal information to provide us. If you do not wish to provide certain information that we directly request from you, you may choose to decline our request.

### **Mandated Reporting**

Maine's mandated reporting laws may require us to record and report information regarding the abuse or neglect, or suspected abuse or neglect, of someone less than 18 years of age or an incapacitated or dependent adult. If you tell us this kind of information, we may have to record it and provide it to state child or adult protective services. If it becomes clear that the advocate needs to make a report, it is helpful to gather as much information as possible. In that situation, the advocate will explain your options for providing further personal information and how that information can be helpful, but the choice to share that information, or not, is yours. We will make the report based solely on what you share with us.

### **TERMS OF SERVICE**

YOUR USE OF THE SAFE VOICES CHAT SERVICES (INDIVIDUALLY AND COLLECTIVELY, THE "CHAT SERVICES") IS BOUND BY THE FOLLOWING TERMS AND CONDITIONS. Please read this text before using the Chat Services. By using the Chat Services, you agree to the terms and conditions below. If you do not agree to the terms and conditions, you may not use the Chat Services.

This document is an agreement between you and Safe Voices, and describes the terms and conditions governing your use of this interactive service and the websites associated with it and your relationship with Safe Voices and its contractors, agents, vendors, related entities, donors, or representatives, including but not limited to iCarol (all of which will be referred to collectively in this document as "Safe Voices").

Safe Voices disclaims all warranties, either expressed, implied, or otherwise. Your use of Chat Services is at your sole risk. In no event shall Safe Voices (as defined above) be liable for any damages (including, without limitation, incidental and consequential damages, personal injury/wrongful death, lost profits, or damages resulting from lost data or business interruption) resulting from the use or inability to use Chat Services or the contents, information, or services available on or through Chat Services.

Your participation in Chat Services, including any communication made to you through Chat Services, is not medical care, counseling, therapy, treatment, or legal advice. IF YOU BELIEVE YOU ARE EXPERIENCING A MEDICAL EMERGENCY OR ARE IN IMMEDIATE, PHYSICAL DANGER CALL 911 IMMEDIATELY. Safe Voices is not responsible for any decisions or results of the decisions that you make while, as a result of, or after participating in, Chat Services. This includes whether you choose to

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seek or not seek professional medical or psychiatric care, or to modify or terminate specific treatment that you currently are receiving based on the information provided by this service. Chat Services should not take the place of seeking personalized advice from a medical or legal professional.

Safe Voices makes no guarantee that the Chat Services website or related resources will be free of viruses, spyware, or other destructive material, and Safe Voices is not liable for any damage to any hardware or software device, or for any inconvenience or difficulty, caused by use of such resources. Your sole remedy against Safe Voices for dissatisfaction with Chat Services or any content thereon is to stop using Online Chat.

Through Chat Services or related websites, Safe Voices may provide links or referrals to outside agencies located in various communities with the goal of helping individuals find the resources they need. Our provision of such information does not constitute endorsement, sponsorship, or recommendation of the information or services found on any of these third party sites. Safe Voices makes no guarantees as to the accuracy or quality of the information found on third party websites. Should you choose to rely on any information located on these third party websites, you do so at your own risk.

Safe Voices Chat Services and its employees, volunteers, and agents have no liability for actions or omissions taken by you or a third party. By using the Chat Services you permanently agree to indemnify and release Safe Voices from all suits, claims, and actions pertaining to your experiences with the Chat Services or information provided through the Chat Services by a third party.

If any provision of this Policy is held to be unenforceable for any reason, this will not affect any of the other provisions, which shall remain in full force and effect. This Policy shall be governed by the laws of the United States of America and the State of Maine.

These Terms and Conditions may be modified from time to time. These changes will be displayed here, and will be effective once posted. We ask that you check this policy regularly. This policy may only be amended in writing by a newer policy document posted by Safe Voices on the Chat Services website or other related website. The policy may not be amended by a Chat Services representative during the course of an interaction with an Online Chat user. Each time you access this Service you will be presented with the current Terms and Conditions and Privacy Policy for acceptance. You must agree to the modified terms to use this service.

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