



**South Essex
Rape & Incest
Crisis Centre**

**Advocacy
Service**



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SERICC Advocacy Service



We can support you



towards independent living

What you can expect from the advocacy service

What is advocacy?

The advocacy service is provided by South Essex Rape & Incest Crisis Centre. Our aim is to help you manage your home and enable you to live independently in the future as well as providing information and support in relation to sexual violence issues.

How does it work?

A SERICC counsellor will complete a short form with you to see if you need to have a separate appointment. SERICC's advocacy worker will complete an initial assessment with you, to find out what help you need. They'll do this by talking with you, asking questions about what your needs are and what you'd like to do in the future.

From this assessment you'll agree a support plan together. This will set out the goals that you and your advocacy worker will work towards. They'll ask you to sign the support plan and give you a copy to keep if it is safe to do so. You'll be asked to sign a form consenting to receive support and agreeing that they can contact other agencies on your behalf (if necessary).

The advocacy worker will set review dates with you to look at what goals have been reached and if there are any new goals that you want to set, for example if you have a change in circumstances you can ask your advocacy worker for a review.

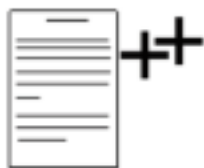
What can they help me with?

Support can be given on almost any issue. If the advocacy worker is unable to help they'll look to put you in touch with a person or agency that will be able to help.

The kind of things that your support worker can help you with are:

- Problems with your accommodation
- Completing forms and claiming benefits
- Practical help with developing your living skills
- Managing debt and improving budgeting skills
- Finding educational, training and employment opportunities
- Deal with other agencies on your behalf e.g. social services, police & courts, benefit agency

What can they help me with?



documents



money



travel



training



education



employment

How often will I get this support?

You'll agree together how often the appointments will be. The worker will be able to see you in a safe secure place and if you have transport difficulty, may be able to arrange transport. The worker will usually be available Monday to Friday between 10am and 4pm.

When will I stop receiving help?

Once you've completed the goals set out in your support plan your worker will talk to you about closing your case. How long you receive support will entirely depend on your own individual needs. You'll make the decision together with the support worker about when the support ends.

If after you have stopped receiving support you start to experience problems, you can contact the SERICC Advocacy service again.

If at any point you don't want to receive the support offered, please talk to the support worker and they'll discuss this with you.

What if I am not happy with the service that I am receiving?

If you're not happy about the service you are receiving, you need to talk to someone as soon as possible. Depending on what the problems are you might want to talk to the manager of the service by calling **01375 381322**. If you wish to make a formal complaint information on how you can do this is in this handbook.

Confidentiality

What will you do with the information that I give you?

SERICC is a registered data controller under the Data Protection Act 1998. This means we have legal responsibilities about how we keep the information we hold about you, and who we share the information with.

Any information about you will only be shared with other SERICC staff that it is relevant to. We will only pass information to another person or agency if we have your consent to do so. This is why we ask you to sign consent forms as part of your support.

The only time we would share information without your consent would be if yours or another person's health and safety would be at risk if the information were not passed on.

What information will you keep about me?

SERICC uses an electronic filing system. Your file holds a record of all contact we have had with you and with others about you, via telephone or letter.

Your needs assessment and support plan are also held at SERICC.

Can I see the information that you have about me?

Yes, you can see the information that we hold about you. But you'll only be able to see letters that other people have written if we get permission from the person who wrote them.

If you want to see a copy of your advocacy file, please ask your advocacy worker to help you request this.

Complaints

At SERICC we try to provide the best service we can to you, but sometimes we do make mistakes and things go wrong. You can help us, by letting us know when we've made a mistake, or suggesting how we can do things better. We treat all complaints seriously and deal with them quickly and in confidence.

What should I do if I have a complaint?

If you are not happy about the service that you've received from us, talk to your advocacy worker first of all, as they may be able to help you. If they aren't able to resolve the matter, or the complaint is about them, please contact the SERICC Director. You can also complain to the Thurrock Borough Council supporting people team.

How do I make a complaint?

We want to make it as easy as possible for you to make a complaint. You can do this by:

- Telephone SERICC: **01375 381322**
- Email: **sericc@sericc.org.uk**
- Write to:
SERICC
The Hall
West Street, Grays
Essex RM17 6LL

- Following the procedure found in the 'Making a complaint' leaflet
- Write to:
Supporting People Team
The Bungalow Rear of Grays Hall
Orsett Road, Grays
Essex RM17 5TT
- Telephone Supporting People Team: **01375 385266**

What happens next?

You'll receive an acknowledgement within 7 days, and we will let you know the outcome of the investigation with 28 days. If you're unhappy with this response, you should write to us within 28 days and say that you want to take your complaint to the next stage of the procedure, which is the appeals panel.

The appeals panel will meet within 28 days. The panel consists of a member of the senior management team and two committee members. You can attend this meeting to express your concerns and bring an advocate, friend or relative with you for support. If you'd prefer not to attend, you can put your concerns in writing. The appeals panel will decide whether to uphold your complaint and will write to you within ten working days with a decision.

Contact SERICC



hours of opening

10am until 4pm



telephone

01375 381322



website

www.sericc.org.uk



address

**The Hall
West Street
Grays
Essex
RM17 6AA**

Useful contacts

Police	Grays	01375 391212
Social services	Grays	01375 652956
Mind	Grays	01375 391411
Alcoholics Anonymous	Thurrock	0845 769 7555
Citizens Advice Bureau	Thurrock	01375 389526
Open Door Oasis (<i>Drug & Alcohol</i>)	Thurrock	01375 374411
Thurrock Women's Aid	Thurrock	01375 845899
Housing Benefit Office	Thurrock	01375 652980
Council Tax Office	Thurrock	01375 652875
GUM Clinic (<i>Gen Clinic for sexually transmitted infections, including HIV</i>)	Orsett	0845 155 3111
Basildon Hospital	Basildon	0845 155 3111
Community Mental Health	Grays	01375 402276
Marie Stopes (<i>Advice and information unplanned pregnancy</i>)		0845 300 8090

SERICC can provide a comprehensive list of other support and agency telephone numbers, if you require any other help and support SERICC can put you in touch with the appropriate organisation.



Do you need to talk to someone about

rape or sexual abuse?

It could have happened a long time ago or more recently.

If you are worried, need support or information, you can call our helpline:

**SOUTH ESSEX RAPE
& INCEST CRISIS CENTRE**

01375 380609

www.sericc.org.uk

Our 24 hour answerphone will tell you our helpline times, or leave a message and we will call you back as soon as possible.

We offer a confidential helpline, 'one-to-one' counselling and support for women and girls who have suffered or are suffering sexual violence.

Run for women, by women

