

# Support Survivors

Increase the civil statute of limitations for child sexual abuse.

- 1 Increase the civil statute of limitations from two to **seven years**
- 2 Allow survivors of child sexual assault to bring civil action until **age 55**
- 3 Create a **two year lookback** for survivors of prior child sexual abuse to hold perpetrators accountable

Current law provides **sexual violence survivors** with a **limited window** (two years) to bring civil action against their abusers. This is **incongruent with the severity of the crime** and the impact of trauma. Over the past three years, New Jersey has made substantive changes to law and policy to better serve survivors of sexual violence. Making **common-sense changes** to the civil statute of limitations is the next logical step to **best serve every survivor** in New Jersey.



**Sexual violence has an emotional, physical, and financial impact.**

Sexual abuse has a negative impact on children's **educational attainment** later **job performance** and **earnings** (*MacMillan, 2000, Anda et al., 2004*).

The financial burden for survivors of sexual violence ranges from **\$87,000** to **\$240,776** per assault (*White House Council on Women and Girls, 2014*).

Civil suits **hold abusers accountable** directly to survivors, rather than the state.

In New Jersey, there is **no civil statute of limitations** for **aggravated assault** or aggravated manslaughter - but the FBI considers rape to be a more violent crime than either of these.

**The FBI recognizes rape as the second most violent crime - the first of which is murder.**

But the following crimes currently have a **longer civil statute of limitations than rape** in New Jersey:

- Property damage (6 years)
- Trespassing (6 years)
- Fraud (6 years)
- Contracts violations (6 years)

**A two year statute of limitations fails to acknowledge the impact of trauma.**

A survey of adult survivors of child sexual abuse found **almost half** did not tell anyone for **over a year** (*Smith et al., 2000*).



Between **delays in reporting** due to trauma, **wait times for services**, and other considerations, a two year statute of limitations **can expire before a survivor feels ready** to pursue that option.



There is **no criminal statute of limitations** for sexual assault in N.J.



**Take action with NJCASA NOW!**

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**njcoalition**  
against sexual assault