



SUMMER 2017

SWAN Vancouver



SWANzine



Announcements

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PAGE 1

Announcements

PAGE 2

Safety
Supplies Deliveries

PAGE 3

Right to Remain Silent
Barriers to Justice

PAGE 4

Residential Tenancy Rights
Health Clinics

SWAN is now a charity! The federal government has granted SWAN charitable status, which means we can now issue charitable tax receipts for donations over \$20.

SWAN has achieved so much since a few volunteers began knocking on the doors of massage shops in Vancouver in the early 2000s. This year, we expanded to the Fraser Valley and we recently received international recognition for best practices in technology-based, online outreach to indoor sex workers. A 'tiny but mighty' grassroots organization, we have managed all these years on a shoestring budget receiving minimal donations. If you or someone you know would like to support our work, go to <https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/SWAN-Vancouver>. Be assured that there is a high social return on your investment given our minimal administrative costs.

We have some other exciting news to share... stay tuned for the next SWANzine for the big announcement. In the meantime, can you guess what the news might be?

What is SWANzine?

The SWANzine newsletter is a guide to health, legal, social, employment, and community information for women engaged in indoor sex work in the Lower Mainland. English and Chinese versions are available. If you require SWANzine in another language, please let us know.



If there is a topic you would like to see in SWANzine, please send us your questions or comments.



SWAN VANCOUVER SOCIETY

Phone: (604)719-6343 (English) | (778)865-6343 (Cantonese, Mandarin)

Email: info@swanvancouver.ca | **Website:** www.swanvancouver.ca | **Wechat:** SWANnetreach

Mailing Address: P.O. 21520, 1424 Commercial Drive, Vancouver, BC, V5L 3X9 **BN: 85317 6295 RP0001**



In the late spring, we received multiple reports of violent robberies in massage shops and private residences that resulted in women being injured and/or having to receive medical attention. We have reason to believe that some of these robberies are not isolated incidents and that one or more perpetrators have committed several. The police have been made aware of some of these incidents through contact with women who have reported to them.

We have distributed photos and descriptions of the perpetrators with permission from women who have experienced this violence so that you can keep yourself safe. If you have not received these photos and descriptions, and would like to, please sign up for our Abuser Alert. The Abuser Alert is a text messaging system that we use to share information about bad guys. If you wish to regularly receive information about abusers, please text "alert" to 604-719-6343. For more information about our abuser alert or to report an abuser, visit our website <http://swanvancouver.ca/abuser-alert/>.

If you have experienced violence, it is not a 911 emergency, and are wondering if you should report it to authorities, you can call us to discuss your options which include among others:

- Giving SWAN permission to share details of the incident with police, without providing your name and contact details to the police.
- SWAN can accompany you to meet a plain-clothes police officer we trust outside of the police station to discuss the matter. This is not to make a formal statement so you do not have to provide your name or address at this point. If you decide you would like to make a formal statement, we can support you to do so.
- You report anonymously to Crime Stoppers online at <http://www.solvecrime.ca/>, call 1-800-222-8477 or text 274637.

It's important to keep in mind that without filing a formal statement that requires your legal name and contact details, police are limited in acting upon the information. Nevertheless, reporting can still be useful as police can create an 'intel' file which could match up with other similar reports or ongoing investigations.



If you missed us, Wednesday is delivery day!

Missed us last month and need supplies? If you missed us during our monthly drop-off, we can deliver mid-month supplies in Vancouver and Burnaby on Wednesdays.

Unfortunately, we do not have resources to deliver mid-month in Surrey, Richmond, Tri-Cities and Abbotsford.



Alternately you are welcome to come to our office Mondays-Fridays 9am-5pm to pick up supplies.

If you are not on our monthly outreach route, but would like to be added, or if you would like to stop by our office and need our address, please call or text us at 604-719-6343.

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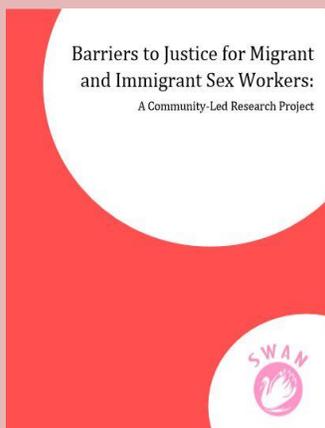
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Your Rights: The Right to Remain Silent

Barriers to Justice Project

In the Fall of 2016, SWAN administered surveys and conducted interviews with women in massage shops and private residences across the Lower Mainland to explore their experiences and concerns around accessing justice. We have completed the project and summarized our findings into easy-to-read infographics that we will be giving out through outreach and WeChat over the summer. Full details and results of the project are compiled into a 20-page report, which is available at (<http://swanvancouver.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/SWAN-Barriers-to-Justice-FINAL-2.pdf>).



Results and recommendations from this project are shared with law enforcement and policy makers to advocate for program and legislative reforms in order to make your work safer.

If police officers come to your workplace, the general rule is that you have no obligation to identify yourself to police or to answer any other questions. If the police speak to you, you may choose to identify yourself, but you are under no obligation to speak with them. **Anything you say is a statement.** Statements may incriminate you, your co-workers and/or your clients. Police can use statements to investigate further and obtain evidence if they are pursuing a case.

Once you make a statement to the police, you become a witness and your statement becomes evidence. Once you have made a statement, you can be ordered to appear in court and testify against the people they arrest (e.g., your colleagues or clients).

Sometimes people panic and say more than they need to because they fear staying silent will make them look guilty of something. **Your silence cannot incriminate you, but your statement might. If you choose to remain silent, you should tell police, "I wish to remain silent."**

There are exceptions to the right to remain silent.

The police can detain you, if you do not identify yourself (by providing your legal name, address, date of birth), in the following situations:

- You are believed to have committed a crime
- You are believed to have broken a municipal bylaw
- You are driving a motor vehicle or biking
- You are suspected to be a minor, and you are in a bar or another place where minors are not allowed (for example, at a cinema where a restricted movie is being shown)

If the police see you committing a crime or have reason to believe that you have committed a crime and you do not identify yourself, they may arrest you for "obstructing justice" or "obstructing the police." You can also be charged with obstruction if you give a false name or address.

Apart from identifying yourself, you do not have to make a statement or provide other information if you choose not to. You can also say you don't want to speak without your lawyer present.

Guidelines for identifying yourself to law enforcement officers

- **Canada Border Services Agency** officers can detain you if they cannot establish your identity even when you are not accused of a crime.
- **Police** can only detain you for failing to identify yourself if you are committing a criminal offense or they have a reason to believe you have.
- **City bylaws** officers generally can only give you a ticket for failing to identify yourself if you are breaking a bylaw, although this may vary by jurisdiction.

Other things to note:

- Planning in advance what you will and will not say if the police or other authorities come to your workplace might help you stay calm. Discussing this strategy with co-workers in advance may also help.
- Lying about your identity to a police officer is a criminal offense.
- Sometimes people give the name that they use every day or their work name instead of their legal name. The consequences may depend on context. You should always give your legal name when you are being formally questioned or detained. If you are not sure, ask the police whether you are free to go. If not, you are being detained. You should ask why you are being held.

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We receive calls from women who are being evicted from their home because of their work. We recently met with the Tenant Resource and Advisory Centre (TRAC) to better understand tenants' rights. TRAC provides legal education, information, support and research on residential tenancy matters in BC.

Eviction

A landlord must have an acceptable reason under the law to evict you - see Section 47 of the Residential Tenancy Act

(http://www.bclaws.ca/EPLibraries/bclaws_new/document/ID/freeside/00_02078_0) **Sex work, immigration status or working illegally may not be the reason for eviction alone. If sex work is cited as the reason, the landlord should have concrete evidence that shows the tenant is putting someone else or the property at risk.**

If a landlord has just cause to evict you, as per Section 47, s/he must give you an approved eviction notice such as the *One Month Notice to End Tenancy for Cause* form found at <http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/housing-tenancy/residential-tenancies/ending-a-tenancy/landlord-notice/one-month-notice>). Without an approved eviction notice, the eviction is illegal.

If you are being illegally evicted, TRAC advises not to leave the premises and to seek legal advice.

Security Deposit

In order to get your security deposit back, the tenant must provide the landlord with a forwarding address in writing for where your deposit can be sent. Keep proof of how you gave your landlord your forwarding address, such as a witness or confirmation that it was delivered by registered mail. Once you have provided your forwarding address in writing and your tenancy has officially ended, your landlord has 15 days to do one of three things:

1. Return your deposit
2. Get your written consent to keep some or all of your deposit
3. Apply for dispute resolution to keep some or all of your deposit.

TRAC provides a template letter for tenants to file a formal request for the security deposit here: <http://tenants.bc.ca/template-letters/>.

Dispute Resolution

If you have been illegally evicted, your security deposit has not been returned, or are experiencing other tenancy issues, you can apply for dispute resolution. It costs \$100 to apply. Dispute resolution is done via conference call with the landlord, tenant and arbitrator. If you have already moved from the space, you will have to prove there was an illegal eviction. There is a 10 day deadline to apply for dispute resolution to challenge a one month eviction notice.

TRAC also has a Tenant Info Pamphlet available online: http://tenants.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/Trac_Brochure_English.pdf

For more information, visit TRAC's website at <http://www.tenants.bc.ca> or call their Tenant Infoline at 604-255-0546/1-800-665-1185. Hours of operation are Mon, Tues, Thurs and Fri from 1-5, and Wed from 5:30-8:30.

Health Clinics

VANCOUVER

Women's Health Collective

29 West Hastings
604-736-5262

All ages. Women only.

*Check-ups *Diagnosis and prescriptions *Specialist referrals *Birth control *Pap tests *STI & HIV testing.

Mon 9:30am-4:30pm

Tues-Thurs 1:00pm-

4:30pm; Friday 9:30am-1:30pm.

Free services. Will not share results with family doctor if requested.

BCCDC Clinic Drop-in Clinic

1170 Bute St.

Mon-Fri 11am -6:30pm

All ages. Offers: *STI & HIV testing *Birth control*Hepatitis B vaccine. Free and confidential. No MSP required.

BURNABY

Options for Sexual Health Clinic

4734 Imperial 604-731-4252

All ages. Offers: *Birth control *pregnancy testing and options *STI & HIV testing. Wednesdays 7pm-9pm

Surrey

Surrey North Community Health Centre

10697 135A St. 604-583-5666

Drop-in (Call SWAN for appointment)

For clinics in other municipalities, check SWAN's Health Page on our website. Click "Resources" and select the health section from the drop down menu options.

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