

## REACH Beyond Domestic Violence Privacy Policy

Welcome to REACH's ONLINE CHAT. Your privacy and safety are very important to us. We have taken numerous security measures to keep your communication safe while using the ONLINE CHAT, and we make all reasonable efforts to maintain confidentiality of your information, pursuant to our obligations under confidentiality laws. This policy describes privacy and security practices for our Web-based ONLINE CHAT Service.

REACH protects your communication through the use of a secure server and end-to-end encryption on our ONLINE CHAT. Our web-based ONLINE CHAT does not require you to download any software or 3rd party application nor provide any personally identifying information such as name or address. The ONLINE CHAT does not collect any information that would identify you or your device. No transcripts of your chat are recorded or stored. No information from your chat is saved. And, once the chat has ended it will be deleted and cannot be retrieved.

However, be aware that no internet communication can be 100% secure. There are things you can do to decrease the risk that someone will intercept a chat. Please make sure you are using a safe computer or safe mobile device when you contact us. If you believe someone is monitoring your devices or has installed spyware on your device, it may be safer to reach us on our 24 hour hotline (800-899-4000) or to use a computer elsewhere such as a computer at a library or school.

The CHAT box has "Quick Escape" button on the upper right corner that you can use if you need to end the chat for safety reasons. If you end the chat you can always open a new chat again later. While each chat conversation will be deleted once a chat session has ended or if you hit the Quick Escape button, your browser history will show that you visited the REACH website so it is best practice that you also clear your history on your search bar.

Also, if you are using the ONLINE CHAT service on a computer or tablet and don't want others in that space to see the chat content please find a safe or private location, if you can, when using the ONLINE CHAT.

We operate the ONLINE CHAT using a combination of trained staff and volunteers who provide you with one-to-one help during your chat session. Any information that you share during a session will be viewed by the individual assisting you, and may also be viewed by a supervisor. Our staff and volunteers will listen to you, provide information and resources, let you know about all of our services, and talk with you about safety planning if necessary. They will not ask you for any identifying information and you do not have to share any personal details with them unless you want to.

The information conveyed by you during any session is intended to be part of a private conversation. Again, this conversation will NOT be recorded, stored, or saved. During this conversation you are not required to provide any information that you do not feel comfortable with. **However**, because our ONLINE CHAT staff and volunteers are considered **mandatory reporters** by law your confidentiality may be waived if you tell a staff or volunteer about any of the following:

- 1) child abuse or neglect of a minor under 18 years of age
- 2) abuse of an elder person 60 years of age or older
- 3) abuse of a person with a disability
- 4) that you intend to cause imminent danger (suicide) to yourself or imminent harm to others

In the event that you disclose any of these situations and provide enough details about them in the chat, our staff and volunteers may need to file a report with the appropriate agencies or call for an emergency response to assist the person or persons in danger.

If you have to leave a chat suddenly or are unable to continue the chat please be aware that for safety reasons, if there is more than a five minute lull in a chat conversation, our staff and volunteers will end the chat and the entirety of the conversation will be deleted. This is for your safety. You are always welcome to initiate a new chat. If you do start a new chat please be aware that you may not reach the same staff or volunteer that you were previously chatting with and you may have to start from the beginning as they will not have a history of what you had shared during the former chat session.

By using the ONLINE CHAT you agree to the provisions of this Policy. If you do not agree to this Policy, you may choose not to use the ONLINE CHAT and in the alternative, you may want to call our Free and Confidential 24- Hour Hotline at 800-899-4000. If you have questions about this policy please feel free to contact [info@reachma.org](mailto:info@reachma.org).

***If you are in immediate danger or this is a life-threatening emergency, please call or text 911, or go to the nearest emergency room.***

If you have any questions or suggestions about this Policy, please contact

