

The following information is supplied by a local sexual violence service to Centre for Women's Justice for a super-complaint on police use of bail conditions.

The vast majority of our cases, since changes to the bail act, involve either voluntary interview, or release with no BC's. It is rare these days that we see any BC's imposed, unless there are particular circumstances in the first instance that cause the police to pursue this. Prior to the changes in the Bail Act, the majority of suspects were put on bail for the life of the investigation. This is very rough, but in a sample of 120 of our current active ISVA clients (this is a fraction of the total clients we currently have open to us), we believe a maximum of 5 suspects in those cases to be on bail.

Additional challenges this can bring about include such matters as sometimes housing providers, or places of study state they are stuck as to not being able to act (i.e. move the suspect if he is in shared accommodation or something similar, or put any other conditions in place to mitigate the victim having to encounter them) in the absence of bail conditions.

Troublingly, we are noticing an increase in investigations coming to an end with the suspects not even being interviewed. I am aware that is a separate point, but feels linked, as they are no even being told by the police to not contact the victim.