



WELLSPRING

Ending relationship and sexual abuse in our community

480 Broadway, LL-20 • Saratoga Springs • New York, 12866
Office 518-583-0280 • Hotline 518-584-8188 • Fax 518-583-2215 • www.wellspringcares.org

Notice to People Seeking the Services of Wellspring *August 2020*

As a provider of victim services, we recognize that relationship and sexual abuse did not stop during a crisis such as the one that our Nation and the World has been experiencing. Our services did not stop either. For the last 4+ months, Wellspring has continued to assist victims of relationship and sexual abuse through:

- crisis intervention and counseling on our 24-hour hotline or our internet-based chat service.
- safe housing through our emergency domestic violence shelter.
- legal advocacy such as assistance with petitioning family court for orders of protection and connection to attorneys who can provide legal advice and representation.
- accompaniment through law enforcement investigations.
- accompaniment through sexual assault forensic exams.

Additionally, we have provided food, cleaning supplies, toiletries, and other basic needs to our clients throughout the entire shutdown. With the help of generous donors, we have also assisted our clients with providing educational and recreational materials to enhance their well-being during this PAUSE.

Our advocates are back in the office now and our services continue to be available to everyone needing our assistance in a manner that best suits their needs in accordance with public health guidelines. Therefore, we continue to provide services either by phone or in person. Below is a list of our services and their status.

Status on the Availability of our Services

- 1) **24/7 Hotline OPEN:** As always, Wellspring advocates are available by phone 24-hours a day, 7 days a week via our hotline (518-584-8188). Our hotline is answered by advocates who are our full-time staff and highly trained to be able to provide information about rights and options and help people access any options they choose.
 - a. **Chat Hotline OPEN:** Wellspring is expanding its efforts to support survivors of relationship and sexual abuse by offering an internet based chat hotline, effective Monday, March 16, 2020. The chat hotline is accessible through our website and available mainly during business hours. Available days and times will be posted on our website.
- 2) **Emergency Domestic Violence Shelter OPEN:** Our shelter remains in operation and we will continue to assist our current residents as well as accept victims of domestic violence into our shelter when space is available.
- 3) **Sexual Assault Forensic Exams (SAFE) OPEN:** Wellspring advocates will continue to accompany victims of sexual assault through the SAFE process at both Saratoga Hospital and Glens Falls Hospital.
- 4) **Assistance in Petitioning Family Court for Orders of Protection OPEN:** Wellspring advocates will continue to assist victims of domestic violence in petitioning family court for orders of protection. This may be done in person or by phone. Each request will be assessed to determine the modality in which this service will be offered.
- 5) **Accompaniment to Family Court Proceedings MODIFIED:** The need for this will be assessed on a case by case basis and will also be subject to policies that the courts enact.

- 6) **Accompaniment Through the Police Report/Investigation Process OPEN:** Wellspring advocates will continue to accompany victims of domestic violence or sexual assault through police reporting and investigation processes. We defer to the police agencies for any policies that they may enact related to COVID-19 and will follow those accordingly.
- 7) **Victim Services Offered Outside of Business Hours OPEN:** Outside of business hours, we will offer all the same services we have always offered (24-hour hotline, accompaniment to the hospital or law enforcement).
- 8) **Legal Clinic OPEN:** Wellspring's Legal Clinic is now offered by phone and will transition to in-person when appropriate. Legal clinic occurs on the 3rd Wednesday of *every month* from 1 – 3 PM and from 6 – 8 PM *every other month* (on the "odd" numbered months, i.e. September & November).
- 9) **Walk-In Services at our Office (480 Broadway, LL-20, Saratoga Springs) OPEN:** Our office is open to people who need to meet with us in person. This could be for counseling, advocacy, or assistance in petitioning family court for an order of protection. We are following public health guidelines and therefore require everyone, both clients and staff, to wear masks that cover both the mouth and the nose. We provide hand sanitizer and frequently sanitize surfaces throughout our office to decrease the likelihood of transmitting illness.
- 10) **New View Housing Program OPEN:** Anyone interested in housing should contact our hotline to be assessed and appropriate options, including New View. Wellspring staff will continue to provide weekly case management to participants in the New View Housing Program via phone. We will also deliver food pantry items to program participants as needed.
- 11) **Hope & Power SUSPENDED:** Wellspring's 8-week financial literacy program is currently on hold. We hope to offer this program via the internet. Stay tuned for more information. Please email info@wellspringcares.org if you want to be notified when it has been scheduled. Or you can follow us on Facebook or LinkedIn or sign up for our newsletter through our website www.wellspringcares.org.
- 12) **Counseling OPEN:** Issue oriented counseling and emotional support will continue to be offered. We prefer to do this by phone to reduce the person-to-person contact but can also meet with someone in person at our office if phone contact is not safe or appropriate.
- 13) **Case Management/Advocacy OPEN:** People's needs will be assessed and information about rights and options will be provided. Any action that needs to be taken to assist the person in accessing any of those options will be determined on a case by case basis and a plan will be identified in a manner that reduces person to person contact as much as possible.
- 14) **Community Engagement MODIFIED:** In person community engagement activities are suspended until further notice but we will offer education and awareness opportunities via the internet. Please email info@wellspringcares.org to be added to a list of people to be notified of any upcoming events. Or you can follow us on Facebook or LinkedIn or sign up for our newsletter through our website -- www.wellspringcares.org.
- 15) **Donations MODIFIED:**
For a variety of reasons related to Covid-19, Wellspring is not accepting donations of any physical items at this time. If you have questions about this please call and ask to speak with our Development Director. That being said, our clients are in need of community support now, more than ever before. To assist we are accepting donations of gift cards and financial donations (either mailed by check or made by visiting wellspringcares.org/donate.) Donations like this allow our clients and families to obtain exactly what it is that they need in the safest way possible. Thank you in advance for your understanding and kindness. For more information or if you have any questions please call 518-583-0280.

About Wellspring

Wellspring is a non-profit organization providing domestic violence and sexual assault services in Saratoga County and sexual assault services in Washington County. Our mission is to support survivors and engage the community to end relationship and sexual abuse. Wellspring's operations are funded by local, state, and federal grant funding as well as philanthropic contributions given to us by our generous and caring community. To support Wellspring's mission, please visit our website <https://www.wellspringcares.org/make-a-change/donate/> or call 518-584-8188.

Wellspring 24/7 hotline – 518-584-8188

Wellspring Chat Hotline – available through our website www.wellspringcares.org and, while not available 24 hours a day, it will be frequently available to meet the needs of victims of relationship and sexual abuse.