

NCW Women Helpline – 14490: A Dedicated Platform for Women's Support

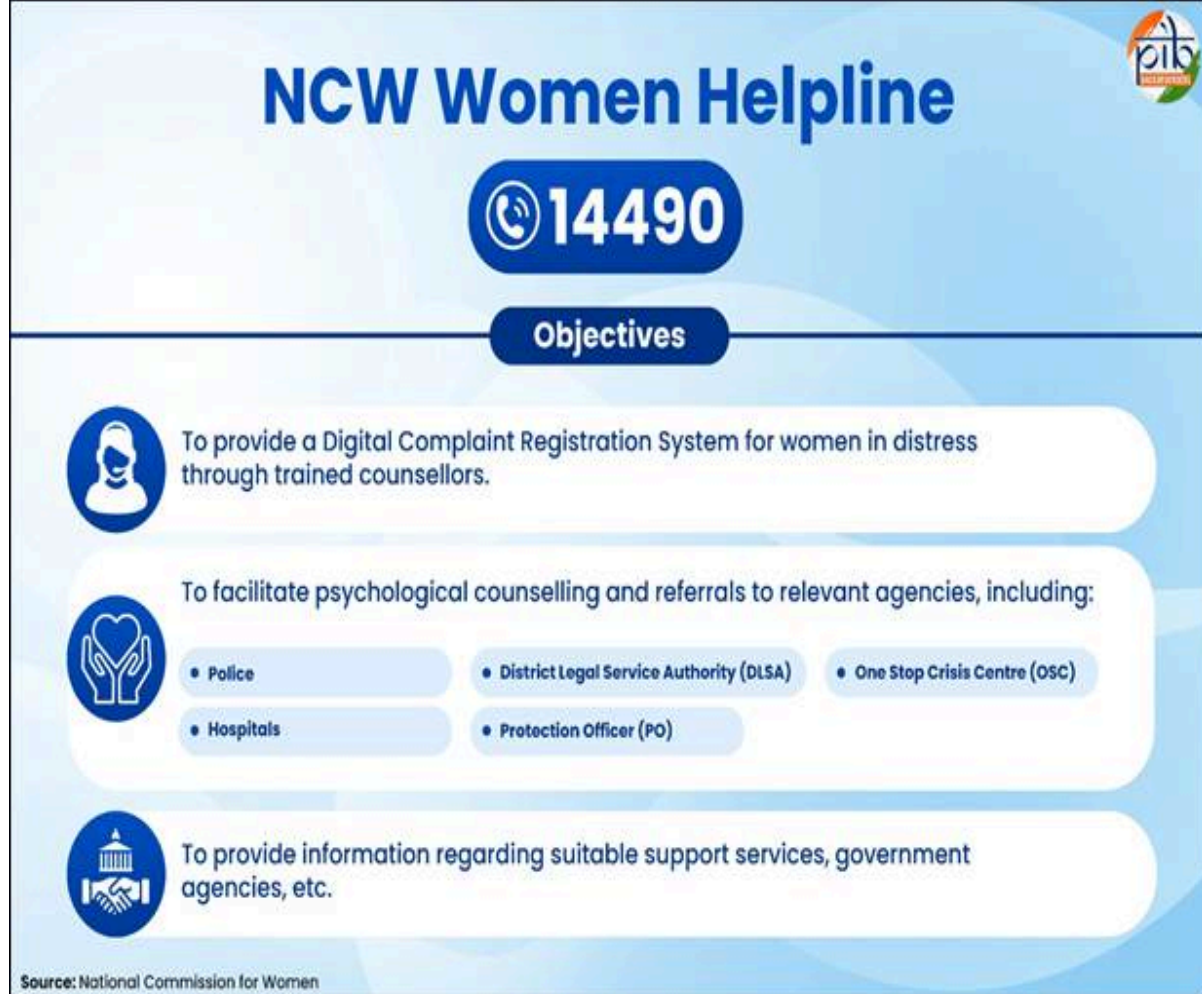
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Bringing Assistance Closer to Women

Ensuring the safety, dignity, and well-being of women is essential for an inclusive and equitable society. Accessible and responsive public service mechanisms play an important role in addressing issues and facilitating redressal. The **National Commission for Women (NCW)** is the apex statutory body to safeguard and promote the rights and interests of women. It serves as a platform to represent women's concerns and advocate for their welfare and empowerment. The subjects of NCW's initiatives include dowry, equal employment opportunities, and labour exploitation.



Every year, NCW receives thousands of complaints related to domestic violence and other forms of abuse. Such experiences can have a significant impact on mental well-being and often require professional psychological support. To assist women in distress, NCW operates the **24×7 Women Helpline – 14490**, providing a **Digital Complaint Registration System** for women affected by violence. This toll-free number acts as an easy-to-remember short code linked to NCW's existing helpline – 7827170170. Any woman or girl above 18 years of age can contact the helpline. It enables women to register complaints and access immediate assistance. It is staffed by trained psychological counsellors from leading mental health and counselling institutions. This ensures professional and compassionate intervention for those in need.



Bridging Distances Through Digital Access

The NCW Women Helpline exemplifies the principles of Digital India by leveraging technology to improve access to public services and grievance redressal.

- The helpline provides a round-the-clock Digital Complaint Registration System to seek assistance at any time.
- The helpline facilitates a digital access point for complaint registration, psychological counselling, referral support, and information on government schemes. This makes support services more accessible and citizen-centric.
- By providing a nationwide number linked to NCW's existing helpline, the initiative enables quicker access to support, particularly during emergencies.

Supporting Reform Through Complaint Analysis

The complaints received by NCW provide valuable insights into the nature and trends of crimes against women.

- The analysis helps identify gaps in the functioning of institutions responsible for addressing violence against women.
- The findings support recommendations for corrective measures to improve the response to such cases.

- Complaints are also used as case studies during sensitization programmes for police personnel, judicial officers, prosecutors, forensic scientists, defence lawyers, and other administrative functionaries.

Complaint Processing and Redressal Mechanism

NCW follows a structured process to examine complaints and facilitate appropriate action. Complaints are reviewed in accordance with the Commission's mandate before further proceedings are initiated.

- Complaints are scrutinized to determine whether they fall within the jurisdiction of the Commission.
- Complaints covered under the NCW mandate are registered and assigned a unique case number.
- Complaints that do not fall within the mandate are closed after informing the complainant.
- Depending on the nature of the case, registered complaints are taken up with the concerned authorities. The following actions are mainly taken to redress the grievances of the complainants:
 - Expediting/monitoring police investigation
 - Monitor proper implementation of statutory provisions
 - Resolving the issues through mediation/counselling
 - For serious crimes, NCW forms an Inquiry Committee, which further examines various aspects of the case.

Towards a More Responsive Framework

The NCW Women Helpline reflects the evolving approach to women's welfare. It brings together responsive institutions and simplified public services to address emerging needs. By creating a dedicated channel for engagement, the initiative strengthens the connection between women and established formal systems. It also promotes greater awareness and builds confidence in institutional processes. As its outreach continues to expand, the helpline plays an important role in strengthening safeguards for women across the country.

References

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