



Crown-Indigenous Relations
and Northern Affairs Canada

Relations Couronne-Autochtones
et Affaires du Nord Canada

Addressing Family Violence in the Workplace

Centre for Integrity, Values and Conflict Resolution/
Occupational Health and Safety
Workplace Wellness Directorate



Canada



Purpose

- Provide an overview of the employer's responsibilities in relation to Family violence under the new *Work Place Harassment and Violence Prevention Regulations*.
- Present the proposed *Manager's Toolkit for Family Violence in the Workplace*.
- Outline next steps.



Context

- **26% of all reported crimes in Canada in 2019 were family violence crimes¹**
- **53,5% of victims said family violence occurred at or near their workplace²**
- **81.9% of victims reported that family violence negatively affected their work²**
- **43.2% of victims reported they discussed it with someone at work²**
- **26% of intimate partner homicide victims between 2014 and 2019 were Indigenous (~ 5% of the population is Indigenous)³**
- **79% of victims of intimate partner violence in 2016 were women⁴**

Family Violence is a reality and it can become a threat not only to the victim's safety at work, but also it increases the risk of violent acts in the workplace, whether they be directed towards the victim or other employees.

Understanding and knowing how to respond to family violence is key to ensuring a safe work place.

¹ Family Violence in Canada: A statistical profile, 2019 (<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2021001/article/00001-eng.htm>)

² Can work be safe, when home isn't? Initial Findings of a Pan-Canadian Survey on Domestic Violence and the Workplace (<https://www.uwo.ca/projects/heritage/heritage3/img/survey-report.pdf>)

³ [Juristat article – Family Violence in Canada: A statistical profile, 2019](#)

⁴ A focus on Family Violence in Canada – The Chief Public Health Officer's Report on the State of Public Health in Canada 2016 (<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/chief-public-health-officer-reports-state-public-health-canada/2016-focus-family-violence-canada.html>)





Introduction of Family Violence in the Canada Labour Code

- Since July 2018, there has been **increased attention in federal workplaces to support family violence victims and survivors**, in large part, through the changes to the Canada Labour Code (CLC).
- In 2019, **Treasury Board and several unions agreed to provide ten (10) days of paid leave** to employees who are victim of family violence within the Core Public Administration and separate agencies. This was as a result of a recommendation from a joint working group struck in 2017 to study potential workplace practices to support employees affected by family violence.
- In 2021, the new *Work Place Harassment and Violence Prevention Regulations*, and its corresponding changes to the CLC, came into effect. Pursuant to those changes, **employers now have an obligation to protect and prevent harassment and violence in the workplace; including family violence.**





The Employer's Responsibility

The *Regulations* directly address family violence:

- **Identification and Assessment**

- Subsection 8.b) requires that employers “*identify risk factors, internal and external to the work place, [...] taking into account circumstances external to the work place, such as family violence, that could give rise to harassment and violence in the work place*”.

- **Prevention**

- The *Regulations* require that preventative measures be implemented for each risk factor identified
- The *Manager's Toolkit for Family Violence* is the departments' preventive measure against family violence and its impacts on our employees and workplaces



Methodology

Internal Consultations	External Consultations
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Indigenous Advisory Circle• Indigenous Employee Network• 2SLGBTQ+ co-champions• GBA + Unit• Labour Relations Team• Centre for Abilities Management• Workplace Wellness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Employment and Social Development Canada• Veterans Affairs Canada• Justice Canada• Parks Canada• Innovation, Sciences and Ec. Dev. Canada• Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada• Department of National Defense• National Capital Commission• Canada Food Inspection Agency
<p>An interdepartmental community of practice was created to respond to the need for sharing of information, knowledge and best practices – (membership of 15 departments)</p>	



Manager's Toolkit

- **The toolkit aims to support managers understanding their responsibilities**
- **The approach to respond to incidents are based on the 3 “R’s”:**
 - **Recognize:**
 - Defines family violence;
 - Explains how it is increasing risks of violence in our workplaces;
 - Gives the tools to identify potential victims.
 - **Respond:**
 - Suggests guidelines on how to discuss with potential victims;
 - Outlines cultural considerations;
 - Defines roles and responsibilities.
 - **Refer**
 - Proposes resources for victims and managers

There is no one size fits all response.
What is important is to ensure the victim's safety and self-determination,
while aiming for a culturally appropriate response.



Manager Response

- **The « Respond » section is the focal point of the document and has three main components:**
 - **Suggested guidelines on how to discuss with potential victims**
 - Empathic listening – Role of the employer as a resource and support
 - Confidentiality, consent, and understanding context - Responding in Ensuring safety in the context of family violence
 - **Outlined cultural considerations**
 - Being culturally competent and show respect to the victim's culture
 - Understanding that it is impossible to be an expert of knowledge in every culture
 - Considering how visible minorities are affected by family violence
 - Appreciating the reality of Indigenous employees
 - **Defined roles and responsibilities**
 - Legal obligations of the employer
 - Role of other teams within the department





Next steps

- **Work with Communications on a roll out strategy**
 - Intranet page dedicated to family violence and the toolkit
 - DM Message
- **Ensure department is ready to respond through**
 - Trauma-informed practices
 - Cultural competency
 - Outreach activities, including dialogue series
- **Develop employee and victim supports**
- **Continue to engage partners and stakeholders**

