

Power to Prevent: Urgent Actions Needed to Stop Sexual Harassment at Work

Joint statement

We are a group of diverse organisations, unions, researchers, peak bodies, health professionals and lawyers who have come together to say we need to do more to stop sexual harassment in workplaces. Our organisations and research efforts see the effects of sexual harassment on people around Australia every day and how our systems are not working to respond to the issues.

Everyone deserves to be safe at work and in their community. Yet the rates of sexual harassment in Australia are alarming, particularly for women, with 85% having experienced it in their lifetime. Sexual harassment is about more than just individual behaviour. It is a problem that is deeply entrenched within our society and occurs because gender inequality is ingrained in our social and cultural norms, structures and practices.

It's time that employers and workplaces stamp out sexual harassment. Sexual harassment causes significant harm to individuals, workplaces and society. We know what the solutions are, but we need governments and employers to implement them. We need strong action to prevent and respond to sexual harassment, and we need it now.

We call on State, Territory and Federal Governments across Australia to take urgent and coordinated action to implement the following solutions.

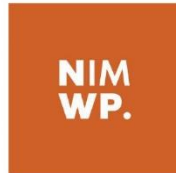
1. **Dedicated prevention efforts to address the underlying gendered drivers of sexual harassment**, which should be part of a holistic strategy to prevent violence against women and promote gender equality in line with *Change the story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia*.
2. **Stronger and clearer legal duties** on employers to take proactive steps to prevent sexual harassment at work, and strong and effective regulators that have the full suite of regulatory tools and resources necessary to effectively tackle sexual harassment, including as a cultural, a systemic and a health and safety issue.
3. **Access to fair, effective and efficient complaints processes**, including a new right of action under the Fair Work Act, extended time limits, increased transparency of conciliation outcomes where appropriate, and other amendments and resources necessary to address the unique barriers that currently prevent workers who experience sexual harassment from taking effective legal action.
4. **Appropriate advocacy and support for workers** who experience sexual harassment, including access to information, counselling and legal services that are appropriately resourced and coordinated.
5. **Accessible reporting tools**, including piloting an online reporting tool that assists people to report and address problem behaviour and seek support, and identifies trends to assist with prevention and enforcement efforts.

We stand together to call for change to create sexual harassment free workplaces.

List of Signatories (as at 28 February 2019)

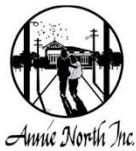
1. Alice Springs Women's Shelter
2. Annie North Inc
3. Australasian Meat Industry Employees Union - Victoria Branch
4. Australian Council for International Development
5. Australian Council of Social Service
6. Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU)
7. Australian Discrimination Law Experts Group, Academic forum
8. Australian Education Union - Victoria
9. Australian Lawyers' Alliance
10. Australian Manufacturing Worker's Union Victorian Branch
11. Australian Services Union Victorian and Tasmanian Authorities & Services Branch
12. Australian Women Against Violence Alliance
13. Basic Rights Queensland
14. Centres Against Sexual Assault Forum
15. CFMEU Construction and General Division Victoria and Tasmanian Branch
16. Community and Public Sector Union - PSU Group
17. Community Legal Centres' NSW
18. Disability Discrimination Legal Service
19. Djirra
20. Domestic Violence NSW
21. Domestic Violence Victoria
22. Dr Alysia Blackham, Academic
23. Dr Belinda Smith, Associate Professor of Sydney Law School, University of Sydney
24. Dr Cristy Clark, Legal Academic
25. Dr Dominique Allen, Legal Academic
26. Dr Karen O'Connell, Associate Professor of Faculty of Law, University of Technology, Sydney
27. Dr Paula McDonald, Legal Academic
28. Dr Sara Charlesworth, Legal Academic
29. Drummond Street Services
30. Emeritus Professor Margaret Thornton of Australian National University College of Law
31. Emma Coetsee, Human Rights Consultant
32. Equality Rights Alliance
33. Fair Agenda
34. Federation of Community Legal Centres
35. Finance Sector Union of Victoria
36. Fitted for Work
37. Gender Equity Victoria (GEN VIC)
38. Gippsland Sexual and Reproductive Health Alliance
39. Gippsland Women's Health
40. Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand
41. Gordon Legal
42. Health and Community Services Union
43. Human Rights Law Centre
44. Independent Education Union Victoria and Tasmania
45. International Women's Development Agency
46. Job Watch
47. Jumbunna Institute for Indigenous Education and Research, UTS
48. Justice Connect
49. Karen Willis, Executive Officer, Rape and Domestic Violence Services Australia
50. Kingsford Legal Centre
51. Liam Elphick, Legal Academic

52. Maritime Union of Australia
53. Maurice Blackburn
54. Media Entertainment and Arts Alliance
55. Minus18
56. National Association of Community Legal Centres (NACLC)
57. National Working Women's Centres
58. Not in My Workplace
59. NOW Australia
60. NT Working Women's Centre
61. Professor Beth Gaze, Academic
62. Public Health Association of Australia
63. Public Interest Advocacy Centre
64. Rail Bus and Tram Union
65. Redfern Legal Centre
66. RMIT Centre for People, Organisation & Work (CPOW)
67. Ruby Gaea Darwin Centre Against Sexual Violence
68. Sexual Assault Support Service Inc
69. Shop Distributive and Allied Employees' Association (SDA) National
70. St Kilda Legal Service
71. Switchboard Victoria
72. Thorne Harbour Health
73. Unions NSW
74. United Voice
75. University of Melbourne Students Union
76. Victoria Legal Aid
77. Victorian Aboriginal Legal Service
78. Victorian Council of Social Service
79. Victorian Trades Hall Council (VTHC)
80. Victorian Women's Lawyers
81. Victorian Women's Trust
82. Villamanta Disability Rights Legal Service Inc.
83. WestJustice
84. Women in Adult and Vocational Education (WAVE)
85. Women with Disabilities Victoria
86. Women's Electoral Lobby
87. Women's Health and Wellbeing Barwon South West
88. Women's Health Goulburn North East
89. Women's Health in the South East (WHISE)
90. Women's Health NSW
91. Women's Health Victoria
92. Women's Health West
93. Women's Legal Service NSW
94. Women's Legal Service Victoria
95. Women's Legal Services Australia
96. Women's Property Initiatives
97. Working Women Queensland
98. Working Women's Centre South Australia Inc
99. Youth Affairs Council Victoria
100. YWCA Australia
101. Northern Territory Legal Aid Commission



NT Working Women's Centre





AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

