GENDERED VIOLENCE AT WORK
SAFETY AND SUPPORT

- 1800 RESPECT - 1800 737 732
- Your workplace employee assistance program
- Centre Against Sexual Assault [www.casa.org.au/](http://www.casa.org.au/)
- We Are Union Women – 03 9659 3537 [www.unionwomen.org.au](http://www.unionwomen.org.au)
WHAT IS GENDERED VIOLENCE?

Gendered violence is any behaviour, action, system or structure that causes physical, sexual, psychological or economic harm to a worker because of their sex, gender, sexual orientation or because they do not adhere to dominant gender stereotypes or social prescribed gender roles.

Gendered violence is includes:
- violence experienced by women because they are women;
- violence experienced by a person because identify as LGBTIQ;
- violence experienced by a person because they don’t conform to socially prescribed gender roles or dominant definitions of masculinity or femininity;
- witnessing gendered violence directed at someone else, such as a co-worker.

VTHC Definition
WHAT IS GENDERED VIOLENCE?

Gendered violence can be perpetrated by anyone regardless of their gender, sex or sexuality.

Gendered violence can be perpetrated by:

- those internal to the workplace such as co-workers and managers
- clients including inmates, patients, students and customers
- and, those external to the workplace such as delivery personnel, site visitors and intruders.
EXAMPLES OF GENDERED VIOLENCE:

- Stalking
- Intimidation
- Verbal abuse
- Rude gestures
- Offensive language and imagery
- Sexual harassment
- Physical assault including sexual assault and rape
- Put downs, innuendo and insinuations
- Ostracism and exclusion
- Being undermined in your work or position
WHAT WORKING WOMEN TOLD US

I was working in an office and it was commonplace for the male employees to openly tell me what they wanted to do with me sexually. This was done frequently both verbally and in writing. I was working in financial trading and was even traded by the male staff.

—Former Financial Trader, Western Suburbs

As a lesbian I sometimes feel uncomfortable when men talk about “queers” in a derogatory way or seem surprised when I tell them I’m gay.

—Calibration Officer, Albury

I was sexually harassed and bullied by men at work and then told it was my fault because of the way I wear my uniform.

—Factory Worker, Springvale

I have had my manager wolf whistle at another woman worker, and when I said that’s not okay the manager asked me if I was jealous. I raised this harassment with my manager’s boss and he said the issue was a personality clash.

—Copywriter & Editor, Melbourne

I have experienced sexual harassment, groping, lewd comments and structural discrimination for a good deal of my life. I left my previous career in the printing industry and returned to study largely because I was so tired of this kind of pressure in the workplace. Ultimately I underwent treatment for PTSD due to the impact of these experiences.

—Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Moonee Ponds

I was given a Kris Kringle present by one of the PE staff saying, ‘Objects beneath this shirt are larger than they appear.’ I felt so uncomfortable.

—Former Teacher, Melbourne

Results from respondents to VTHC study Women’s Rights at Work -WRAW-Chats 2016.
Women workers experiences told us that gendered violence is endemic in our workplaces

The gendered violence that women are experiencing at work is causing them serious injuries

Results from respondents to VTHC study Women’s Rights at Work - WRAW-Chats 2016.
**WRAW Chats** *(Results from respondents to VTHC study Women’s Rights at Work - WRAW-Chats 2016.0)*

64% of women have experienced sexual harassment or violence in their workplace

44% of women have experienced discrimination at work

19% of women have resigned from a workplace because they did not feel safe


More than 1 woman *per week* is killed by a partner or former partner

1 in 3 women has experienced physical violence

1 in 5 women has experienced sexual violence

8 in 10 women aged 18 – 24 were harassed on the street in the past year
Almost **two in five** women - **39%** experienced sexual harassment at work in the past 5 years and **one in four** men - **26%**

**52%** of workers who identify as LGBTIQ compared to **31%** of those who identify as heterosexual have experienced sexual harassment at work in the past 5 years.

**53%** of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers have experienced sexual harassment at work compared with **32%** of non-indigenous workers.

**44%** of people with a disability have been sexually harassed at work compared to **32%** of people without a disability.

The HRC survey was only in English and didn’t take into account visa or migration status although it reports no significant difference in the prevalence of workplace sexual harassment for CALD workers this is not reliable.

*Australian Human Rights Commission, Everyone’s business: Fourth national survey on sexual harassment in Australian workplaces, 2018*
GENDERED VIOLENCE INJURES WORKERS:

- Physical injury and illness
- Loss of confidence and withdrawal
- Suicide
- Social isolation, family dislocation
- Feelings of isolation
- Anxiety
- PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder)
- Stress

Results from respondents to VTHC study Women’s Rights at Work - WRAW-Chats 2016.
DRIVERS AND RISK FACTORS

The underlying drivers or root cause of gendered violence are sexism, misogyny and homophobia.

Any worker can experience gendered violence at work, however, there are groups of vulnerable workers who are at greater risk. For example, refugee and migrant workers; culturally and linguistically diverse workers; and, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers.

DRIVERS AND RISK FACTORS

Gendered violence injurers workers and is therefore is workplace health and safety hazard. Like all workplace hazards, in order to prevent injury from gendered violence duty-holders must assess and control the hazard and risks.

- Work environment
- Systems of work
- Workplace policies and procedures
MAKING WORKPLACES SAFE AND RESPECTFUL

- Union officials and workers are educated and organised to take action to stop gendered violence at work
- Gendered violence needs to be recognised as an OHS hazard by work health safety (WHS) regulators
- WHS regulators and employers must take steps to prevent gendered violence from injuring workers and develop the capacity to adequately respond to incidents of gendered violence
RESOURCES

- Safe and Respectful Workplaces website: saferespectfulworkplaces.com/resources
- Your Union
- We Are Union Women: unionwomen.org.au
  women@vthc.org.au Ph: 03 9659 3511