



# Piliriqatigiitta

## Sexual Harassment in the Workplace and Gender Based Violence in Nunavut Stakeholder Update: *Creating a Healthy Workplace, Together*



As we've entered into the third year of the [Sexual Harassment in the Workplace and Gender Based Violence in Nunavut](#) project, we are pleased to report on progress made to eliminate gender-based violence and harassment in Nunavut. *The Sexual Harassment in the Workplace and Gender Based Violence in Nunavut* project is a four-year commitment to raise awareness, educate and provide free legal advice to Nunavummiut. Using a trauma-informed approach, we have developed a number of Public Legal Education Information (PLEI) [resources and tools](#) as well as developed and delivered workshops offering accessible legal advice and information tailored to the needs and realities of the communities.

We are pleased that we have been given the opportunity to broaden the scope of the objectives to include barriers to employment and discrimination in the workplace. We look forward to sharing a number of new tools that have been made possible by the support and contributions from a number of Nunavut-based organizations.

This newsletter presents an opportunity to stay connected and continue to build a strong network in supporting organizations in their efforts to prevent harassment and gender-based violence in the workplace. By continuing to collaborate, together we can support Nunavummiut in gaining a better understanding of their rights and empower all of us to take steps, and seek support, to address barriers to a healthy workplace.

Nalini Vaddapalli, CEO – Deputy Secretary  
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## BACKGROUND

Gendered violence is a very prominent issue throughout Nunavut in both the workplace as well as in the domestic sphere. Almost two-thirds of police-reported victims in Nunavut were female in 2016, which is the highest percentage among the different jurisdictions in Canada. Further, 95% of victims of sexual offences are female. Unfortunately, harassment in general tends to be under-reported and as such, the number of incidents that occur is most likely much higher than what statistics tell us.

Through consultation with stakeholders consisting of 22 various non-legal and community-based organizations, key themes related to workplace harassment and barriers to employment needs of Nunavummiut were identified. These insights informed the development of PLEI resources and tools as well as community workshops.

Given the significant geographic challenges to providing legal information and legal services in the territory, the project aims to assist in filling this gap. As such, through the Community Workshop Program, the project provides legal information and access to legal advice in the territory in a way that is relevant for the different communities. Participants and community members are able to meet privately with a lawyer to receive free basic legal advice and referrals about workplace harassment and other employment-related issues.

This means that the project addresses both sexual harassment and harassment in the workplace as well as other forms of gender-based violence recognizing the different needs and realities of the communities.

## PUBLIC LEGAL EDUCATION AND INFORMATION TOOLS & RESOURCES

Providing access to plain language information on harassment and gender-based violence, specifically harassment in the workplace, is something that needs to be offered to both the employee and the employer. Employees and employers need to understand their role and responsibility as well as how to create healthy workplaces free of sexual and other forms of harassment. As such, the following plain language resources have been developed to provide access to information related to harassment in the workplace including the:

- [Prevention of Harassment in the Workplace – What it is and what to do about it](#), a resource helping identify harassment in the workplace and what one can do if being harassed;
- [Addressing Harassment, Discrimination, and Violence in the Workplace – A Quick Guide for Employers in Nunavut](#), specifically created for employers;
- [Workplace Harassment: Legal & Wellness Resources](#), a list of organizations who can provide assistance;
- [Prevention of Harassment in the Workplace Posters](#); and a
- [Prevention of Harassment in the Workplace Informational Video](#).

The Law Society is also committed to bring attention to the subject of sexual harassment in the workplace and gender based violence. On March 8th, 2021, an opinion editorial [Taking action against sexual harassment in the workplace on International Women's Day](#) written by Gloria Song, Access to Justice Co-ordinator with the Law Society of Nunavut was published in Nunatsiaq News.

The Law Society has also incorporated social media to help raise awareness on the topic and created a Facebook page, [Break the Silence](#). The Facebook page is used to promote upcoming workshops and the PLEI resources created for the project.

**If you would like copies of any of the above resources we invite you to contact our toll free general line: 1-844-979-2330 or email [info@lawsociety.nu.ca](mailto:info@lawsociety.nu.ca).**



## COMMUNITY WORKSHOP PROGRAM MEETING THE NEEDS AND REALITIES

The [Community Workshop Program](#) was developed to offer Nunavummiut accessible legal advice and information tailored to the needs and realities of each community. Communities are invited to choose from either one module, up to all three modules, based on their unique needs. The workshops are open to anyone in the community with each module running approximately 1 hour and 15 minutes.

While the goal of the workshops is to provide legal information related to harassment in the workplace, workshop participants are encouraged to engage with the lawyer and ask questions. The intended outcome – to have participants leave with a better understanding of what defines a workplace, what would be considered harassment, violence or discrimination, and how they can help contribute to healthy workplaces.

Each workshop is delivered based on the needs of the audience and discovered to be most beneficial when delivered at the place of work of the participants. Using this approach, it helps to make the conversation more relevant to the work place / type of work of the workshop participants.

Community Legal Clinics are held in each of the communities visited in collaboration with the Nunavut Legal Services Board. Using local radio, community members as well as workshop participants are invited to meet with the Legal Aid lawyer.

As part of the Community Workshop Program, the Law Society collaborated with Borden Ladner Gervais LLP (Ottawa) and ilinniapaa Skills Development Centre to develop the [Prevention of Harassment and Violence in the Workplace - Legal Resources Manual](#) specifically to support lawyers. During October 2020, in partnership with Borden Ladner Gervais LLP, training was provided to Law Society Members on the [applicable legislation](#) and how to [adopt a trauma-informed approach based on Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit principles](#) when meeting with members of the community.

Since launching the Community Workshop Program, the Law Society of Nunavut in partnership with Nunavut Legal Aid delivered a community workshop in Clyde River on March 24<sup>th</sup> 2021, followed by two workshops in Pangnirtung the week of March 27<sup>th</sup> and a workshop in Qikiqtarjuaq on April 5<sup>th</sup>.

Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, in person community workshops were put on hold.

No stranger to pivoting throughout the pandemic, the Law Society welcomed lawyers from Borden Ladner Gervais (BLG) LLP in the spring and fall to deliver a number workshops to meet the needs of the French speaking community. The various workshops were aimed at decision-makers, employers, employees and self-employed. In addition, free legal advice sessions were offered to community members-at-large and workshop participants.

The Law Society is thankful for the invaluable support it has received from the [Association des Francophones du Nunavut](#) (AFN) and [Carrefour Nunavut](#) (Carrefour); and also from the Iqaluit Chamber of Commerce that welcomed the Law Society and lawyers from BLG during the fall visit.

The Law Society is committed to bringing awareness to [Sexual Harassment in the Workplace and Gender Based Violence in Nunavut](#). If you wish to welcome our travelling team in your community, please let us know so we can confirm dates and begin planning. **Contact our toll-free general line: 1-844-979-2330 or email [info@lawsociety.nu.ca](mailto:info@lawsociety.nu.ca).**







## Prevention of Harassment – Discrimination in the Workplace Barriers to Employment

Launched in February 2022, *Discrimination in the Workplace – Barriers to Employment* is a collaboration with the [Nunavummi Disabilities Makinnasuaqtiit Society](#) that looks into barriers to employment. More specifically, the focus is on an employer's duty to reasonably accommodate employees. This initiative aims to make all Nunavummiut more aware of their right to work in an environment that is free from harassment and discrimination.

The broad goal will be to help employers implement more comprehensive policies. This will be achieved by developing and strengthening meaningful connections with organizations to promote cross-sector collaboration; and dissemination of information on the legal framework surrounding the duty to accommodate using a mix of oral and written PLEI tools such as:

- Posters
- Pamphlet
- Social media
- Podcast / video
- Workshops

The Law Society welcomed Raven Law LLP (Ottawa) to deliver workshops on June 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> at the AFN as well as the Qajuqturvik Community Food Center in Iqaluit. Raphaëlle Laframboise - Carignan and Alison McEwen, both Employment Law Lawyers, provided information on barriers to employment and duty to accommodate. Free legal advice sessions were also made accessible.



The next stop for the Law Society team with Raven Law LLP was Rankin Inlet from October 17-21, 2022. For the first time, the team delivered a workshop for the youth. The workshop was delivered at Maani Ulujuk Ilinniarvik High School in Rankin Inlet and focused on the rights and responsibilities on alcohol and cannabis consumption, as well as prevention of harassment in the workplace. About 25 teenagers participated in the three-day series of workshops that were developed and delivered in collaboration with the Ontario Justice Education Network who were generous with their time and knowledge-sharing.

In addition to the youth workshop, an employer's workshop was provided to managers of local businesses. The workshop focused on the overview of their responsibilities as employers.

A community event was held at the conclusion of this trip.

Most recently, the Law Society team travelled to Pond Inlet from November 3-5, 2022 to deliver a lunch and learn workshop with managers. The workshop was delivered by LSN Member Lawyer Jessica Lott Thompson who provided legal information regarding their responsibilities as supervisors in cases of prevention of harassment and their duty to accommodate.



In addition to the lunch and learn, free legal advice was offered to community members who wanted to know more about their rights in the workplace and the employer's duty to accommodate.

The Law Society also presented a brief overview of the project to the Pond Inlet Community Council during their regular council meeting at the Hamlet.





## PREVENTION OF HARASSMENT – SUPPORT FOR NEWCOMERS AND IMMIGRANTS

As part of the Law Society new efforts to look into barriers to employment and discrimination in the workplace, another initiative that is currently being scoped out is *Support for Newcomers and Immigrants*. In a collaborative effort, the Law Society has developed a network with organizations and businesses to ensure this particular group of individuals has a strong support system in Iqaluit and in the communities.

Currently, one objective has been to develop a poster with support information relevant to a newcomer's needs. These posters will be made available in English, French and Inuktitut. As a first step the poster will be placed in key areas throughout Iqaluit with a focus at the airport's baggage claim area at the Iqaluit airport. The poster is an important initiative demonstrating organizations we can come together to meet the needs of individuals who may find themselves in a vulnerable context. The Law Society acknowledges the dedication and invested efforts made by the following organizations to bring to fruition the poster: [Association des Francophones du Nunavut](#) (AFN), [Carrefour Nunavut](#) (Carrefour), [Réseau santé en français au Nunavut](#) (RÉSEFAN) and [Legal Services Board of Nunavut](#). Further, it recognizes the invaluable contribution made by the Government of Nunavut's Iqaluit Airport Management and very much looks forward to the public launch of the poster before the end of this year.

An additional objective in the works is the creation of a care package for newcomers from the Francophone community. in collaboration with the AFN and Carrefour.



Going forward, the Law Society of Nunavut will collaborate with a member of the private bar working in the area of Immigration Law for the creation of PLEI tools that are appropriate for newcomers in the context of the [Sexual Harassment in the Workplace and Gender Based Violence in Nunavut](#) project.



We look forward to hearing from you if you have any comments or questions; and to visit your community and organization in the future.

### CONTACT US

Toll Free General Line: 1-844-979-2330

Email: [info@lawsociety.nu.ca](mailto:info@lawsociety.nu.ca)



Prevention of Harassment resources are available on the Law Society of Nunavut's [website](#).