



# Email your MLA: Deliver paid leave for sexual and domestic violence survivors

October 3, 2019

BC is failing workers experiencing domestic and sexual violence. Paid, job-protected leave from work is critical for employees experiencing violence who may need to relocate or seek community services, such as medical attention, legal services, or counselling.

For workers experiencing trauma, it can be difficult to focus on work and perform job duties safely. We also know that the workplace is the second most likely site for a woman to be stalked or followed. Without paid leave, workers may make the difficult decision to go to work even when it is unsafe to do so.

That's why HSA and the BC Federation of labour (BCFED) are calling on the provincial government to reform the *Employment Standards Act* and implement a minimum of 10 days of paid, job-protected leave for survivors of sexual and domestic violence.

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Paid leave should be barrier-free. We know that significant barriers already exist for survivors to come forward, and there should be no burden of proof placed on those who need sometimes urgent access to leave.

Statistics Canada data shows that sexual assault is the only violent crime on the rise in Canada. We also know that Indigenous women, women with disabilities, and young women are at the highest risk of intimate partner violence. We must do more to support all survivors of domestic and sexual violence.

Six provinces across Canada and federally regulated workplaces currently guarantee paid leave for workers experiencing domestic violence. BC is falling behind.

The BC government is undertaking public consultations on this issue. Now is the time to make our voices heard.

To read HSA's submission, Paid Leave for Workers Facing Domestic and Sexual Violence, [click here](#).

To read the BCFED's formal government submission, click [here](#).

Want to learn more? Read [HSA's article "Domestic violence and workplace safety: why policy change is needed,"](#) published in the March 2018 issue of *The Report* magazine.



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