



Women's Legal reveals seven targeted steps to boost gender equality in Victoria's legal and justice sector

Media release / Wednesday 15 June 2022

Today, Women Legal Service Victoria (WLSV) released its latest research into the state of gender inequality and sexism in Victoria's legal and justice sector.

The Gender and Intersectional Inequality report was launched in Melbourne by the Hon Gabrielle Williams, Minister for Women and the Prevention of Family Violence, alongside an expert panel.

The report draws on a survey of over 300 legal and justice professionals, conducted in early 2021 and demonstrates the critical need for an intersectional approach to gender equality.

Key findings identify critical areas that require genuine action by those who hold power and privilege in the sector, and demonstrates that the needs and experiences of professionals whose careers and wellbeing are harmed by inequalities must be at the centre of all efforts.

Eila Pourasgheri, Women's Legal Director of Education and Engagement, said: "This report builds on the 2019 Starts With Us Discussion paper and helps us to better understand how the needs of all women in the legal and justice sector can be better met. It tells us clearly that a one size fits all approach to gender inequality won't work."

Dr Monica Campo, Research Manager, said legal and Justice organisations have a responsibility to make workplaces safe. "Over half of the research participants observed discrimination in their workplaces and almost half reported considering leaving the sector," Dr Campo said.

"As a workforce of 32,000 people, our sector can make a significant contribution to Victoria-wide efforts to address sexism and gender inequality as the underlying drivers of violence against women."

Ms Pourasgheri added "If we are serious about ending violence against women, workplaces are a key setting for change and the legal sector has an important role to play."

The Women's Legal Services Victoria's research report and wider Starts With Us project is funded by the Victorian Government's Free from Violence strategy and aims to drive workplace gender equality action to prevent violence against women in the legal and justice sector.

The research report and more on the Starts With Us project is available at:

www.womenslegal.org.au/starts-with-us/

About Women's Legal Victoria

Women's Legal Service Victoria is a not-for-profit organisation which has been providing free legal services to women since 1982. We work with and for women to address legal issues arising from relationship breakdown or violence. See www.womenslegal.org.au for more information.