

STARTS
WITH US

LEGAL AND JUSTICE SECTOR
ACTION TO PREVENT VIOLENCE
AGAINST WOMEN

PHASE ONE DISCUSSION PAPER

SEXISM AND GENDER
INEQUALITY IN THE
VICTORIAN LEGAL
AND JUSTICE SECTOR

ABOUT STARTS WITH US

Starts With Us is a project by and for the legal and justice workforce in Victoria. It will contribute to the primary prevention of violence against women in Victoria by responding to the gendered drivers of violence against women as they manifest in our workplaces across the sector.

The current phase of the project aims to improve our understanding of gender inequality and sexism in the legal and justice setting.

In so doing, it will strengthen the foundations for collaborative development and implementation of a sector-wide action plan.

Implementation of the action plan will, over time, achieve measurable changes in sexist and discriminatory behaviours in the sector, as well as attitudes that justify, excuse and minimise gender inequality.

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ABOUT WOMEN’S LEGAL SERVICE 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.

We exist to help build a gender equitable country. Our unique contribution to this vision – as lawyers, advocates and educators – is to work alongside women experiencing disadvantage to promote their rights to live free from violence and make informed choices about their relationships.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Women’s Legal Service Victoria acknowledges and respects the traditional custodians on whose land we are fortunate to live and work, and we pay our respects to all Elders past and present.

Research Participants

We thank and acknowledge the professionals from across the legal and justice workforce who shared their stories, expertise and lived experience. Without them, this discussion paper would not have been possible.

Project Partners



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Starts With Us

is supported by the Victorian Government.



SERVICES AND SUPPORT

If you have experienced violence or sexual assault and require assistance, contact 1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732) to talk to a counsellor from the National Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence hotline.

For confidential support and information, contact Safe Steps’ 24/7 family violence response line on 1800 015 188.

If you are concerned for your safety or that of someone else, please contact the police or call 000 for emergency assistance.

ASSISTANCE WITH WORKPLACE HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION

If you would like further information about workplace sexual harassment or discrimination, including if you would like to lodge a complaint, please contact the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission on 1300 292 153.

If you wish to discuss a matter confidentially or make a complaint relating to sexual harassment by a lawyer, please email the Victorian Legal Services Board and Commissioner’s office at: harassmentcomplaints@lsbc.vic.gov.au
A specially trained member of staff will make contact with you.

Worksafe Victoria has responsibilities in relation to the health, safety and welfare of workplaces under the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004. Call 1800 136 089 or (03) 9641 1444, or email info@worksafe.vic.gov.au

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

“It’s everywhere, and it’s insidious. It’s very difficult to call out because sometimes it’s so nuanced and accepted. One of the worst things is that in my workplace, and I think in the law in general, there is a view that things are really good for women now. That makes it virtually impossible to call out systemic and insidious gendered issues.”

Starts With Us Research Participant

Starts With Us aims to support and encourage legal and justice professionals and organisations to take action to prevent violence against women. The project is for everyone working in legal and justice professions – including lawyers, judiciary, administrative staff, paralegals, policy advisers, legal educators, court staff and more. It is funded by the Victorian Government’s *Free from Violence* strategy and is part of a state-wide coordinated effort to prevent violence against women.

We invited responses from people working across the sector to tell us about sexism and gender inequity they have experienced or observed. Respondents to the survey described varying levels of sexism in their workplaces, ranging from gender stereotyping to sexist remarks which humiliated and denigrated women’s professional capabilities or expertise. Many respondents observed that sexism was the ‘norm’, and that it occurred across all parts of the sector.

This discussion paper highlights how ‘casual’ and ‘everyday’ sexism contribute to workplaces that are less favourable to women and privilege men, and the ways in which gender stereotypes and traditional ‘male’ qualities are subtly as well as overtly reinforced. It discusses direct and indirect ways in which women experience discrimination, especially in relation to workplace expectations and cultures that are incompatible with caring responsibilities.

Sexual harassment in the legal and justice sector was described as pervasive, normalised and often accepted, along with what is observed to be a pervasive culture of objectification of women, especially young women.

The themes that emerged in the research are presented relative to the underlying drivers that lead to violence against women, as established in the *Our Watch Change the Story* framework. Structuring the paper in this way enables us to shed light on how the drivers of violence against women manifest in the sector and, in so doing, more clearly identify the changes we need to work towards.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

GENDER INEQUALITY IN LEADERSHIP AND OPPORTUNITY

Gender-based discrimination against women is occurring directly and indirectly in the legal sector, particularly against women considered to be of childbearing age.

- Experiences of direct, structural discrimination include preferential treatment of male practitioners through hiring, promotion and leadership opportunities.
- Indirect discrimination against women with primary caregiving responsibilities is occurring in workplaces that formally have flexible work arrangements, gender equity policies, maternity leave provisions, and promote themselves as 'equitable'.
- Unfair treatment based on age, sexuality, gender identity, and ethnicity was also identified by respondents, overwhelmingly in regard to these characteristics intersecting with gender-based discrimination.

GENDERED ROLES AND STEREOTYPING

Women's career progression is severely hampered by the cumulative effect of gender biases and assumptions about men's and women's capabilities.

- Gender stereotyping was identified predominantly in relation to underlying beliefs about men's and women's capabilities or perceived characteristics.
- In many workplaces, traditional 'masculine' attributes are highly valued, leading to the underlying view that men are better suited to lawyering.

DISRESPECT TOWARDS WOMEN

One of the most common observations made by respondents about sexism in the legal sector was that the profession effectively acts as a 'boys club'.

- This 'boys club' culture is the backdrop for sexual harassment and gendered bullying that respondents describe as pervasive and even normalised within the sector.
- Our participants describe work cultures characterised by dominance and privilege in which men prefer working and socialising with other men.
- A relationship between gendered bullying and sexual harassment is observed and can be understood to exist on a continuum of mutually reinforcing behaviours that objectify and demean women.

EXCUSING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Attitudes that excuse, trivialise or condone violence against women exist within the sector.

- Responses to the survey overwhelmingly indicate that sexism and inequality is entrenched within legal and justice settings.
- Sexist attitudes contribute to workplace cultures in which sexism and inequality thrive.
- Inadequate organisational and sector-wide responses to sexism and gender inequality effectively condones, or at least minimises, violence against women.

A CALL TO ACTION

The goal of this paper is to generate discussion about gender inequality and sexism in the Victorian legal and justice sector that will lead to meaningful action and positive change.

While some formal progress has been made around policy changes to address discrimination, sexual harassment and pay inequity, more must be done to activate these policies, as well as changing informal cultures, attitudes and practices that maintain the status quo. These practices have a profound effect on women's opportunities for career advancement and access to leadership roles, are harmful to self-esteem and morale, and too often result in women leaving the profession altogether.

Our attention needs to shift to the attitudes, cultural norms and systemic manifestations of sexism and gender inequality that disadvantage and harm women. Sexism and gender inequality in the legal and justice workforce can be remedied, and we invite stakeholders from across the sector to join us in doing so.

Starts With Us is for and by the legal and justice workforce. The forthcoming phase of Starts With Us is the collaborative development of a sector-wide action plan. The action plan will build upon the knowledge captured in this discussion paper and make use of relevant, successful frameworks and tools, such as the *Our Watch (2019) Workplace Equality and Respect* package. The plan will also incorporate sector-wide initiatives, coordination and resourcing. To maximise its effectiveness and ensure it reflects the nuances of legal and justice workplaces, the action plan will be driven by organisations from across the sector.

ABOUT THE DISCUSSION PAPER

This discussion paper aims to deepen our understanding of attitudinal and systemic drivers of violence against women, as they manifest in the legal and justice setting in Victoria. Its purpose is to generate discussion across the legal and justice workforce that will lead to meaningful action to redress sexism and gender inequity in the sector.

PREVENTION OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

If we are serious about ending violence against women, we must begin by addressing gender inequality. Primary prevention of violence against women is long-term work that aims to reach whole populations to change the attitudes, cultural norms and social and structural conditions that underpin violence against women. The national framework for the prevention of violence against women, *Change the Story* (Our Watch 2015), identifies four pillars of gender inequality that need to be addressed:

- > **STEREOTYPED** constructions of masculinity and femininity
- > **MEN'S CONTROL** of decision making and limits to women's independence
- > **DISRESPECT** towards women and male peer relations that emphasise aggression
- > **CONDONING** of violence against women

Legal and justice is one of eleven priority settings identified in *Change the Story* where action on the gendered drivers of violence against women is likely to have the greatest impact. While violence against women is widely condemned by legal and justice practitioners, to date there has been limited progress to remedy violence-supportive norms, attitudes and behaviours as they manifest within the sector itself.

Prevention requires individuals and communities to act on the underlying causes of violence against women in everyday places to promote respect and equality and to reject violence in all its forms (Victorian Government 2017, p8). While the legal and justice sector plays a critical role in responding to victims' needs and holding perpetrators to account, there is a further role to play in the primary prevention of violence against women by actively promoting equality and respect in our work environments and in our daily practice (Our Watch 2015, p40).

We turn attention to prevention of violence against women, not because the drivers of violence are present only in the legal and justice setting, but because they are present across all parts of the Victorian community. As a workforce of 32,000 people, the legal and justice sector can make a significant contribution to the Victoria-wide effort to address the underlying drivers of violence against women.

ABOUT STARTS WITH US

In 2018, Women’s Legal Service Victoria was funded by the Victorian Government *Free From Violence* innovation fund to lead the Starts With Us project. The current phase of the project aims to increase awareness of the drivers of violence against women as they manifest in the legal and justice setting. In so doing, it will strengthen the foundations for the collaborative development and implementation of a sector-wide action plan.

The forthcoming action plan will align with *Free From Violence: Victoria’s strategy to prevent family violence and all forms of violence against women – First action plan 2018-2021* (Victorian Government, 2018). It will adapt successful programs and models to the needs and nuances of the legal and justice sector and, over time, achieve measurable changes in sexist and discriminatory behaviours, as well as attitudes that justify, excuse and minimise gender inequality. In line with Victoria’s *Free From Violence First Action Plan*, the overall aim of Starts With Us is to see measurable changes in:

- **Attitudes and beliefs about gender inequality** including increased awareness of the extent and impact of gender inequality within the sector and within society more broadly, increased organisational/sector culture of challenging gender inequalities, and a decrease in attitudes that justify, excuse, minimise, hide or shift blame for violence
- **Attitudes and behaviours that enable violence** including a decrease in sexist/discriminatory attitudes and behaviours, an increase in organisations and institutions with systems to support people who challenge sexism and discrimination, reduced reports of stereotyping and sexism, and an increase in bystander action on sexism and discrimination

BACKGROUND RESEARCH

Existing research shows that legal and justice workplaces, like many sectors, are spaces where the drivers of violence against women are marked. Evidence of the presence of gender inequality in the legal and justice setting includes:

- High incidence of workplace sexual harassment and bullying experienced by women (Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission, 2012; Law Council of Australia, 2013; Morton, 2018; Women Lawyers Association of New South Wales, 2019)
- Men working in the legal profession are much more likely than women to be in leadership roles and are more likely to be working at the Bar (Law Institute of Victoria and Victorian Women Lawyers, 2006; Campbell and Charlesworth, 2011; Eastman, 2016; Thornton, 2016)
- Women barristers are less likely to be briefed and appear in significantly fewer matters than male barristers, despite the introduction of equitable briefing policies (Eastman, 2016)
- Women are more likely to be working part-time and/or in flexible-time arrangements due to caregiving responsibilities, however this is associated with poorer career progression, inferior job quality and limited access to work (Campbell and Charlesworth, 2011; Law Council of Australia, 2013; Thornton, 2016)
- Prolific levels of both structural and indirect discrimination on the basis of gender, particularly in relation to parenting and caregiving (Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission, 2012; Law Council of Australia, 2013; Friedman, 2017)

- Women are less likely to continue in the profession after having children due to discrimination, poor part-time options and hostile workplaces (Law Council of Australia, 2013; Campbell and Charlesworth, 2011)
- Women are likely to be subjected to unconscious gender bias and workplace cultural norms that prevent them from progressing (Thornton, 2016; Law Council of Australia, 2013; Bartlett, 2008; Travers, 2009)
- Although almost 70 per cent of the legal sector is made up of women, the gender pay gap is 26.2 per cent for full-time employees. This is higher than comparable industries (WGEA, 2018)

Academic literature on gender inequality in the legal profession indicates that policy efforts to address discrimination, harassment, pay inequity and gender bias have had limited effect because of persistent attitudes and work cultures that privilege men and are based on perceived 'masculine' values (Anleu, 1992; Hunter, 2005; Bartlett, 2008; Travers, 2009; Freidman, 2017).

“There is certainly greater awareness now than when I started 20 years ago but there is still a long way to go when it comes to the culture of legal and justice. Still a lot of lip service being paid as opposed to a commitment to substantive gender equality being achieved on the ground in terms of individual behaviour, attitudes and ‘microaggressions’ of men who still occupy the majority of leadership roles; and systemically in terms of structural change that increases opportunities and recognition so that there is equal briefing, payment, appointment and representation of women at all levels of the justice system.”

Starts With Us Research Participant

METHODOLOGY

To better understand the drivers of violence against women as they manifest in the legal and justice setting in Victoria, we invited professionals from across the sector to share their experiences and observations of sexism and gender inequality via an online survey (see Appendix II).

We recruited participants using email and social media, targeting current and former employees in legal and justice in Victoria, including lawyers, judiciary, students/interns, legal assistants, administrative and court workers, policy and legal education officers, amongst others. Snowball recruitment, where we encouraged participants to share among their own networks and friends, was relied upon to garner further participants. There were 294 respondents, and 93 per cent of those who recorded their gender are women. We heard from professionals in the private sector, government and statutory authorities, community and not-for-profit organisations, the judiciary and court services (see Appendix I).

The stories were analysed by the Starts With Us project team at Women’s Legal Service Victoria to identify themes that would, alongside existing statistics and academic literature, assist us to shed light on the underlying attitudes, norms and systemic barriers to gender equality as they exist in the sector.

Participants in the survey were self-selected and they were specifically asked to reflect on sexism and gender inequality they had experienced or witnessed. We make no claims that the data is statistically representative of the sector. However, themes emerged in the data that are consistent with previous research and strongly indicate that troubling norms, behaviours and attitudes exist in the sector that we have a collective responsibility to address.

PRESENTING OUR FINDINGS

The discussion paper presents the themes that emerged from our data analysis relative to the underlying drivers and reinforcing factors that lead to violence against women, as established in the Our Watch *Change the Story* framework (2015). Structuring the paper in this way enables us to shed light on how the underlying drivers of violence against women manifest in the sector and, in so doing, more clearly identify the changes we need to work towards.

Respondents’ stories feature heavily throughout the paper. Practitioners from across the sector were invited to share their experiences and observations, and respondents did so with generosity and courage. The contributions that are featured in the paper are representative of themes that emerged when analysing the data as a whole. Moreover, practitioners’ descriptions, in their own words, can help us tremendously to understand the lived experience of sexism and gender inequality. We encourage you to pay due attention to them.

> PART 1	> PART 2	> PART 3	> PART 4
GENDER INEQUALITY IN LEADERSHIP AND OPPORTUNITY	GENDERED ROLES AND STEREOTYPING	DISRESPECT TOWARDS WOMEN	EXCUSING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN
<p>Men’s over-representation in leadership and limits to women’s independence through pay inequity and unequal access to opportunities.</p> <p>Sends the message that women have a lower social value, and are less worthy of respect.</p>	<p>Traditional beliefs about men’s and women’s ‘natural’ abilities or roles in society reinforce inequality and power dynamics that underpin violence against women.</p> <p>Stereotyped notions of masculinity associated with dominance and control, and feminine identities related to sexual attractiveness, cast women as objects and men as naturally aggressive.</p>	<p>Male peer relations that reinforce stereotypical forms of masculinity create disrespect for, objectification of, or hostility towards women.</p> <p>When men are encouraged to privilege their relationships with other men over those with women, they may be more likely to excuse violence and disrespect towards women.</p>	<p>When violence against women is condoned, excused and trivialised, and gender inequality and sexism is minimised, levels of violence are higher.</p> <p>Violence against women is condoned both through beliefs and attitudes and through legal, institutional and organisational structures and practices that reflect and reinforce them.</p>

Source: Adapted from Our Watch (2015)

› PART 1: GENDER INEQUALITY IN LEADERSHIP AND OPPORTUNITY

“It’s very clear from looking at who are our Judges, Senior/Queen’s Counsel, and law firm partners, that men are provided greater opportunities for career advancement. Men also dominate in certain sectors and generally the more lucrative sectors – commercial law firms.”

Gender inequality in private and public life is a key driver of violence against women. One of the most recognisable ways gender inequality is visible in Australian society is through male control of decision-making. In public life, this is observable in the under-representation of women in positions of leadership including in politics and business, and is evident in the gender pay gap. Men working in the legal profession are much more likely than women to be in leadership roles, as directors, partners, and chief executives.

Despite the steady increase of women in the legal profession since the 1990s, women have not reached the top tiers at the same rate as men. Women remain concentrated at the lower levels and are poorly represented as partners and principals. Lower representation of women in leadership roles has been attributed to a number of factors, including persistent discrimination against women, unconscious gender bias, higher attrition rate of women compared to men, and slower career advancement after having children (Campbell and Charlesworth, 2011; Law Council of Australia, 2013; Dearnley, 2016; Thornton, 2016, Marrone, 2018). Men are less likely to take extended parental leave or take on primary caregiver roles, and there is still stigma around working part-time (Thornton, 2016). Part-time and flexible work arrangements have been found to impact on the career progression of women in law (Campbell and Charlesworth, 2011).

Women are much more likely than men to experience discrimination for working part-time to look after children, are more likely to be subject to bias and workplace cultural norms that limit career progression, and are less likely to continue in the profession after having children (Law Council of Australia, 2013). The gender pay gap in the legal sector for full-time employees is 26.2 per cent, which is considerably higher than in other comparable sectors (WGEA, 2018).

Our survey respondents highlighted how discrimination can occur directly and indirectly, particularly against women of childbearing age. Examples of direct structural discrimination include preferential treatment of male practitioners through hiring, promotion and leadership opportunities. Indirect discrimination occurs as a result of inflexible work arrangements and unfavourable treatment of people who work part-time, and through interactions and socialising that in effect exclude women. Unfair treatment based on age, sexual preference, gender identity, and ethnicity was also identified by respondents, overwhelmingly (but not exclusively) in regard to the interaction between these characteristics and gender-based discrimination.

PARENTING AND CARING

"I had a male boss who questioned my ability to work in a law firm and as a lawyer 'considering my family responsibilities'..."

Discrimination on the basis of parenting or caring responsibilities was the most common form of discrimination or unfair treatment that respondents identified. Unfair treatment and indirect discrimination was experienced through workplace cultures and expectations that made managing parenting and lawyering difficult. Respondents described workplaces that, despite formally having flexible work arrangements, gender equity policies, maternity leave provisions and promoting themselves as 'equitable', were in practice discriminatory towards those with caring responsibilities. Respondents commonly identified parenting and caring responsibilities as a key barrier to promotion and career progression, and several respondents said that having children is 'a career killer'.

"...[O]n paper, the firm liked to promote itself as being an employer of choice for women and had a generous maternity leave policy – in practice, there was systemic bias against women in that workplace...[V]ery high billing targets...made it very difficult for working parents, particularly those with very young children... few concessions were made by way of flexible working to accommodate working parents... I returned from 12 months maternity leave on a part time basis and was not supported to achieve billing targets. I was not allocated the kind of work that enabled me to achieve these targets because I was not in the office 5 days. I have now left that industry."

Respondents said that flexible hours and part-time work, where available, were often perceived negatively and had adverse impacts on women's careers. For example, women said that when they worked part-time or returned from maternity leave they were not given meaningful or substantive work (e.g. they were denied trial work) and were overlooked for promotions and partnerships because of the perception that they were not able to cope and were unreliable or a 'risk' due to family commitments.

"My leaving work at 6pm so I could get home to see my kids before bedtime resulted in me getting less valuable and interesting work, even though I logged back in when the kids were asleep. Other lawyers who stayed at work (especially the male ones) got the better work and never even noticed how much extra I had to put in just to pick up the crumbs."

Further, respondents who worked part-time due to parenting responsibilities described having to put in substantially more hours than they were paid for, so as not to be seen as 'unreliable'.

"...I was getting paid for three days' work spread over four days as I had to leave work at 5 to get my [child] from kindergarten. I was effectively working non-stop from 9 to 5, 4 days a week but getting paid for 3 and was also expected to do additional work at home..."

Previous research shows that the culture of legal workplaces favours those without caring responsibilities and, traditionally, the legal profession is designed for a full-time 'breadwinner' with a 'wife' at home (Campbell and Charlesworth, 2011; Friedman, 2017).

"The way legal practice is structured... male practitioners that have a partner that fulfils care responsibilities in the home are often advantaged over female practitioners who are also caregivers."

The impact of workplaces that are unfavourable to flexibility and working part-time can affect women and men alike but has a greater impact on women because they are still overwhelmingly more likely to be primary caregivers (Friedman, 2017). Consistent with findings in the *National Attrition and Re-engagement Study* (Law Council of Australia, 2013), several of our survey respondents noted that women either left the legal sector altogether after having children, or moved into roles in government or the community legal sector as they were viewed as more accommodating of parenting responsibilities (but with lower pay).

Several respondents remarked that it was not only mothers but all women considered to be 'of child bearing age' who were subjected to unfavourable treatment. Women's ability to commit to their job was

questioned not only because they had children but also because of the possibility that they *might* have children. Participants said that women received less career-developing work due to the belief they might be 'going off to have babies soon'. Instances of direct discrimination against women in hiring and promotion were noted.

"No promotions even though I'm equally as qualified. I was asked 'When are you going to have kids?' in an interview for a senior position. 'Women with kids are unreliable'..."

"As the only female director of a small firm, I regularly hear comments from the other male directors about how women of a certain age should not be hired because they are of child-bearing age. As a woman who is also of that age, I find such considerations offensive."

PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT OF MEN

"As a white man, I feel that I am taken more seriously than some of my more experienced female colleagues. I feel that I am given more opportunities and also am taken more seriously by judicial officers."

Survey respondents frequently stated that they had directly experienced or witnessed women being overlooked for positions, promotions and leadership opportunities in favour of (often less qualified) men. Preferential treatment of men was also discussed in relation to briefing practices for barristers, and in junior male lawyers being preferred over junior women lawyers in formal and informal mentoring. Respondents frequently referred to a 'boys club' in which male bonding, socialisation and preference for male colleagues resulted in a culture that effectively excludes and devalues women.

"One of my colleagues was denied promotion because her boss explicitly said he wanted to work with a bloke. She ended up leaving the corporate law firm."

Several respondents identified preferential treatment of men by way of lower standards expected of them. Respondents discussed, for example, management having higher expectations of women, women having to 'prove' themselves more, and men getting away with poor performance.

"There appears to be one standard for men and another for women. Organisations appear to have all the 'right values' on paper but not in reality. Suitably qualified women are overlooked, or rules bent in order to get the man across the line."

The response above is typical of many that pointed to the limits of organisational policies and values in being able to address gender bias and discrimination. Our findings here are consistent with previous research and demonstrate that discrimination of women in the legal profession occurs in the context of the "attitudes and practices of the legal profession itself" (Travers, 2009, p106). While some inroads have been made in addressing discrimination and pay inequity, more must be done to shift the cultures and practices that limit women's opportunities for career advancement and access to leadership roles (Travers, 2009; Friedman, 2017; Mundy and Seuffert, 2017).

› PART 2: GENDERED ROLES AND STEREOTYPING

The *Change the Story* framework highlights how rigid gender stereotypes – beliefs about men’s and women’s ‘natural’ abilities and roles within society – are a key driver of violence against women (Our Watch, 2015, p25). Sexist stereotypes that support traditional ideals of masculinity and femininity can validate the notion that men are dominant and women are submissive. These stereotypes also lead to beliefs that men are ‘naturally’ more suited to roles that require leadership and assertiveness, and that women are ‘naturally’ more emotional and nurturing. Research has shown that rigid gender stereotypes reinforce power dynamics that contribute to the likelihood of violence against women (Our Watch, 2015). While these beliefs are present across all areas of Australian society, our research suggests rigid gendered assumptions about men’s and women’s ideal roles have specific expressions and effects in the legal and justice setting.

GENDER STEREOTYPES

Research on the culture of legal practice has shown that the ‘model’ lawyer is associated with traditional masculine stereotypes such as assertiveness, ruthlessness, confidence, rationality and dedication to the job unencumbered by caring responsibilities (Bartlett, 2008; Campbell and Charlesworth, 2011; Bishop, 2013; Friedman, 2017). This leads to male practitioners being favoured by both workplaces and clients alike (Ragusa and Groves, 2012). Responses to our survey suggest that these biases are still present in legal and justice workplaces. Gender stereotyping is evident in respondents’ descriptions of women being perceived as weak, emotional and lacking assertiveness, with these traits being seen as incompatible with the demands of competitive legal

workplaces. In contrast, respondents described that traditional ‘masculine’ qualities are desirable, more highly valued and seen as more suitable to certain types of work (for example criminal law).

“... upholding of typically ‘masculine’ traits as a marker of success (assertiveness and a confidence/willingness to take up space as a marker of competency), devaluing of ‘feminine’ tasks and skills (e.g. tasks requiring communication and organisation) ...”

Yet, when women displayed qualities that are considered ‘masculine’, they are disparaged and/or told to adjust their behaviour. Women find themselves in a double bind, where so-called masculine traits were seen as more suitable to the role, but only when displayed by men.

“... If a woman is tough she is seen as aggressive. If she is soft she is weak. If a man is tough he is seen as effective and strong. If he is soft he is seen as strategic.”

“I observe that women are expected to be more conciliatory and inoffensive in the workplace than men are. Women hold back from expressing strong views and equivocate more, out of necessity.”

Stereotyped views of femininity that focus on physical appearance and attractiveness was another recurring theme in our data. Respondents describe receiving or overhearing comments from men that young women could use their looks or “feminine wiles” to “get ahead” in their careers, that they “must have slept their way to the top” or were favoured because of their perceived attractiveness.

In contrast, some respondents told us that failing to achieve acceptable levels of femininity in appearance and attire could result in negative treatment or comments.

“... I have had men tell me that if I ‘dressed more like a woman’, tried to ‘fit in more’ and ‘played the game’ then I’d probably have better chances of getting ahead.”

“Working as a legal assistant I was told when applying for jobs as a lawyer I should wear a skirt to job interviews...”

GENDERED TASK ALLOCATION

Another effect of gender stereotyping described by respondents was the way women are disproportionately expected to undertake menial tasks, such as note taking, organising meetings, cleaning, making morning tea, getting coffee and picking up dry cleaning. As one respondent put it: “...older male staff seem to think that women are there to perform menial tasks for them rather than perform their actual job description...” Several respondents noted that the gendering of menial tasks occurred across the sector – including in community legal centres and in government workplaces.

The gendering of workplace tasks extended beyond expectations that women would run errands and complete cleaning duties, to the expectation that junior female staff would also do the less substantive or clerical and administrative tasks at the expense of more meaningful work.

“... I can’t count the number of times I watched men take over substantive tasks that involved communications with clients and counsel, and simply fail to do the other essential but less glamorous tasks until a woman picked up the slack. They were then rewarded for this with increased access and responsibility for work, while the female lawyer who ensured that the matter continued to run smoothly was slowly consigned to that job at the expense of doing any other substantive work.”

This response is typical of stories women shared about the lived impact of being expected to undertake a disproportionate share of administrative work. The cumulative effect of gender biases and assumptions about men’s and women’s capabilities was commonly noted by respondents as contributing to their slower career progression and lack of opportunity to gain experience in more substantive work, which in turn reduced opportunities to compete for more senior roles.

› PART 3: DISRESPECT TOWARDS WOMEN

Male peer relations that reinforce stereotypical and aggressive forms of masculinity can “create disrespect for, objectification of, or hostility towards women” (Our Watch, 2015, p26). As outlined in *Change the Story*, these types of male peer relationships are associated with a greater likelihood of violence against women. Some dynamics of male peer relationships can lead to a greater tendency to excuse or condone violence, and a greater reluctance to stand against it (Our Watch, 2015, p26).

PRIVILEGING RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER MEN

Previous academic research shows that the kinds of male bonding patterns described above are present in the legal profession, and this culture is often referred to as a ‘boys club’ (Hunter, 2005; Bartlett, 2008; Friedman, 2017). One of the most common observations made by respondents to our survey was that the profession effectively acts as a ‘boys club’ that operates to the detriment of women. Respondents describe work cultures characterised by male dominance and privilege in which men prefer working and socialising with other men.

“Clear boys’ club/patriarchy – particularly amongst the older, white male practitioners including some of the judiciary – both in and out of court.”

“As a female, it’s a constant battle against the old Boys Club.”

“The elitist boys club permeates all areas of the courts and criminal law work places.”

Previous research on the Victorian Bar (Hunter, 2005) revealed that male bonding through social activities and private boys’ school networks was integral to how briefs were secured. Social activities matter in the legal

profession because they offer opportunities to network, and excluding women can negatively impact on career opportunities. Our survey respondents concur with this view, describing judiciary, senior male practitioners and partners excluding women from their banter, ignoring women in the room, using the objectification of women as a bonding exercise, and organising men-only social activities (including going to male-only adult entertainment establishments).

“I see that men in senior positions feel more inclined to socialise with other men, and in turn offer them opportunities such as mentoring or employment opportunities that are not available to women.”

As discussed in the first section of this paper, men privileging their relationships with other men over those with women contributes to discrimination and preferential treatment in hiring and promotion. However, respondents also described subtle ways in which male relationships function to benefit men’s opportunities for career advancement since men comprise the majority of leadership across the sector.

“In general, because partnerships are mostly male, I witness better initial interactions between partners and young males. This also applies to initial interactions between male clients and male lawyers. There is an instant approval of each other between them...”

OBJECTIFICATION OF WOMEN AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment is a form of violence against women. Existing research and anecdotal evidence makes it clear that workplace sexual harassment is a significant problem in the Victorian legal and justice sector (Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission, 2012; Law Council of Australia, 2013; Friedman, 2017; Morton, 2018). This paper is published in the context of a national inquiry into workplace sexual harassment that is currently underway by the Australian Human Rights Commission, and a long-term program of work on sexual harassment within the legal profession in Victoria being undertaken by the Victorian Legal Services Board and Commissioner.

Respondents to our survey told us that sexual harassment in the legal and justice sector was pervasive, normalised and often accepted. Participants described a range of sexual harassment behaviours including: being groped/inappropriately touched; being propositioned for sex; receiving sexual and inappropriate text messages; being shown pornography or being aware of pornography being viewed in the workplace; being the subject of, or overhearing, sexualised and demeaning jokes; frequent commentary on appearance; being leered at or ogled; and being interrogated about their private sex lives. Several respondents reported sexual assault or rape. Perpetrators of sexual harassment were predominantly identified as senior to victims, but many were identified as peers, external colleagues (e.g. in court), and clients.

Sexual harassment was described as commonplace in legal and justice settings. Many respondents identified several different incidents of sexual harassment, from multiple perpetrators, across periods of time and in different workplaces.

“As a junior lawyer I had someone pat me on the arse at the [organisation] Christmas drinks. Working in criminal law many years ago there was unwelcome comments, jokes and leering... I received porn footage in an email from a non-lawyer that was also sent to other lawyers...A [person] from [workplace] once sent me a text message that implied we’d somehow been sexually involved when we hadn’t been...”

“I have been leered at and objectified, from the time of being a junior secretary to being an intermediate level solicitor today. 23 years of experiencing and observing abuse by members of a profession designed to promote the law.”

Socialising with peers is considered to be a standard part of professional life in the legal sector, and several respondents described sexual harassment as commonly occurring at social events such as work drinks, Christmas parties and functions.

“For me, it was all at work drinks. Inappropriate touching/comments/jokes from male colleagues that were sexist. Because I’m queer, sometimes they would assume that I’d be ok with them making objectifying comments or jokes about other women in the office. They would also ask intrusive questions about my sex life - what position I preferred, who I’d have a threesome with, which other lawyer at the office I’d be most interested in shagging.”

Many respondents felt that there is little accountability for perpetrators of sexual harassment. There were many stories of complaints being ‘swept under the carpet’ and that complaints to managers or partners were dismissed or minimised.

“... when I queried if this comment was appropriate I was told ‘If I can’t have a joke at work then what is the point’.”

“...When I did complain to my boss, he said I should feel flattered and not make a fuss...”

Respondents described work environments where young women are openly objectified and where remarks about what women are wearing and their attractiveness is normalised and accepted. Remarks about appearance were reported as being made in the form of jokes or ‘compliments’, and were often conducted openly and blatantly among groups of men.

“One of the male directors had a sign on the wall, behind his desk, saying ‘sexual harassment will not be tolerated in this office, it will be graded’.”

“... when working in government, a male colleague made very explicit sexual comments [and] jokes about and to me over a period of time. He regularly made these comments in an open plan office where other people could hear, including managers.”

“... Everyday I was subjected to sexual harassment that almost always included my race. ‘hot [...] mail girl’ to more lewd comments such as ‘sit on my face’. I also witnessed every single day first hand ‘the guys’ within my team remark on Every. Single. Female in the office. I’d watch their behaviour with those that they found ‘attractive’ to those whom they had absolutely no attraction to and how they’d do any favours possible for the former to give them any advantage. The most terrible part of it was thinking that was just the way of the world and learning to normalise such behaviour at the age of 19-21.”

Many respondents described this culture of objectification and sexual harassment as “toxic” and “demoralising”. Respondents said they felt humiliated, devalued and embarrassed but that they felt there was very little they could practically do about it given the normalisation and pervasiveness of the behaviour in many workplaces.

“The office manager and [...] male Director would sit together and ‘check out’ the Facebook photos of admin before they interviewed them, to see if they were attractive... Another one of my female colleagues had briefed a male barrister that she had not met before. That barrister asked another male barrister what my colleague looked like, so he could find her at court. The other male barrister responded along the lines ‘she’s around an 8/10’, described her face, her body etc. The barrister who said this, told my colleague, like she should be proud of the description he’d provided to this barrister she didn’t know. The worst thing is she didn’t say anything, and thought, well maybe I should be proud of that. The influence and culture that continuously impacts women in the law.”

BULLYING, UNDERMINING, HUMILIATION

“The male lawyer’s body language, his sneering and use of language made me feel like I was incompetent and like I didn’t belong in the Courtroom. I have never seen him treat other male lawyers like this before, but this type of behaviour from that male lawyer is common with my other female colleagues.”

Another way women described feeling devalued in the sector was through aggressive or subtle bullying, humiliation and the undermining of women’s professional skills or expertise. Respondents reported that women experience high levels of hostility, bullying and other aggressive behaviours. This was most often experienced by junior practitioners but was also reported by women at all stages of their careers, and was perpetrated by partners, directors, senior lawyers, barristers, members of the judiciary, police and sometimes clients.

“Opposing male practitioner being derogatory and speaking down to me and other women lawyers, shouting and using derogatory terms in text messages.”

The manner in which the bullying and aggression occurs is overtly gendered. For example, respondents described being called diminutive and patronising names such as “girly”, “young lady” and “lovey”, or derogatory names such as “bitch” and “slut”. Respondents described being patronised, degraded, talked down to, ignored in favour of their male peers, being shouted at (particularly in court by members of the judiciary), and of having their qualifications or legal experience questioned.

“As a female duty lawyer, I have had many experiences where older male [members of the judiciary] have been very disparaging towards me, such as a [member of the judiciary] making comments attacking my competence and threatening to make a complaint [...] about the time it took me to resolve duty lawyer matters for which I had no control. I generally have not seen the same level of disparagement and negative personal comments to male lawyers as I have seen directed towards female lawyers.”

Several respondents related similar situations involving clients, such as clients refusing to engage with them, clients mistakenly believing they were an assistant, student or secretary, and clients engaging in direct abuse/hostility.

While many suggested that this behaviour was explicitly sexist, aggressive and direct, subtler behaviours were also observed. Respondents described instances of being ignored in favour of men, undermined, disparaged and having their opinions or professional expertise dismissed or not sought out at all despite sometimes being in the same room.

“... I vividly remember a time when I observed two male lawyers dismiss the opinion of a female lawyer, which I can only assume was a manifestation of their sexist attitudes. The incident occurred in a court room, involving 3 lawyers. Two of those lawyers were duty lawyers- one male, one female, both around the same age (40- 50)...The other was a male, private lawyer, who was slightly older (about 60). No one else was present in the courtroom at the time as we waited for the court to reconvene after lunch. We waited in silence until the older male private lawyer broke it with a question he directed only at the male duty lawyer on a point of law that all the lawyers in the room could have contributed to. The two male lawyers exchanged their opinions, but neither turned to the female lawyer for hers. The female lawyer interjected at one point to contribute to the conversation and I watched as her opinion was dismissed – barely even acknowledged – by the male private lawyer. I also tried to involve myself in the discussion without any show of welcome from the male lawyers. I felt offended by the way the male private lawyer’s disrespect for my female colleague and I felt disappointed in our male duty lawyer colleague for not making an effort to involve us in the conversation.”

A relationship between gendered bullying and sexual harassment is observed in respondents’ stories and can be understood to exist on a continuum of mutually reinforcing behaviours that objectify and demean

women. While several respondents rightly pointed out that not all men behave in this manner, a picture nonetheless emerges of an environment in which disrespect for, objectification of, or hostility towards women exists.

› PART 4: EXCUSING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Change the Story (Our Watch, 2015) makes clear that when violence against women is excused, trivialised or condoned, levels of violence are higher. Violence against women is condoned both through beliefs and attitudes and through the legal, institutional and organisational structures and practices that reflect and reinforce them. This includes social norms, structures and practices that justify or excuse violence; trivialising and downplaying the seriousness of violence; and shifting the blame for violence on to victims (victim-blaming).

EXCUSING, TRIVIALISING AND CONDONING VIOLENCE

Respondents noted that attitudes that excuse, trivialise or condone violence against women exist within the sector. For example, respondents remarked that members of the judiciary, barristers and lawyers sometimes downplayed family violence or collude with perpetrators in court. Respondents also described victim-blaming attitudes and hearing ‘jokes’ involving sexual assault. As discussed above, inadequate accountability for sexual harassment and downplaying its seriousness are other ways in which violence against women is minimised in the sector.

These attitudes and behaviours are highly concerning and must be remedied. However, if we are to work towards their eradication, the attitudes and behaviours must be viewed in the context of a culture and society in which sexism and inequality thrive.

CUMULATIVE EFFECT OF SEXISM AND INEQUALITY

Respondents to our survey overwhelmingly indicated that sexism and inequality is entrenched within legal and justice settings. They describe ‘casual’ and ‘everyday’ sexism that creates workplaces that are less favourable to women and privilege men. Gender stereotyping and favouring traditional ‘male’ qualities, direct and indirect discrimination, sexual harassment and bullying, and a pervasive culture of objectification of women (especially young women), all act in informal ways to preserve power and limit women’s opportunities. A lack of meaningful action to eradicate these behaviours and attitudes would be to condone, or at least minimise, violence against women.

Many respondents said they felt ‘worn down’ by the pervasiveness of the sexist culture of the sector. This had significant impacts on the career prospects of women within the sector, as well as on morale, self-esteem and wellbeing.

“As a young practitioner, I worked in a department of a large law firm that was commonly referred to as ‘the testosterone zone’ and ‘the departure lounge’. It was considered a joke. There was a pervasive ‘boys club’ atmosphere that was toxic and soul destroying for me as a young lawyer. I went to that firm as a bright and hard-working graduate who believed I would build a career on merit. I did not expect to encounter such an entrenched sexist culture that was condoned because the perpetrators were the ‘corporate cowboys’ who brought in a lot of money for the firm. On one occasion, I was publicly subjected to a sexist ‘joke’ at a department Christmas function. When I raised my concerns with my supervising partner, I was asked: ‘What did you do to bring that on? Did you lead him on or something?’. I was married and had very little to do with the perpetrator of the ‘joke’, so there was no basis for those questions at all. When, many months later, I asked about the results of the investigation into the incident, I was told that ‘it was nothing personal’ and ‘boys will be boys’. This was many years ago, but the injustice and toxicity of that environment still rankles with me. The worst perpetrators of the behaviour were promoted to partners at the firm. I left the legal profession for many years because of attitudes and treatment like that.... I believe that the sexist treatment and attitudes from my early years in the profession significantly affected my confidence and belief in my abilities as a lawyer... the sexist and toxic treatment led me to believe that I was ‘not up to the job’ and that I ‘couldn’t hack it’, so I left the profession. To a large extent, the damage from that early treatment ruined my career.”

Like the respondent above, many women said that they ‘had to leave’ the profession. Several emphasised that they could not cope with the endemic sexism and relentless negative treatment, particularly once they had children. The onus of responsibility for managing the problem of gender inequality and sexism within the sector should not fall on those who are disadvantaged and harmed by it.

A CALL TO ACTION

This paper aims to generate discussion about gender inequality and sexism in the Victorian legal and justice sector that will lead to meaningful action and positive change.

In presenting a snapshot of practitioners' experiences of sexism and gender inequality, the report highlights how 'casual' and 'everyday' sexism creates workplaces that can disadvantage women and benefit men. It examines the way in which gender stereotypes are subtly as well as overtly reinforced. It describes the structural as well as indirect ways in which women experience discrimination, especially in relation to workplace expectations and cultures that are incompatible with caring responsibilities. Sexual harassment is discussed, particularly in relation to what appears to be a pervasive culture of objectification of women, especially young women.

While some formal progress has been made around policy changes to address discrimination, sexual harassment and pay inequity, more must be done to activate these policies, as well as changing informal cultures, attitudes and practices that maintain the status quo. These practices have a profound effect on women's opportunities for career advancement and access to leadership roles, are harmful to self-esteem and morale, and too often result in women leaving the profession altogether.

Solutions to sexism and gender inequality in the legal and justice setting have often focussed on women changing their behaviour – such as accessing mentoring, and programs that assist women to be more assertive, and better at public speaking and networking (Travers, 2009). If we are serious about eradicating sexist and discriminatory behaviours in the legal and justice setting, and contributing to the broader societal effort to prevent violence against women, our attention needs to shift to solving the problem itself – the attitudes, cultural norms and systemic manifestations of sexism and gender inequality that disadvantage and harm women.

Starts With Us is for and by the legal and justice workforce. The forthcoming phase of Starts With Us is the collaborative development of a sector-wide action plan. The action plan will build upon relevant, successful frameworks and tools – such as the Our Watch (2019) *Workplace Equality and Respect* package – while also addressing the need for sector-wide initiatives, coordination and resourcing. The action plan will be driven by organisations within the sector, to maximise its effectiveness and ensure it reflects the nuances and needs of legal and justice workplaces.

APPENDIX 1

SURVEY PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

294 professionals who work, or have previously worked, in the legal and justice sector in Victoria participated in the survey.

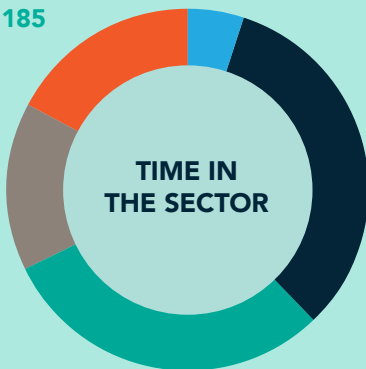


TOTAL RESPONSES 171

- > LAWYER 56%
- > POLICY OFFICER OR ADVISOR 8%
- > PRINCIPAL LAWYER 6%
- > BARRISTER 5%
- > OPERATIONS 4%
- > JUDGE'S ASSOCIATE 3.5%
- > MANAGEMENT 3%
- > PARALEGAL/LEGAL ASSISTANT 3%
- > JUDICIARY 2%
- > LEFT SECTOR/NO LONGER PRACTICING 2.5%
- > OTHER 7%

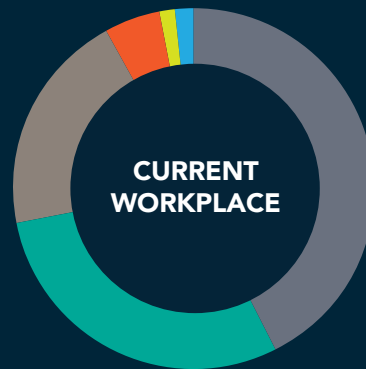
TOTAL RESPONSES 185

- > LESS THAN 1 YEAR 5%
- > 1 TO 5 YEARS 33%
- > 6 TO 10 YEARS 30%
- > 11 TO 15 YEARS 15%
- > 16+ YEARS 17%



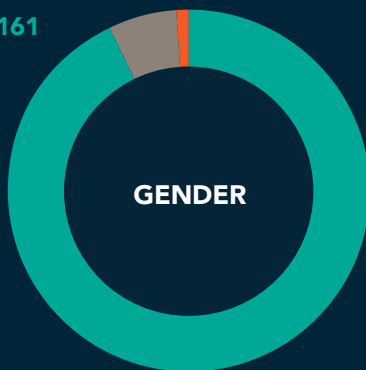
TOTAL RESPONSES 185

- > COMMUNITY / NOT FOR PROFIT 42.5%
- > GOVERNMENT / STATUTORY AUTHORITY 29.5%
- > PRIVATE 20%
- > COURTS / COURT SERVICES 5%
- > JUDICIARY 1.5%
- > OTHER 1.5%



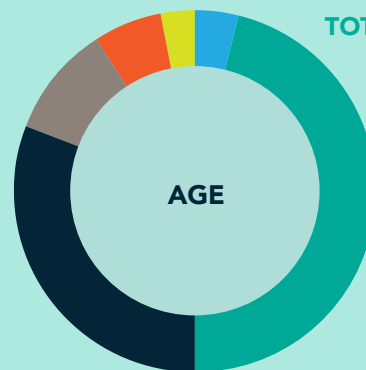
TOTAL RESPONSES 161

- > WOMAN/FEMALE 93%
- > MAN/MALE 6%
- > NON-BINARY 1%



TOTAL RESPONSES 176

- > 18-24 4%
- > 25-34 46%
- > 35-44 31%
- > 45-54 10%
- > 55-64 6%
- > 65+ 3%



APPENDIX 2

DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT: ONLINE SURVEY

1. INTRODUCTION

YOUR STORY IS IMPORTANT

As a legal and justice professional working in Victoria (Australia), we want to hear about your experiences and observations of sexist attitudes and cultural norms, sexual harassment and unfair treatment related to gender.

This research is part of a Victorian Government funded project Starts With Us: legal and justice sector action on prevention of violence against women. Women's Legal Service Victoria is leading the project, in collaboration with a number of leading sector organisations.

The responses and experiences gathered in this story collection will contribute to a discussion paper, and will shine a light on the gendered drivers of violence against women as they manifest within the Victorian legal and justice sector.

WILL MY PARTICIPATION BE ANONYMOUS?

Telling your story is anonymous and entirely voluntary. We do not ask for your name, employer, or any other identifying details. You can choose not to answer particular questions and you may exit the survey at any time. Please feel free to give detailed responses where applicable, but do not include names of individuals, places, organisations or companies.

Your stories might be used in the discussion paper and in advocacy and strategy development to prevent violence against women.

WHO CAN TAKE PART?

We would like to hear from anyone who works or has worked in legal and justice (including volunteers and students) in Victoria, Australia. All legal professionals, paralegals, administrative staff, policy and education practitioners, court staff, and judiciary are encouraged to participate.

The survey will take approximately 10- 20 minutes to complete.

CONTENT NOTE

This survey asks questions about sexual harassment and assault. Please call

1800RESPECT if anything in this survey raises distress or concern.

Telephone: 1800 737 732

National Relay Service: 1800 555 677

Interpreter: 13 14 50

By completing and submitting the survey you consent to participate in the research. You are providing your consent on the basis that all data is anonymous and that no person, employer or organisation will be identified in any communications arising from this research.*

- Agree
 Disagree

Do you currently work, or have you previously worked in the legal and justice sector? *

- Yes
 No

Do you currently live in Victoria? *

- Yes
 No

[* Answer required in order to proceed]

2. SEXIST ATTITUDES AND CULTURAL NORMS

We are interested in hearing about your experiences of ‘everyday sexism’ at work. These experiences might be serious and overt, or they might be minor and even considered “normal”. Your response can be about any workplace or setting, at any time in your career, as long as it occurred while working in legal and justice in Victoria (Australia). You can tell us about things that have happened to you directly or that you have observed happening to others.

Reminder: please do not include names of individuals, places, or organisations/companies.

Have you experienced or observed sexist attitudes and/or cultural norms at work?

- Yes
 No
 Don’t know

Tell your story. What happened?

3. UNFAIR TREATMENT

Reminder: please do not include names of individuals, places, or organisations/companies.

While working in legal and justice, have you ever experienced or observed unfair treatment or disadvantage because of gender?

- Yes
 No
 Don’t know

Tell your story. What happened?

While working in legal and justice, have you ever experienced or observed unfair treatment or disadvantage because of any of the following:

- Gender identity (trans/non binary)
 Sexual orientation
 Disability
 Ethnicity or cultural background
 Religion
 Age
 Other (please specify)

Tell your story. What happened?

4. SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Reminder: please do not include names of individuals, places, or organisations/companies.

Have you experienced or observed sexual harassment while working in legal and justice?

- Yes
 No
 Don’t know

Which of the following behaviours have you experienced or observed (check all that apply)

- Unwelcome or inappropriate physical contact
 Unwelcome staring/leering or suggestive gestures that made you feel offended, humiliated or intimidated
 Sexually suggestive comments or jokes (in person or via text, email, social media etc) that made you feel offended, humiliated or intimidated
 Sexually explicit images in the workplace (including via text, email, social media etc) that made you feel offended, humiliated or intimidated
 Repeated inappropriate advances/invitations to go on dates
 Sexually explicit/inappropriate gifts that made you feel offended, humiliated or intimidated
 Intrusive questions or comments about your private life that made you feel offended, humiliated or intimidated

- Intrusive questions or comments about your appearance that made you feel offended, humiliated or intimidated
 - Requests or pressure for sex or other sexual acts
 - Actual or attempted sexual assault
 - Other (please specify)
-

Tell your story. What happened? Tell us about the sexual harassment you experienced or observed, including the perpetrator/s' gender and relationship to the affected person (e.g. supervisor, colleague).

5. BARRIERS TO CAREER ADVANCEMENT

What gendered barriers to career advancement in legal and justice have you experienced or observed?

Tell your story.

6. FINAL COMMENTS

Would you like to tell us anything else about gender inequality in legal and justice?

7. ABOUT YOU

How long have you worked (or how long did you work) in legal and justice?

- Less than one year
- 1-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-15 years
- 16 years+

What is your current role? (eg. barrister, policy officer, paralegal, solicitor, HR, support worker, volunteer, etc)

Are you currently working in the:

- Private sector
 - Not-for-profit/community sector
 - Government or statutory authority
 - Judiciary
 - Court and court services
 - Other
-

Your gender

How old are you?

- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54
- 55-64
- 65+

9. THANK YOU

We appreciate you taking the time to tell us about your experiences and observations. Thank you.

If participation in this story collection process has caused you distress or concern

Please call 1800 RESPECT on 1800 737 732

NRS: 1800 555 677 Interpreter: 13 14 50

FURTHER INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE WITH WORKPLACE HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION

If you would like further information about workplace sexual harassment or discrimination, including if you would like to lodge a complaint, please see the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission or phone: 1300 292 153.

FOCUS GROUPS

If you are keen to further explore the issues raised here by taking part in a focus group, please email: monica@womenslegal.org.au

PROJECT UPDATES AND DISCUSSION PAPER

If you would like to receive the discussion paper, project updates and/or for any other enquiries about the project, please email: lynda@womenslegal.org.au

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