



# Implementing Respect@Work

## WA State Government Final Progress Report

### About the Report

In 2020, the Australian Human Rights Commission released **Respect@Work: National Inquiry into Sexual Harassment in Australian Workplaces**, which outlines 55 recommendations aimed at preventing and responding to sexual harassment in workplaces.

The responsibility for implementing these recommendations was shared by the Commonwealth Government, independent government agencies, state and territory governments, and the private sector. The Western Australian Government has played a central role in contributing to the implementation of 18 specific recommendations.


Progress reports published in [2021](#), [2022](#) and [2023](#) highlight the successful completion of 14 of these 18 recommendations. This final progress report outlines the successful completion of all but three recommendations, with the remaining recommendations in advance stages of completion.

The finalisation of this reporting against the **Respect@Work** recommendations demonstrates the significant progress made by the Western Australian Government in addressing sexual harassment in the workplace, marking a notable achievement in the pursuit of safer, more inclusive work environments.






# Completed recommendations

**Table Key:**  Completed  In Progress

Recommendation	Update 2024	Status
<b>Recommendation 49</b>	<p>Australian governments provide increased and recurrent funding to working women's centres to provide information, advice and assistance to vulnerable workers who experience sexual harassment, taking into account particular needs of workers facing intersectional discrimination. Australian governments should consider establishing or re-establishing working women's centres in jurisdictions where they do not currently exist. The Council of Australian Governments agrees to incorporate sexual harassment as a key area for action and investment under any national framework to address violence against women.</p>	
	<p>Working Women's Centres (WWC) have been funded in every state and territory to assist women who are experiencing sexual harassment, discrimination and other workplace issues.</p> <p>Circle Green in partnership with Women's Legal Service WA is implementing the Working Women's Centre WA (WWC WA) which will provide free information, advocacy, advice and assistance to women on workplace issues, including workplace entitlements and rights, gender issues, cultural diversity, discrimination and sexual harassment. The service model is holistic and trauma-informed, to ensure that issues in relation to the workplace are addressed in the context of women's other needs.</p> <p>A Reference Group of key stakeholders has also been established to provide strategic oversight and guidance in the implementation, delivery and impact of WWC WA.</p>	

## In progress recommendations

Recommendation	Update 2024	Status
<b>Recommendation 11</b>	<p>Building on work already underway in response to the recommendations in Change the Course, all tertiary and higher education providers deliver evidence-based information and training on sexual harassment for staff and students that addresses the drivers of gender-based violence and includes content on workplace rights.</p>	
	<p>The WA Training Accreditation Council (TAC) has been working closely with Commonwealth, DTWD and VET regulators on the review of the Standards for Registered Training Organisations (RTOs). The draft revised Standard for RTOs includes Standards and Performance Indicators that have relevance to harassment and discrimination for RTO staff and students. The planned implementation of the revised Standards is 1 July 2025 (subject to WA regulatory amendments being completed).</p>	
<b>Recommendation 26</b>	<p>The Australian Government work with state and territory governments, through the Council of Australian Governments or another appropriate forum, to amend state and territory human rights and anti-discrimination legislation with the objective of achieving consistency, where possible, with the <i>Sex Discrimination Act 1984</i> (Cth), without limiting or reducing protections.</p>	
	<p>The Western Australian Law Reform Commission (the Commission) undertook a Review of the <i>Equal Opportunity Act 1984</i> (WA) (the Act). The Commission's Final Report was tabled in Parliament on 16 August 2022 with Recommendation One calling for "the Act be redrafted in a clear, concise and accessible manner". Work is ongoing to consider the recommendations of the Commission's review.</p>	

Recommendation	Update 2024	Status
<p><b>Recommendation 39</b></p> <p>The Council of Attorneys-General consider how best to protect alleged victims of sexual harassment who are witnesses in civil proceedings, including but not limited to defamation proceedings. Measures could include amending state and territory legislation governing defamation proceedings to introduce a standard direction or presumption in favour of confidentiality and suppression or non-publication of witness details in any defamation court proceeding, where the defamatory material includes allegations of sexual harassment.</p> <p>Consideration should also be given to additional witness safeguards and protections including:</p> <p>Having the proceedings conducted in a closed courtroom.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Giving evidence from a remote room.</li> <li>Having their evidence in chief be audio-visually recorded prior to the hearing.</li> <li>Having an audio-visual recording of their evidence during the hearing to be re-used in any subsequent proceedings.</li> <li>Being protected from direct cross-examination by a self-represented party.</li> <li>Having a support person present while giving evidence.</li> </ol>	<p>The <i>Evidence Bill 2024</i> (WA) (the Bill) was introduced into Parliament on 13 August 2024.</p> <p>The Bill is making significant changes to protect and support vulnerable victims, including victims of family and domestic violence, child sexual abuse and other sexual offences.</p> <p>This will afford protections to victims of sexual harassment in certain circumstances, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enabling evidence to be provided from a remote room or by pre-recording</li> <li>Enabling audio-visual recordings to be submitted as evidence</li> <li>Codifying areas of impermissible cross examination of witnesses, such as questioning that is harassing, intimidating, offensive, oppressive or humiliating</li> <li>Protecting victims from direct cross-examination by a self-represented party</li> <li>Enabling special witnesses to access modifications and supports where appropriate (e.g. support persons, support animals, communications partners).</li> </ul>	

## Department of Communities

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