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Environmental Scan



Managers must tell new hires about risk of violence at work under new Sask. employment rules

Saskatchewan employers will be required to tell new hires if they face a risk of violence in the workplace and to take actions against it starting on May 17.

Under the employment act amendments taking effect later this month, workplaces must have a violence policy and prevention plan in place that identifies where violent situations have occurred or may occur and informs workers about the risks, including warnings about people with a history of violent behaviour who could become a risk to employees.

Employers will also be required to take action to prevent violent incidents, investigate when they occur, and provide training and counselling for employees.

The amendments take effect just months after Saskatchewan teachers went public about violent incidents they've faced at school, including chairs thrown across the classroom, destroyed equipment and physical assault.

Sask. will require all regulated workplaces to develop policies on violence

All provincially regulated workplaces in Saskatchewan will soon need to have a violence policy and prevention plan in place.

According to the Ministry of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety, changes to Saskatchewan's employment act come into effect on May 17, making the policies mandatory in workplaces regulated by the provincial government. Students, post-secondary students, volunteers and contract employees must all be covered under the policy.

According to the ministry, the policy statements and violence prevention plans must include:

- a commitment to minimize or eliminate risk factors for violence and review the plan every three years;
- identify worksites where violence has occurred or may occur;
- identify staff positions which could be exposed to violence;
- outline procedures to inform workers about the risks of violence and any details about persons with a history of violence who could become a risk in the workplace;
- describe actions taken to minimize or eliminate risks of violence;
- outline procedures for reporting incidents of violence;
- a recommendation that employees who have suffered violence consult a doctor or obtain a referral for counselling; and
- a commitment to provide a training program for employees.

Employer of visiting nurse who was killed didn't protect her and should be fined, safety agency says

A home health care company failed to protect a visiting nurse who was killed during an appointment with a convicted rapist at a Connecticut halfway house and should be fined about \$161,000, federal workplace safety officials said Wednesday.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration released the results of its investigation into Elara Caring and the Oct. 28 death of Joyce Grayson, a 63-year-old mother of six and nurse for 36 years. The Dallas, Texas-based company, which provides home care for more than 60,000 patients in 17 states, said it disputes OSHA's findings and plans to contest them.

OSHA determined the company "exposed home healthcare employees to workplace violence from patients who exhibited aggressive behavior and were known to pose a risk to others," the agency said in a statement.

"Elara Caring failed its legal duty to protect employees from workplace injury by not having effective measures in place to protect employees against a known hazard and it cost a worker her life," Charles McGrevy, an OSHA area director in Hartford, Connecticut, said in the statement.

OSHA said the company could have reduced the risk of workplace violence in a number of ways including providing its health care providers with comprehensive background information on patients, giving them panic alert buttons and developing procedures for using safety escorts with certain patients.

Yang: All forms of workplace harassment, however subtle, must be eradicated

Have you ever felt coerced into hugging a co-worker who demanded it inappropriately? Have you ever found yourself nodding or blushing in response to a co-worker's inappropriate comments? Have you ever been "accidentally" touched by a co-worker? Or have you encountered a co-worker who goes out of their way to offer help without a clear reason, compelling you to either return the favor or tolerate their inappropriate behaviour?

These troubling experiences are so often ignored, raising significant concerns about workplace harassment.

Despite the introduction of provincial and federal acts aimed at regulating employer responsibilities to ensure a safe workplace, eradicating workplace harassment remains challenging.

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Workplace harassment may manifest in subtle ways these days. It is imperative for management teams to acknowledge that harassment can manifest in various forms, and that overlooking subtle types of harassment effectively supports such behaviours.

N.S. pharmacy association says members facing more harassment

The Pharmacy Association of Nova Scotia has launched a new anti-harassment campaign after a new survey revealed more than half of respondents have been intimidated or threatened at work over the last year — mostly by their own patients.

Allison Bodnar, the association's CEO, said harassment, intimidation and physical threats against pharmacists have been on the rise in recent years.

"We've had people throw their prescription bags at peoples' heads and it's just impacting our members' mental health and their physical well-being ... and it just needs to stop," Bodnar told CBC Radio's Information Morning Sydney on Wednesday.

The association, which represents more than 1,500 pharmacy professionals in Nova Scotia, recently conducted a survey about harassment in the workplace. Of the 700 members who responded, more than 50 per cent had experienced some form of harassment in the last year.

Bodnar said these experiences are happening to burnt-out staff, which has led to increasing rates of disability and sick leave and in turn, staffing shortages.

Province brings in new rules addressing workplace violence

Employers in Saskatchewan will be required to let new hires know about the history of workplace violence in their workplace starting this month.

Amendments to the occupational health and safety provisions of The Saskatchewan Employment Act will come into force requiring all provincially regulated workplaces to have a violence policy and prevention plan in place effect starting May 17.

"Everyone has the right to feel safe when they come to work," said Don McMorris, minister of labour relations and workplace safety. "Having a violence policy and investigating all incidents is a step toward protecting workers from acts of violence."

Saskatchewan first introduced the changes to its provincial employment act in 2022.

Allegations of RCMP bullying detailed in Surrey police court docs

In one incident, a mixed-race Surrey Police Service officer allegedly saw Surrey RCMP members play a game mocking a Black male suspect.

In another, an RCMP officer was heard yelling "hide the food" before trying to touch a Surrey Police Service officer's stomach with his hand.

And in yet another, a Surrey Police Service officer — assigned to work with the RCMP's special victims unit as part of a transition from the federal force to a municipal squad — said she was told "the RCMP had not planned for SPS officers to stay beyond a week."

All three incidents are detailed — along with dozens more — in a summary of a Surrey Police Service (SPS) investigative report filed in B.C. Supreme Court Thursday that concluded RCMP officers had subjected their municipal counterparts to "harassment and a toxic work environment"

"Harassment by the RCMP has negatively affected the health and welfare of SPS officers," wrote the author of the report, SPS Insp. Bal Brach, who himself joined the SPS after a 25-year career with the RCMP.

Workplace dysfunction behind complaint, privacy commissioner finds

A privacy breach involving a Department of Health employee could have been avoided if it weren't for tensions in the workplace, said Graham Steele, Nunavut's information and privacy commissioner.

In a decision published April 29, Steele found there was a privacy breach when information about an employee's personal life was shared with coworkers.

Steele was investigating a complaint from a Health Department employee who submitted a leave request via email in February with some personal information and other details related to the request.

The decision does not name the complainant, the employees involved, or which community the complaint originated from, in order to protect the privacy of those involved. The complainant returned from leave and learned their personal information related to the leave request had been shared with a co-worker and passed on to others.

Steele said during his investigation he found "simmering tension" in the workplace between employees and management. He remarked in his decision that he worried he was being "drawn unwillingly into a wider workplace dispute."

News release: Ontario Supporting Women at Work

MISSISSAUGA — Today, the Ontario government is introducing the Working for Workers Five Act, 2024, building on its previous four Working for Workers acts. The act contains a suite of measures to support workers, including requiring that menstrual products be provided on larger construction sites and mandating that washrooms are clean and sanitary. The legislation, the first of its kind in Canada, would make the skilled trades more accessible to women and support women at work.

“Under Premier Ford, our government is tackling the generational labour shortage previous governments left in their wake. That means we need all hands on deck – but when women represent only one in ten workers in the skilled trades, we have one hand tied behind our back,” said David Piccini, Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development. “That’s why our government is introducing first-in-Canada changes to encourage women to start a career in the skilled trades and reach their full potential. Because an economy that doesn’t work for women, doesn’t work at all.”

For the first time in Canada, the Ontario government will make regulatory changes to the province’s Occupational Health and Safety Act to require menstrual products be provided on larger construction sites. The government will also propose legislative and regulatory changes to require employers at both construction sites and other workplaces to require that washrooms are kept clean and sanitary and maintain records of washroom cleaning.

Ontario’s proposed amendments would add virtual harassment to the definitions of workplace harassment and workplace sexual harassment in the Occupational Health and Safety Act, ensuring that workplace policies to address harassment in the workplace also cover online harassment.

Ontario proposing new rules for construction workplaces

Building on its previous four Working for Workers acts, the Ontario government is introducing the Working for Workers Five Act, 2024, which contains a suite of measures to support workers, including mandating that jobsite washrooms are clean and sanitary, and requiring that menstrual products be provided on larger construction sites.

The legislation will be the first of its kind in Canada and would make the skilled trades more accessible to women and support women at work, says the province.

“Under Premier Ford, our government is tackling the generational labour shortage previous governments left in their wake. That means we need all hands on deck – but when women represent only one in ten workers in the skilled trades, we have one hand tied behind our back,” said David Piccini, Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development. “That’s why our government is introducing first-in-Canada changes to encourage women to start a career in the skilled trades and reach their full potential. Because an economy that doesn’t work for women, doesn’t work at all.”

When passed by the provincial legislature, Ontario’s proposed amendments would also add virtual harassment to the definitions of workplace harassment and workplace sexual harassment in the provincial Occupational Health and Safety Act.

Trial begins today for alleged assault of non-binary firefighter, attempt to silence them

The criminal trial of an Ottawa fire captain and a former firefighter, both charged following a ritualistic dishwashing competition in 2022 that allegedly turned violent before being hushed up, is set to begin Monday before a judge alone in the Ontario Court of Justice.

Eric Einagel, 38, is accused of choking openly non-binary rookie firefighter Ash Weaver during an assault that caused bodily harm, as well as harassment by threatening conduct that caused Weaver to fear for their safety. Einagel was eventually fired.

He had previously been charged with aggravated assault, which was replaced with assault causing bodily harm. A separate charge of forcibly seizing Weaver was dropped.

Capt. Gregory Wright, 58, is facing a previously unreported charge, first laid in May 2023 and altered in February. Wright was Weaver's supervisor at the time of the incident, and department sources told CBC he had been hand-picked to oversee the rookie.

He's accused of disciplining Weaver or adversely affecting their employment — or threatening to — with the intent to stop Weaver from going to police about Einagel's alleged assault.

P.E.I. program to reduce workplace sexual harassment will go on, despite no federal funding

A P.E.I. project will continue to encourage people to talk about workplace sexual harassment, despite federal funding for the program coming to an end. The Shift project, run by the P.E.I. Human Rights Commission, began in 2019. It was inspired by #MeToo, the global social awareness campaign against sexual abuse and harassment.

The federal Department of Justice funded the program for five years, but that support came to an end this spring. Even so, the project's manager said the provincial human rights commission will continue to fund the Shift workshops because of how prevalent the problem is in Island workplaces.

"It was very clear from the calls that the human rights commission was getting that sexual harassment in the workplace is a problem in P.E.I.," Sarah Denman-Wood told Island Morning host Mitch Cormier on Tuesday.

"Part of the goal of the Shift project was to make people aware, to prevent it."

In 2021, Shift launched an anonymous survey on workplace sexual harassment that saw over 1,600 Islanders respond, about four times as many as organizers had been expecting.

Howard Levitt: Why workplace investigations are the bête noir of employment law

They have become the method for employers to sidestep scandal, kick problems down the road, and build up a case against and humiliate employees under the pretence of objective evaluation and due diligence. But make no mistake: pretence it almost invariably is.

It starts with the suspension of the “accused,” which starts the rumour mills churning as to what misdeeds the apparent miscreant must have committed to deserve that fate, and a clear expectation after a short time that the person will never be returning. That makes it in other employees’ interest to provide the employer with as much “dirt” on that employee as can be mustered to “please” their employer which, it appears to everyone, must want that employee gone. That, in turn, makes the suspect’s lot untenable. As a result, there is almost no case that I have ever seen where a suspended employee returns to the workplace as, if they do, they feel humiliated, suspect and unable to work comfortably going forward. As I have often written, a workplace “suspension” is never a neutral act.

The “investigator” has two incentives. First, to prolong the investigation, hence their fees. (Their employer client often wants this in order that the employee is removed for such a lengthy period that they lose their desire to fight and cannot tenably return, however innocent their conduct). Second, to create a case and produce the report their employer client wishes in order to obtain further retainers and recommendations to other employers/clients.

ETFO holds advocacy day at Queen's Park to call for urgent action to address rising violence in schools

The Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario is holding an advocacy day at Queen's Park on May 14 to call for urgent action to address increasing violence in schools. ETFO local presidents from across the province are bringing our concerns on this issue directly to members of provincial parliament (MPPs).

“Rather than moving inadequate funding from one envelope to another, the Ministry of Education must reverse its cuts to school board funding and address increasing violence in schools. The safety and well-being of students and educators are non-negotiable priorities,” says ETFO President Karen Brown. “The government's lack of support for struggling students puts staff and students at unacceptable increased risk of harm.”

ETFO local presidents will observe Question Period and meet with MPPs to demand meaningful changes.

The benefits of diversity and inclusion are real

A more positive workplace culture on construction sites, one that truly embraces a diverse and inclusive workforce, is the right thing to do, but it can also have a beneficial financial impact.

Research has shown that companies with people from varied walks of life with different experiences bring new insights, which lead to more innovation and creativity. Companies with higher levels of ethnic and cultural diversity are more likely to see above-average profits.

At the Residential Construction Council of Ontario (RESCON), we are walking the talk. We recently released a best practice guide with strategies to help build a more positive culture on construction sites, improve satisfaction of employees and boost productivity. The document highlights how builders, employees and others in the construction industry can implement best practices related to diversity, equity and inclusion.

The guide is aimed at helping stakeholders understand how a more positive workplace culture can impact a business, both good and bad, minimize health and safety grievances, enhance a firm's ability to recruit, train and retain talent, and proactively eliminate risk in a business.

Social media and sexual violence disclosure movements

Social movements to denounce and combat sexual violence have multiplied in recent decades. The recognition of this violence as gender-based violence and the implementation of resources to help victims and survivors are examples of the changes brought about by these feminist struggles^{1,2}. In addition to offline mobilization efforts, Quebec feminist groups have made extensive use of social media to develop complementary initiatives, whether through the sharing of information, images, hyperlinks, or hashtags³. Social media have thus become a platform for conveying important messages, by making visible and documenting the fight against sexual violence towards women and by offering support to victims and survivors³.

The #MeToo movement (#MoiAussi in French) is an example of online mobilization rooted in the social, economic, and structural inequalities especially affecting Black women. In 2006, Tarana Burke, an African American community organizer and activist, created the MeToo initiative, which aimed to denounce sexual violence, particularly against Black, racialized, and disadvantaged girls and women. Today, Tarana Burke is currently the founder and executive director of the me too Movement organization, which aims to support victims and survivors of sexual violence, by providing resources tailored to their needs.

'Staff and council have right to feel safe': mayor

Anyone attending the Stratford city council meeting on Monday, May 13, who came there expecting fireworks following the city's recent actions over suspending a pair of local residents from attending meetings or having contact with any of the city's employees would have been somewhat disappointed.

Council did hear from one delegation on the matter, as Tim Forster – the husband of Barb Shaughnessy, one of the two who were suspended by the city following the February 26 regular council meeting – spoke alone to the meeting and read from a prepared statement where he questioned why the city acted the way it did.

In his statement, Forster said that the city conducted an internal investigation which it claims found harassment and threats of violence made to both city staff and members of the public. The statement went on to say that the city's strategy was to paint all who spoke out against them with the same brush.

“To be clear, no threats of violence or harassment were in any complaints provided to those who delegated on Feb. 26,” Forster read. “If any threats of violence are made, the Respectful Workplace Policy directs the police be called – they weren't.”

Online, off duty, off the hook?

With the recent emergence of remote work and the explosion of social media applications such as TikTok, the line between an employee's work life and personal life has blurred. The workplace is no longer the four corners of an office building, and an employee's behaviour that occurs both online and off duty can attract significant disciplinary measures. Below are important principles to be apprised of when considering engaging in certain conduct outside of the workplace and off duty.

The “workplace” is anywhere an employer's business interests can be impacted by an employee's behaviour. Therefore, employees can be disciplined - and in some cases even terminated - for conduct relating to online or off-duty conduct.

The significant case, *International Union of Elevator Constructors, Local 50 v. ThyssenKrupp Elevator (Canada) Ltd*, 2011 CanLII 46582, illustrates the principle that inappropriate online, off-duty conduct can be subject to significant disciplinary measures. During a lunch break at work, a construction employee of ThyssenKrupp Elevator posted videos online of his exposed genitals in a gruesome manner. ThyssenKrupp subsequently fired the worker due to these postings.

Found guilty of sexual assault, police officer and mentor will not serve jail time

A police officer in Hamilton, Ont. has been found guilty of sexually assaulting a woman he was mentoring in 2010 – but he will not be serving any jail time, a judge ruled. Michael LaCombe, 54, will instead serve 12 months of house arrest followed by 12 months of probation.

Justice Cameron Watson determined that LaCombe didn't deserve imprisonment for his crimes because he's led a life of "exemplary service," has no prior criminal record and is remorseful, CBC reported, citing the judge's written decision.

"This offence involved his ham-fisted attempt to engage in an extramarital affair with a friend, albeit with an extremely serious impact on [the victim]," Watson wrote. Watson sentenced LaCombe on Monday at the Ontario Court of Justice in St. Catharines, Ont., for acts he committed in 2010. During a sentencing hearing in April, however, Watson already told LaCombe he wouldn't spend any time in jail, according to the CBC report.

Previously, a police officer in Windsor, Ont. was demoted after pleading guilty to two charges under the Police Services Act for engaging in "vexatious conduct" against lower ranking female Windsor police employees.

2 Ottawa Fire Services employees charged with hate-motivated workplace assault

Two Ottawa Fire Services employees have been charged with what police are calling a "hate-motivated assault incident" in the workplace.

The incident happened when the two accused and the victim were on duty, police said in a news release Monday. The victim reported the incident to police on Sept. 20.

"The assailant is charged with hate-motivated assault/choking, aggravated assault, forcible confinement, harassment by threatening conduct," police said. "The second member is charged with criminal negligence."

Police declined to give the ages or genders of the accused because they are concerned doing so would identify the victim. Both accused are due to appear in court on Dec. 16. Kim Ayotte, the city's general manager of emergency and protective services, said in a statement that the city is conducting an internal investigation and cooperating with the police investigation.

"We are committed to providing a safe and healthy work environment for all employees and are conducting an internal investigation in accordance with the City's Discipline Policy," he said.

CFL suspends Chad Kelly over violating gender-based violence policy

The Canadian Football League (CFL) has suspended Toronto Argonauts' Chad Kelly over an allegation of gender-based violence policy violation made against the quarterback. This comes after a third-party investigation into allegations made against Kelly.

"Players are the ambassadors of our great game," said Randy Ambrosie, CFL commissioner. "They are expected to be leaders in the locker room and role models in the community. It was important that we performed our due diligence to properly review this matter from all points of view. That in-depth investigation found that Mr. Kelly unequivocally violated the CFL's Gender-based Violence Policy." Earlier this year, a woman who was a former strength and conditioning coach with the Argos filed a harassment case against Kelly following her separation from the team.

She claimed she was harassed by Kelly, whose behaviour is said to have started with unwanted romantic overtures and escalated into incidents where Kelly apparently used threatening language, according to a previous report from The Canadian Press.

The worker reported Kelly's behaviour to the team, but the team did not act on it, according to the report posted on CP24.

Big Idea: Protect Nurses in the Workplace

I became a registered nurse in 2007. I've held many jobs since then—in prenatal education, women's health and in various leadership roles—but I got my start in the postpartum unit. In those early years, I spent much of my time at my patients' bedsides administering medications, checking wounds, drawing blood and otherwise attending to the needs of moms and babies. By 2016, I was a clinical nurse specialist working on staff education within the Greater Toronto Area, which is where I met Amie Archibald-Varley, another nurse. Our friendship really grew after we started exchanging horror stories.

Amie and I had both been bullied during our careers. In my case, a co-worker ridiculed me in front of our colleagues when I couldn't handle a heavy workload and made hurtful comments about my appearance—including a rash I'd developed from anxiety. For a while, I struggled with insomnia. It was actually Amie who suggested I go on stress leave, which I didn't even realize was an option; I'd never met another nurse who'd taken one. My doctor provided me with a note that said I needed time off, but because it didn't include an official diagnosis, my employer didn't approve it. I took my concerns to human resources, but nothing happened. No one was listening.

In 2019, Amie and I decided to create an outlet where we could talk openly about what it's really like to be a nurse—the unsustainable caseloads, the unsafe working conditions, the harassment from patients and employers. All of it. That's how *The Gritty Nurse* podcast was born. At first, we were producing it for our fellow nurses, but our audience has since grown well beyond health care professionals. Every day, people tell me they had no idea what nurses faced on the job. Amie and I advocate for ways that the profession can better protect them.

The most common workplace human rights violations in Canada

Workplace human rights violations are becoming more common, which greatly affect a lot of employees across different industries. Understanding these violations and how to address them is the first step for employers to protect their employees against these inhumane incidents.

What are workplace human rights violations?

Workplace human rights violations are offences against a person's right to be free from discrimination and harassment based on certain categories:

- age
- civil status
- conviction for an offence
- creed, religion, and expression of faith
- language or dialect
- race, colour, or ethnicity
- sexual orientation or gender identity

These offences are related to one's employment, such as violations that occur in the workplace itself, or when the violation is related to one's performance of their duties. There are also other offences that are found in labour laws that are related to workplace human rights violations

Moose Hide Campaign Addresses Violence Against Women And Children

Hôtel-Dieu Grace Healthcare, along with community partners Métis Nation of Ontario, Ska:na Family Learning Centre, and Hiatus House, proudly hosted their inaugural Moose Hide Campaign event on May 16, 2024, promoting healing, awareness, and solidarity in the fight against violence towards women and children.

The Moose Hide Campaign, an Indigenous-led national grassroots movement, aims to end violence against women and children by engaging men and boys in the meaningful dialogue. The event hosted at Hôtel-Dieu Grace Healthcare saw a diverse array of local community organizations coming together in support of the campaign, including:

- Canadian Border Services Agency
- Canadian Addiction Treatment Centres (CATC)
- University of Windsor: Turtle Island – Aboriginal Education Centre
- The Hospice of Windsor and Essex County
- Windsor Regional Hospital: Indigenous Patient Navigator & Indigenous Projects Coordinator
- St. Clair College Indigenous Student Services
- Hôtel-Dieu Grace Healthcare: Safe Workplace Advocate
- Hôtel-Dieu Grace Healthcare: Addiction Assessment and Referral
- Métis Nation of Ontario
- Hiatus House
- Ska:na Family Learning Centre – Windsor

Three grocery workers hospitalized after attack

Three grocery store workers in Manitoba were hospitalized after falling victim to an assault in their workplace, according to police. The incident happened on Tuesday. The Winnipeg Police Service arrived at the Foodfare location at 900 block of Portage Avenue at around 6:40 pm in response to a robbery report.

Attending patrol officers found three male workers – aged 19, 22, and 46 – all suffering from upper-body injuries sustained from an assault. However, the suspect – a 17-year-old male – had fled on foot before the police arrived. The workers were transported to a hospital where they were treated, according to the police.

Through their investigation, the police found that the suspect had attended the store earlier that day and was escorted out of the premises following an unrelated incident. Police later located and arrested the victim at the rear of the 1000 block of Selkirk Avenue. They recovered the brass knuckles in a nearby yard – where the suspect had discarded it – and will use it as evidence, according to the Winnipeg Police Service.

The suspect is facing three counts of assault with a weapon and one count of possession of a prohibited or restricted weapon knowing its possession is unauthorized.

There's a new workers' rights treaty in Canada. What does it mean for you?

Although a global workers' treaty has been in force in Canada since January, an employment lawyer believes it won't do anything more to protect employees from violence and harassment.

The International Labour Organization says Convention 190, or C190, is the first of its kind aimed at ending violence and harassment. Canada ratified it on Jan. 30, 2023, and it came into force a year later.

"This is just more virtue signalling by the Trudeau government to give the impression they're doing something and preventing violence in the workplace, when there's nothing whatsoever in this that was not already the law in Canada and in every province," Howard Levitt, senior partner of Levitt LLP in Toronto, said in a video interview with CTVNews.ca on Wednesday.

Levitt said laws across Canada already prohibit people from committing violence and harassing others in the workplace, including online. If an employee is harassed in a way that no reasonable employee should have to put up with, Levitt said, they can file a legal claim against their employer for constructive dismissal, negligence or intentional infliction of mental stress, depending on what happened.

They may also have a claim involving human rights legislation if it is based on a covered ground such as gender, he added. Key examples of workplace behaviour that people could sue for include sexual harassment, unwanted touching, shouting and having an abusive, toxic boss.

Beauty queen moms say they were allegedly ‘tormented and threatened’ daily with mental abuse

The mother of the former Miss Teen USA 2023 has alleged her daughter and former Miss USA 2023 were “tormented and threatened” daily by management at the organization.

Barbara Sravistava said the two young women allegedly suffered “mental abuse” at the hands of Miss USA president Laylah Rose, in their brief time as title-holders after being crowned last year.

Pageant queens Noelia Voigt and UmaSofia Srivastava, Miss USA and Miss Teen USA respectively, both announced they would be stepping down from their positions earlier this month amid accusations of unprofessional behavior, workplace bullying and harassment.

Speaking to The Independent, Ms Voigt said the families had been through “many bad situations with the organization” which had stemmed from a lack of communication.

“From the very beginning [when] the girls won the titles the communication was really bad,” she claimed. “They didn’t know what they were doing wrong, why they were getting such bad texts and emails. You know, like, not normal. Normally you talk to a person.

Labor laws largely exclude nannies. Some are banding together to protect themselves

Map all doors in the home and figure out how to escape. Make a list of items in each room that you can use to defend yourself. Shelves, dishes, night stands, kitchen knives -- all can be weapons if you are attacked. These are among the strategies Judith Bautista Hidalgo teaches her students -- 25 Hispanic women working as nannies, housekeepers and home care workers in the New York City area -- to defend themselves on the job. She hopes her April training on preventing sexual harassment will be a lifeline for many in the classroom who have experienced assault or abuse at work.

Domestic workers like those in Hidalgo's class are excluded from many federal workplace protections in the United States, and the private, home-based nature of the work means abuse tends to happen behind closed doors. Although many domestic workers are covered under federal minimum wage and overtime laws, part-time and live-in workers are still exempt from some provisions. And domestic workers are generally excluded from Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 — a federal law banning workplace discrimination, including sexual harassment — since it only applies to employers with 15 or more employees.

Neither are domestic workers covered by the Occupational Safety and Health Act, which aims to ensure safe and healthy conditions for workers.

Tribunal finds Champlain College responsible for psychological harassment of Quebec City teacher

A Quebec teachers' union says it fears for the health and safety of staff at Champlain Regional College after an arbitration tribunal found a presence of psychological harassment and management issues at its Quebec City campus.

In a 35-page ruling submitted to CBC News, Quebec's arbitration tribunal ruled that Champlain Regional College failed to prevent the psychological harassment of a long-time teacher at its St. Lawrence campus.

The plaintiff in the case, Lisa Birch, has claims dating back to 2022. She was investigated after allegations surfaced in the college accusing her of denigrating campus director Edward Berryman.

The tribunal found no direct evidence of Birch being involved in a smear campaign against Berryman — instead concluding that an investigation into Birch was done "without any precise allegation" and contributed to psychological harm.

"The evidence doesn't allow us to understand why and how, in the absence of a formal complaint, Mrs. Birch found herself being accused of harassment," read the ruling.

Parole Board fails to address member's 'unwanted advances' towards women: report

The Parole Board of Canada (PBC) failed to protect its workers from “unwanted advances” from a former board member over a span of eight years, according to the Public Sector Integrity Commissioner of Canada.

This is because the PBC failed to adequately respond to reports of Michael Sanford's misconduct and effectively document incidents of harassment, said Harriet Solloway, integrity commissioner.

According to Solloway, Sanford “committed a serious breach of a code of conduct when he repeatedly behaved inappropriately towards female employees.”

And the actions taken by PBC management “failed to convey the seriousness of the matter, and actually fostered an environment that enabled the Board Member's misconduct.”

Nearly half (47%) of women and 31% of men report experiencing inappropriate sexualized behaviours in a workplace setting, according to a previous Statistics Canada study.

‘Women are hoes’: Worker fired over ‘sexist’ comment cries unfair termination

In a recent grievance arbitration case in Alberta, a worker was terminated for making inappropriate comments of a sexist nature in the workplace.

The case highlights the importance of respectful workplace policies and the challenges employers face in balancing the need to enforce these policies while also adhering to the principles of progressive discipline. The arbitration decision also discusses the details of the incident, the employer's response, and the arguments presented by both parties.

The events took place against the backdrop of the construction industry, which has historically been male-dominated and has faced challenges in creating inclusive and respectful work environments for women.

The employer had taken steps to address these issues by implementing a comprehensive Workplace Harassment Policy and providing training to employees on respectful workplace practices.

Harassment of MPs spiked almost 800% in 5 years, says House sergeant-at-arms

The harassment members of Parliament experience from the public has jumped almost 800 per cent in the last five years, according to the person in charge of security in the House of Commons.

Patrick McDonnell, sergeant-at-arms and corporate security officer, told a committee of MPs studying the House harassment policy Tuesday that the spike was driven by incidents that are "mostly online but also in person and at events."

The number of files McDonnell's office has opened on threats to MPs has also increased significantly, he said. "In 2019 there was approximately eight files we opened up on threat behaviours, either direct or in direct threat towards an MP, and in 2023 there was 530 files opened," McDonnell said.

A spokesperson for the Speaker's office told CBC News in an email that when a file is opened it means the Sergeant-at-Arms is working with "law enforcement partners to determine the credibility and veracity" of the threat. For security reasons, details about the alleged threats are not shared publicly.

McDonnell said his office has started "bulk filing" harassing complaints received by MPs because "there's just so much of it."

The House of Commons procedure and House affairs committee is hearing witnesses for its review of the House of Commons workplace harassment and violence prevention policy.

Local teachers have had enough of daily violence at schools, unions say

Local teachers' unions are raising the alarm on violence in classrooms. Together in Education (TIE), a group representing education workers from the Catholic and public school boards of Waterloo region, held a press conference Thursday to share survey results that found a majority of local teachers are experiencing workplace violence.

Amy Brillinger Tuka has been a teacher in Waterloo region for 20 years and she's currently a kindergarten teacher. She says she's experienced violence in classrooms at all grade levels. "Every single class from kindergarten to Grade 12 has violence, threats, actions, near misses happening daily. Daily. And that's not OK. It's not OK for the employees and it's definitely not OK for the other students who are witnessing that and making it become normal for them."

Patrick Etmanski, president of the Waterloo chapter of the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association, says many teachers are enduring violence in their workplaces on a daily basis.

"We're talking about physical violence. We're talking about kids throwing things. We're talking about punching, hitting, kicking, biting, spitting, swearing. We're talking about the whole gamut of violence from kids who are as young as four all the way up to our kids who are in Grade 12."

CBSA Directed To Conduct New Investigation After "Fundamentally Flawed" Inquiry

The Federal Court has instructed the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) to conduct a new workplace investigation, appointing a different investigator this time. This decision follows extensive allegations from a veteran border guard about enduring workplace harassment and violence.

C.M., who joined the CBSA in 1994, reported experiencing various forms of mistreatment, including hate crimes, discrimination, physical assaults, and derogatory behaviour from supervisors, over a 25-year period from 1995 to 2020.

In January 2023, a CBSA report concluded that none of these incidents constituted workplace harassment or violence under their guidelines. As a result, no preventive measures were taken, and the case was closed.

Dissatisfied with the investigation's findings and process, C.M. filed a judicial review, arguing that the investigation was procedurally unfair. The Federal Court sided with C.M., describing the process and final report as "fundamentally flawed" and ordering a new investigation by a different investigator.

Liberal MPs tell committee some Conservatives are driving the harassment they face

Two Liberal MPs provided a parliamentary committee with multiple examples Thursday of threatening abuse they say they have received from members of the public — some of which they claim was in reaction to public messaging by Conservative MPs.

Pam Damoff and Iqra Khalid were testifying before the House of Commons procedures and House affairs committee as part of its review of the House of Commons workplace harassment and violence prevention policy.

The policy holds members of Parliament accountable for how they treat their employees. It does not govern conduct between MPs.

Damoff and Khalid said that while some of the abuse they get is not driven by MPs' messaging, they want the House harassment policy expanded to crack down on MPs whose messages outside of Parliament drive some of that abuse.

The multiple examples of harassing messages they read out to the committee contained insulting and vulgar language referring to them and their family members, some of it sexually explicit. Other messages were violent and threatened the MPs' lives.

Employer's handling of workplace harassment complaint serves as 'template': tribunal

A recent dismissal of a discrimination complaint by the B.C. Human Rights Tribunal (HRT) serves as a “template” for employers and investigators for how to handle employee harassment complaints properly.

On May 21, 2019, the employee, who had worked for Parq Vancouver for over 10 years and oversaw a team, told her supervisor informally that one of her staff was singling her out and criticizing her work errors publicly, in retaliation for past discipline. At the supervisor's request, she followed that discussion with an email summarizing her complaint.

The situation escalated when on July 14, the employee – described as a “valued and long service employee” by Parq – made a formal complaint to the HR Director that the colleague had mocked her speech impediment in front of other employees.

The complainant is a “survivor of a serious health condition and related surgery,” the tribunal decision states, “which left her with what she describes as a speech impediment.”

Captain failed to follow protocol after non-binary firefighter allegedly assaulted, Crown suggests

The Ottawa Fire Services (OFS) captain in charge of the station where a firefighter allegedly choked and assaulted a non-binary crewmate failed to follow workplace policies following the incident, suggested the Crown attorney.

Friday marked three full weeks of the criminal trial of an OFS captain and a former firefighter at the Ottawa Courthouse, concluding the examination of witnesses.

The court has heard that on Sept. 14, 2022, former firefighter Eric Einagel and rookie Ash Weaver got into a physical confrontation in the kitchen at Station 47 on Greenbank Road in Barrhaven, over who would wash the dinner dishes that evening.

According to earlier testimonies, "horseplay" was common among junior firefighters who would compete to perform menial tasks as a way of demonstrating their initiative.

Weaver previously testified that during the altercation at the sink, Einagel choked them with both hands — a claim Einagel has denied.

Einagel is charged with assault causing bodily harm and assault by choking.

Capt. Greg Wright, 58, is charged with threatening to discipline rookie firefighter Weaver to prevent them from reporting the incident.

Sarnia council returns to virtual meetings, Mayor cites workplace health and safety concerns

Sarnia council has transitioned back to what became a normal way of conducting meetings throughout the pandemic.

Mayor Mike Bradley said the regular meeting at 1 p.m. on Monday will be held electronically.

"The meeting is on Zoom because of concerns raised by members of council, staff, and the public about health and safety in the workplace due to recent events," Bradley said. "I can not say much more than that, but it is a preventative measure."

A special council meeting on May 23, and strategic planning session on May 13, were also conducted online.

"As a chair, I would prefer not to run a Zoom meeting. It is more challenging. However, I understand the concerns that have been raised and it's the responsibility of the city to ensure that everyone in the workplace is safe," he said.

Mayor Bradley was unable to confirm how long meetings will be conducted electronically.