



WomanACT is calling for Party Leaders and candidates to prioritize issues of gender equity and women's safety in the Ontario 2018 election.

WomanACT Platform for the 2018 Ontario Election

At WomanACT our vision is for women to live free from violence. Across Ontario, women and girls are disproportionately impacted by violence, especially, if they are Indigenous, racialized, non-binary, queer, trans, new Canadians or living with disabilities.

Approximately every 6 days, a woman in Canada is killed by her intimate partner. This year in Ontario there have already been 17 victims who have died in alleged domestic violence cases. Violence against women is not only a human rights violation but has devastating physical, emotional, social and economic consequences to women. It can also have a significant impact on children, families, communities and the Canadian society as a whole. One study by Justice Canada found that spousal violence alone costs Canada \$7.4 billion annually.

Addressing violence against women requires comprehensive legislation that prevents violence against women, responds to the diverse experiences and needs of survivors and promotes gender equality. In addition to legislation, we need an Ontario wide strategy that is paired with investments, accountability mechanisms and strengthened partnerships with the Violence Against Women sector.

We are calling on the next Ontario government to:

- 1. ENGAGE** Critically engage the Violence Against Women sector and Women with Lived Experience of violence in all aspects of policy development and system reform.
- 2. REFORM** Ensure that legislation prevents violence against women, supports survivors and their families and protects all women, without discrimination.
- 3. RESOURCE** Ensure that all systems and services that support women survivors and their families are adequately resourced.

1. ENGAGE

A key component of a rights-based approach is that people with lived experience are engaged in the decision-making processes that affect their everyday lives. We need to move beyond the traditional consultation model and towards a more collaborative and transparent partnership where Women with Lived Experience of violence are engaged in the shaping of policies, strategies and services. The Violence Against Women sector also plays an important role in bringing forward the concerns of some of the most marginalized communities and for advocating for change that addresses these concerns.

WomanACT brings the Violence Against Women sector and other key stakeholders together to collaborate, advocate and drive change. We want Ontario's next government to build a meaningful and ongoing relationship with Women with Lived Experience and the Violence Against Women sector.

2. REFORM

Violence against women must be addressed consistently across all public policies and requires a coordinated response across ministries. Violence against women is not a stand-alone issue and therefore requires more than a stand-alone solution. Related legislation, including housing, labour, social assistance, health, to name a few also need to protect women from violence. Province wide strategies that address violence against women are also essential for establishing a broad framework and for assigning accountability and resources.

WomanACT works with the community to identify and advocate for policies that conflict with one another and/or have a negative impact on women experiencing violence. We want Ontario's next government to ensure all policies work together to protect women from violence.

3. RESOURCE

The Violence Against Women sector provides important community and health services and advocates for the rights of survivors and marginalized communities. The sector is historically underfunded and requires core funding to deliver quality and responsive services and to bring about lasting change in communities across Ontario.

We want the Ontario's next government to invest in sustainable core funding for the Violence Against Women sector. We want to see long-term investments targeted directly at preventing and responding to violence against women in addition to broad strategic investments into gender equality.

Questions for Candidates:

- What are your party's strategies for preventing violence against women and responding to the needs of survivors?
- How will your party engage Women with Lived Experience of violence and the Violence against Women sector in policy development and key decision making?
- What is your party's plan to ensure organizations in the Violence against Women sector are adequately funded?