



Piliriqatigiitta

Creating a Healthy Workplace, Together

Prevention of Harassment and Sexual Harassment in the Workplace and Gender Based Violence in Nunavut

Overview 2019-2024



This issue of *Piliriqatigiitta* - let's work together - serves as a celebration of success as we wrap up the Prevention of harassment, including [Sexual Harassment, in the Workplace and Gender Based Violence in Nunavut](#) Project. The Project was a four-year commitment to raise awareness, educate and provide free legal advice to Nunavummiut to address workplace harassment and gender based violence.

Many thanks to the Law Society of Nunavut (LSN) members and students, community-based organizations, and all community members who supported us in our ongoing access to justice efforts and awareness raising to prevent sexual harassment, harassment and gender based violence. It is because of their dedication and willingness to share their expertise that this Project has been impactful. Furthermore, a special recognition to the law firms who have made significant pro bono contributions, allowing the Access to Justice Program to keep moving forward.

While this newsletter letter represents a final overview of the Project, the LSN is committed to fostering ongoing collaborations with stakeholders and community-based organizations. Together we can support Nunavummiut in gaining a better understanding of their rights, and empower all of us to take steps to prevent and address harassment, including sexual harassment, and gender based violence both in the workplace and in our daily lives.

Nalini Vaddapalli, CEO – Deputy Secretary
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THE PROJECT ENGAGED OVER **650** PEOPLE IN PERSON
OVER THE FIVE-YEAR PERIOD THROUGH **10** COMMUNITY VISITS AND WORKSHOPS

Access to Justice for Nunavummiut

The LSN is committed to building connections and using a collaborative approach to better respond to the legal needs and interests of all Nunavummiut. Through its Access to Justice Program (A2J), launched in 2015, the LSN strives to provide Nunavummiut with relevant resources and information that will help increase their understanding of their rights and get the legal help and access to other types of support they deserve through community-informed public awareness campaigns and its growing network of advocacy and front line organizations.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN THE WORKPLACE AND GENDER BASED VIOLENCE IN NUNAVUT PROJECT:

During the first year of the Project, consultations occurred with stakeholders consisting of 22 various non-legal and community-based organizations. Key themes related to workplace harassment, barriers to employment, discrimination in the workplace, sexual harassment and gender based violence were identified. These insights informed the development of Public Legal Education Information (PLEI) resources and tools as well as community workshops.

Given the significant geographic challenges to providing legal information and legal services in the territory, a key deliverable from the *Sexual Harassment in the Workplace and Gender Based Violence in Nunavut* Project was to find innovative ways to provide legal information and access to legal advice, relevant to each community. This was addressed by in-person community visits, allowing us to meet with community members face to face, and hear from them directly. Using a trauma-informed approach, we created a number of (PLEI) resources and delivered various workshops about workplace harassment and other employment-related issues. Following the workshops, community members were invited to meet privately with a lawyer to receive free summary legal advice. Based on community feedback during our visits, we were able to better respond to the needs and realities of Nunavummiut by broadening the scope of the project objectives to include barriers to employment and discrimination in the workplace.

PUBLIC LEGAL EDUCATION RESOURCES DEVELOPED DURING THE PROJECT:

- [Addressing Harassment, Discrimination, and Violence in the Workplace – A Quick Guide for Employers in Nunavut](#), specifically created for employers;
- [Break the Silence](#) Facebook Page;
- [Comic Strip Poster](#) on the Prevention of Harassment in the Workplace;
- Podcast Series Talking About Justice: Creating a Healthy Workplace with Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Perspectives:
 - [Episode 3](#) talks about how to create a safe, healthy, and respectful workplace in Nunavut, featuring content from dessa O'Dell, Borden Ladner Gervais and Joe Karetak & Shirley Tagalik, Aqqiumavvik Society
- [Prevention of Harassment in the Workplace – What it is and what to do about it](#), a resource helping identify harassment in the workplace and what one can do if being harassed;
- [Prevention of Harassment and Violence in the Workplace – Legal Resources Manuals](#)
 - [Nunavut-specific legislation](#)
 - [Federal-specific legislation](#);
- [Prevention of Harassment in the Workplace Informational Video](#);
- [Taking action against sexual harassment in the workplace on International Women's Day](#) opinion editorial;
- [Training to Law Society Members on the applicable legislation](#) and how to [adopt a trauma-informed approach](#) based on Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit principles when meeting with members of the community; and
- [Workplace Harassment: Legal & Wellness Resources](#), a list of organizations who can provide assistance.





“For me personally, it is important to do this type of work. It’s what I love to do. The sad reality is that there are communities throughout the North truly without access to justice and this type of expertise. If we are able to connect people to the resources and help keep people feeling safe in the workplace, to help employers feel they are equipped to protect their employees, then we have done our job,” states O’Dell. “It’s about a meaningful and impactful approach.”

IMPRESSIONS OF THE NORTH – A CONVERSATION WITH ODESSA O’DELL OF BORDEN LADNER GERVAIS LLP (OTTAWA)

As a labour and employment lawyer, Odessa O’Dell saw the Community Workshop Program as an opportunity to apply her legal expertise in the development of the Prevention of Harassment and Violence in the Workplace - Legal Resources Manual for lawyers (see [Nunavut](#) and [Federal](#) Manuals). She stated the following about her experience working on the resource:

“It’s important that individuals as well as organizations throughout Nunavut have access to legal information and available resources about harassment in the workplace, specifically what defines harassment and individual rights. Employers have a legal obligation to protect their employees, and in my view, they should have the tools they need to put proper procedures and policies in place[...]. It is important to keep educating and reminding individuals and organizations [...].”

In addition to collaborating on the Legal Resource Manual and Community Workshop Program workbook, O’Dell was invited in 2021 to deliver prevention of harassment in the workplace training to lawyers and to the public during community workshops. For O’Dell, it was also her first trip to Nunavut.

“In one week, I delivered three workshops, in both French and English [...]. More importantly, we were also able to offer one-on-one consultations outside of the workshop. We were able to connect with individuals to talk about their specific issues and offer them legal information and advice. We were also able to consult with local

organizations about what they are doing or should be doing to meet their legal obligations. Normally there would not be access to such legal consultations in person. It was so nice to be able to offer this to them.”

The one-on-one consultations and workshops were seen as the greatest value of the community workshops. “When you are able to offer a workshop in a community, you have an opportunity to work with practical scenarios that are real and relevant to the people in that community. It brings the Manuals to life. You can dig into the issue and look at what is harassment or not; what is discrimination or not,” states O’Dell. “It’s also meaningful to participants to talk through examples that resonate with them and the nature of their workplace within the northern context.”

For O’Dell, this project was an opportunity to do more. “I am proud to be part of an initiative that offers Nunavummiut access to legal information and expertise, [...]. I see it as my professional obligation to contribute in a meaningful way and to do what I can for communities, especially remote communities where there are a lack of resources.

“For me personally, it is important to do this type of work. It’s what I love to do. If we are able to connect people to the resources and help keep people feeling safe in the workplace, to help employers feel they are equipped to protect their employees, then we have done our job [...]. It’s about a meaningful and impactful approach.”

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT – MEETING THE NEEDS AND REALITIES OF NUNAVUMMIUT

The [Community Workshop Program](#) was developed to provide legal information related to harassment in the workplace tailored to address the needs of individual organizations. Delivered at the place of work, workshop participants were encouraged to engage with the lawyer and ask questions related to their specific work environment. Participants left these workshops with a better understanding of what defines a workplace, what would be considered harassment, violence or discrimination, and how they can help contribute to healthy workplaces.

Community Legal Clinics were also held in each of the communities visited in collaboration with the Nunavut Legal Services Board and other lawyer Members of the LSN. We recognize the unique opportunity the LSN has been given to provide additional legal information and resources to meet the various needs of community members: Housing, Human Rights and Wills and Estates are examples of topics that were included in the Clinics.

DISCRIMINATION IN THE WORKPLACE – BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT

The broad goal was to help employers implement more comprehensive policies with a focus on an employer’s duty to reasonably accommodate employees. Throughout the duration of the Project, management from local businesses and community organizations were invited to attend workshops where they were provided with information on barriers to employment and their duty to accommodate.

Further, opportunities were offered to meet one on one with designated lawyers to develop or update policies and share relevant information and templates included in the [Quick Guide for Employers in Nunavut](#).

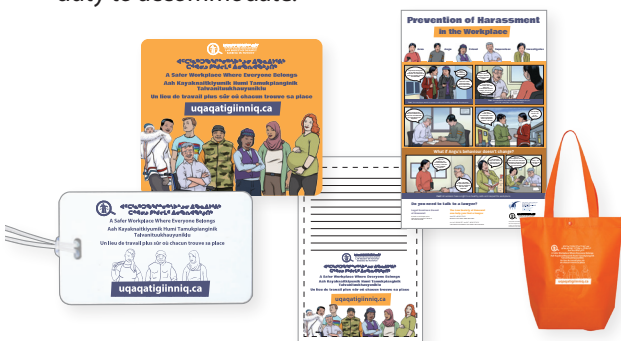
This initiative also focused on raising awareness of an individual’s right to work in an environment that is free from harassment and discrimination and developing and strengthening meaningful community connections to promote cross-sector collaboration including by disseminating the many PLEI tools and resources developed during the Project.

Free legal advice, and the option to also meet with designated lawyers at community open houses, were made available to community members who wanted to know more about their rights in the workplace and the employer’s duty to accommodate.



ENGAGING YOUTH

Building on a resource developed as part of the Access to Knowledge initiative: Your Age & the Law - What Youth Need to Know, the LSN team raised awareness on the prevention of harassment and employee rights in the workplace and delivered first-time workshops on the rights and responsibilities of youth when consuming alcohol and cannabis. You can learn more in the [2022 Piliiriqatigiitta Stakeholder Newsletter](#). Raising awareness among youth remains an important focus of the LSN’s Access to Justice Program and continues to take place in various communities.



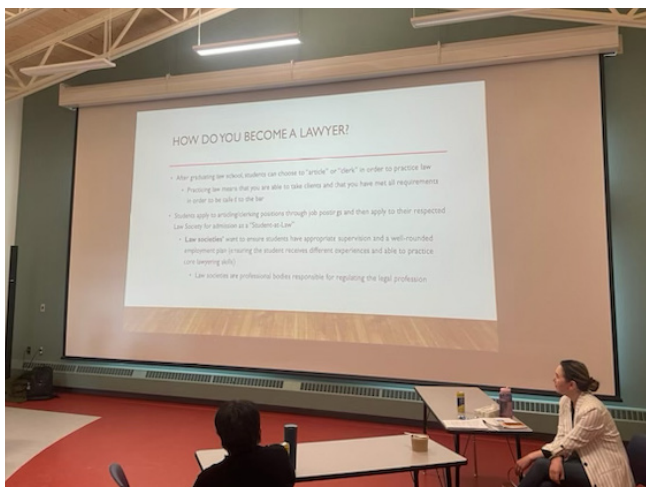
SUPPORT FOR NEWCOMERS AND IMMIGRANTS

The *Support for Newcomers and Immigrants* initiative addressed the barriers to employment and discrimination in the workplace for newcomers and immigrants. The intent of this initiative was to develop a network to ensure newcomers and immigrants have a strong support system in Iqaluit and in key regional communities to begin with.

As a first step, a poster was created with information relevant to a newcomer's needs. This poster was placed in key areas throughout Iqaluit. The poster is an important initiative demonstrating how we can come together to meet the needs of individuals who may find themselves in a vulnerable context.

CONTINUING TO PROVIDE ACCESS TO JUSTICE TO NUNAVUMMIUT

The LSN continues with its commitment to provide access to justice for Nunavummiut. Throughout the spring of 2024, the LSN visited four communities: Rankin Inlet, Baker Lake, Cambridge Bay, and Gjoa Haven. These community visits provided legal information and resources available on several topics including employment law, housing rights, wills and estates, youth rights, accessing legal aid, name change and gender markers. Looking towards the fall, the Law Society of Nunavut will continue on with its access to justice community visits, making its way to Arctic Bay and Pond Inlet.



HOW TO CONTACT US

We look forward to hearing from you if you have any comments or questions including about our PLEI resources and community visits:

Toll-Free General Line: 1-844-979-2330

Email: info@lawsociety.nu.ca



Prevention of Harassment resources are available on the Law Society of Nunavut's [website](#).