

SURVIVORS'* *AGENDA

ENGLISH VERSION



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PREAMBLE

The Survivors' Agenda is a community-driven guide toward the survivor justice that we all deserve. This is an offering of love for those who have navigated sexual abuse and other forms of sexual violence. It is also a guide for those seeking to prevent and interrupt sexual violence, including sexual harassment.

Those who have experienced sexual violence are inherently powerful and resilient. We know what it means to arise out of struggle and face a new day. Survivors are more than our stories of trauma. We are family members, friends, workers, and leaders. This agenda is about what we are calling for, and what we will no longer stay silent about.

In October 2017, the world shifted as millions of people raised their hands to say, “me too.” Survivors—many for the first time—shared their stories of violence and how they have navigated harm to become resilient. This touched the lives of millions and catalyzed an unprecedented cultural moment. Nearly three years later, we are still experiencing the ripple effects of that moment and building a movement in its wake. The Survivors' Agenda is about building power and changing the conversation, especially for those least seen and heard in our society.

We are a collective of organizations and survivors who believe that survivors should be the ones shaping the national conversation on sexual violence. We are moving forward a vision of survivor justice that precedes our work and one that will continue for decades to come. We are beginning our work in this formation in 2020, committed to laying the foundation for future movement building, policy changes, narrative shifts, and accountability efforts over the long term. We honor those who have done this work before us, especially the Black women¹, Indigenous women, and women of color who have shown us the meaning of resilience.

As a steering committee of 21 organizations and 60+ community partners, we strive to serve survivors first. We also strive to remain accountable to the diverse experiences of those who have experienced sexual harassment, assault, and other forms of gender-based violence. Survivors are not a monolith, nor do we all agree on what needs to change and how to bring that change about, but we choose to move forward in community. We are most accountable to those who are often left out of conversations on sexual violence, or who are not even given consideration as victims, much less as survivors. Black people, Indigenous people, other people of color, queer, transgender, intersex, and gender non-binary folks, young folks, workers, immigrants with or without legal protections, those who are disabled, those currently or formerly incarcerated and other historically marginalized groups globally; we believe in the value and power of these voices, and are committed to being in active conversation with them. And, as most of us are survivors ourselves, we are also dedicated to supporting one another through the daily struggle of this work.

This agenda is derived from multiple sources.

¹ Gender is expansive. We include here all those who self-identity as cis women, femme, womxn, transgender, and gender non-binary individuals.

- In June 2020 we released a [survey](#) to learn about what survivors across the country are calling for. We asked a variety of questions about solutions and policies. We also asked what makes them feel powerful, and what healing means to them. These 1,100+ responses were diverse and varied, but they started to paint a picture of what survivors need to be able to thrive.
- We also brought together a group of over 40+ individuals from our steering committee and community partner organizations to meet weekly from July-September, to bring to the table decades of expertise directly from those building the movement to end sexual violence. These individuals work as community organizers, legal and legislative advocates, counselors, researchers, and thought leaders. Each week we delved into conversations about our values, our framework for change, and interrogated the complexity of survivorhood.
- We held national town halls, kitchen table conversations, and workshops to focus on specific communities and issues relevant to our audience. We heard from Black femmes. We heard from Latinx organizers. We heard from adult survivors of childhood sexual violence and many more. And we are not done listening.

Above all else, we know that this agenda is a work in progress and a snapshot of what is needed to bring about transformation. The policies listed in this agenda are building blocks toward this transformation, but do not necessarily capture the entirety of the change we need. Nor has every organization that has engaged in the creation of the Agenda taken positions on the full spectrum of policies set out here, but we are united in believing that a comprehensive survivor-centered vision is necessary to achieve the changes we seek. The team pulling together incredibly varied—and sometimes competing—demands and experiences created a living and breathing platform that is far greater than the sum of our individual parts. What did not feel possible a few short months ago may soon feel within reach. Still, working on behalf of survivors to envision a world free from sexual violence means that our perspective changes, grows, and evolves. This is a platform that will be shifted and reimagined continuously.

Below you will see a list of our values in our current formation as a collective. At every point in this process we have strived for those values to inform our conversations and our work. We haven't always gotten it right and, surely, we have much to learn.

How to use this agenda: This agenda is meant to be talked about and adapted for your needs. This agenda is meant to drive and inform policy change. With that in mind, we hope you will use it as a tool for organizing specifically in your city and state. We want decision makers and elected officials to see this agenda and know that it was created by the thousands of survivors who are demanding change and who will never be silenced.

We have immense gratitude for those who have helped to create this living, breathing document. It belongs to all of us.

-The Survivors' Agenda Team

VALUES FRAMEWORK

The Survivors' Agenda Initiative operates in accordance with the following values:

1. Our work is survivor-centered and survivor-led, focused on strategies and tactics that support those harmed by sexual violence to survive, heal, and take action in service of creating systemic change that interrupts, prevents, and ends sexual violence.
2. We recognize that sexual violence is experienced by those of all gender identities, including cis- and trans- women, men, and children, and gender non-conforming and non-binary folks.
3. We center the voices and experiences of those most marginalized and least visible. We look at the ways that multiple hierarchies of power and privilege shape our vulnerability to and experiences of violence, including the narratives and legacies of enslavement and colonization. We believe that the people closest to the pain of these systems and histories should be at the center of and driving survivor-centered solutions. This includes Black, Indigenous and other people of color. It also includes caste-oppressed, queer, transgender, intersex, and gender non-binary folks, as well as young people, workers, immigrants with or without legal protections, those who are disabled, those currently or formerly incarcerated, and other historically marginalized groups globally. We recognize that our solutions must be visionary in how we understand radical transformation.
4. We believe that change must occur at multiple levels. Institutional, interpersonal, policy, and cultural transformation are all needed. We are pursuing goals and strategies that represent the best and highest use of our collective engagement.
5. We do not believe that sexual violence exists within a silo. We believe that work on behalf of survivors is work that must reflect the inherent connections across the continuum of all forms of violence and oppression, which includes but is not limited to: domestic violence, harassment, coercion, and law-enforcement brutality. When we use the term 'sexual violence,' we see it as part of this complex spectrum. We also recognize that it takes places in ways that intersect with race, color, national origin, disability, immigration status and other identities that make some complaints of sexual violence even less likely to be taken seriously or believed.
6. We seek to create a space that welcomes and holds the experiences of people at any point along their journey of being a survivor, as well as those who may not necessarily self-identify as such, but who, by nature of their personal experiences, deeply associate with the impacts of survivorhood.
7. We practice language justice by ensuring multilingual access within our community spaces. We value and uplift our communities that do not use English as their primary language as storytellers, policy experts, and representatives of our work.
8. We practice disability justice by ensuring accessibility for people with disabilities in our virtual and event spaces through, for example, the inclusion of sign language and captioning for our events, as well as ensuring that we lift up the unique experience and needs of survivors with disabilities.

**COMMUNITY
SAFETY AND
ALTERNATIVES
TO THE CRIMINAL
LEGAL SYSTEM**

INTRODUCTION:

There are currently limited strategies that a survivor has available to them when navigating harm, because too many of our current strategies that purport to protect the safety of survivors are rooted in the criminal legal system. This means that: police serve as responders in situations they are often not trained to handle and, in turn, exacerbate the trauma of the survivor; the burden of legal proof falls on the survivor in situations where there are often only two witnesses—the perpetrator and the survivor; and our methods of resolving violence lead to incarceration over survivor-centered, community-driven accountability or healing processes. Moreover, 1 in 4 women (24%) reported they had been arrested or threatened with arrest during a partner abuse incident or while reporting a sexual assault incident to the police. Additionally, sexual misconduct claims accounted for the [second-highest category](#) of complaints against law enforcement officers, after use of excessive force, meaning the very systems tasked with providing safety often perpetuate harm and fail survivors.

The ability to access support is even more challenging if you are a survivor of color, low to no income, queer, transgender or gender nonconforming, an immigrant, or are a part of another marginalized community. And, not only do we have to look out for our own safety, but oftentimes we are also navigating complicated familial and community situations, while also holding the trauma of others. Most of the existing strategies fail at helping survivors through the complex journey of both the abuse and the healing journey ahead.

Our solutions and strategies to address harm must center survivors at every point—from disclosure, to recovery, to restoration. Survivors of sexual violence have the right to feel safe, secure, and protected in their homes and communities. Survivors are and have always been resilient in the face of their violence and abuse. We deserve trauma-informed services with skilled workers trained in the specific emotional and physical needs of survivors, and courageous communities to take up the mantle of safety, accountability, and justice. Survivors need solutions that protect them from immediate harm, as well as solutions to prevent the root causes of violence.

WE ARE CALLING FOR:

1. A reimagining of how communities address safety that includes creative prevention strategies and intervention strategies that center the voices and needs of survivors first.
2. Ending the criminalization of survivors and people who defend themselves against harm doers and abusive partners.
3. Development and investment in expanding culturally-rooted, community-based programs that allow community members to address the issue of sexual violence without police involvement or state intervention, including mental health services, family and trauma-informed counseling, restorative justice strategies, the child welfare and foster care systems, and investments in transformative justice and community accountability processes made available to all survivors. (Examples of Transformative Justice Community Based Collectives: [Philly Stands Up](#), [Safe Neighborhood Campaign](#) and [Bay Area Transformative Justice Collective](#))

4. Ensure that immigrant survivors and survivors fleeing gender-based violence from their countries of origin have access to safety and services and are able to access critical immigration remedies in a timely manner (such as the Violence Against Women Act self-petition, U visa, T visa, asylum or refugee protections) that enable them to move toward healing and well-being without fear of detention or deportation. Enact policies that remove requirements of engaging with the criminal legal system in order to obtain a U visa and eliminate policies that promote ICE entanglement with local law enforcement, which undermines victim safety.
5. [Decrease barriers](#) to victim compensation across the nation and increase deposits into the Crime Victims Fund so that the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) can continue to be available to provide lifesaving and healing services.
6. Greater accountability for convicted offenders (including law enforcement), that centers the need of survivors.
7. Provide funding to methods of addressing violence against survivors that are outside of the criminal legal system and that are survivor-centered and hold harm doers responsible for the harm caused. Any participation in the criminal justice system should be at the discretion of the survivor, not the prosecutor or law enforcement. (Restorative Justice Example: [Restorative Justice Project in Contra Costa County](#))
8. Investments in community crisis teams who are skilled in de-escalation strategies and techniques and are equipped to respond to sexual violence and intimate partner violence, including [credible messengers](#) and culturally-relevant and trauma-informed mental health counselors and social workers.
9. An investment in the prevention of sexual violence by addressing root causes, such as poverty, the lack of employment opportunities, access to transportation, comprehensive harm reduction services for drug and alcohol abuse, and addressing societal norms that support the abuse of power, rape culture, white supremacy, and patriarchal violence. Meaningful investments in prevention are the [most effective strategies](#), especially sexual health education at every grade level (K-12) that teaches people about the importance of boundaries, bodily autonomy for young people, social-emotional skills, and the importance of building cultures of [consent](#). Dismantling abstinence-only education, which often overlooks intimate-partner violence, and teaching about healthy relationships. [See additional resources](#).

POLICIES THAT MOVE US FORWARD:

- Pass the [Sexual Assault Survivors Bill of Rights](#) in the remaining 24 states in order to provide equal rights protections under the law for all survivors of sexual assault, whether law enforcement is involved or not.
- [Decriminalization](#) of the commercial exchange of sexual services that is adult, voluntary, and consensual, to protect sex workers from abuse and exploitation and lessen their vulnerability to violence by being forced to work in secret, unsafe locations. This does not refer to any actions

involving children, sex trafficking, or trafficking of humans for any reason, which are undeniably human rights violations.

- Increase funding for the [Rape Prevention & Education Program](#) to \$200 million.
- Require that part of the VAWA funding provided to the states to fund law enforcement through the STOP grants, as well as national training for law enforcement, be dedicated to preventing and improving the response and accountability of officers engaged in sexual misconduct and sexual violence.
- National requirement and funding for [comprehensive sexuality education](#) to be taught to K-12 students with meaningful input from the community tasked with implementation.
- Provide targeted resources through the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) and the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funding, as well as new resources through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, to support the development of alternative justice responses and restorative justice initiatives. This should also include funding for national training and technical assistance to support the development of these programs.
- Provide funding for community crisis teams that are equipped to respond to sexual and intimate partner violence in lieu of law enforcement, so survivors have this option.

Our work is survivor-centered and survivor-led, focused on strategies and tactics that support those harmed by sexual violence to survive, heal, and take action in service of creating systemic change that interrupts, prevents, and ends sexual violence.

**CULTURE &
NARRATIVE
SHIFT**

INTRODUCTION:

The current systems and institutions that shape our culture (such as the media, legal systems, corporations, and government) too often reinforce false narratives, such as a limited understanding of who is considered a victim/survivor deserving of our help and compassion (the “perfect victim”), and engaging in “victim-blaming”—presuming that the survivor, rather than the perpetrator, is at fault based on discrimination and stereotypes about the survivor’s identity and behavior.

These stereotypes and discriminatory practices based on the race, gender, caste, class, sexual orientation, and other identities, belief systems, and behaviors of the survivor promote a culture of sexual violence. The use of misogynistic, homophobic, and transphobic language; the objectification of certain bodies; misogynoir where race and gender bias intersect; and the glamorization of sexual violence, thereby create a society that disregards the rights and respect of survivors and perpetuate negative cultural norms that rationalize or excuse sexual violence.

These systems do not serve survivors of sexual violence in a way that promotes healing and accountability, and they also fail to acknowledge or affirm the identities and true power and resilience of survivors. In particular, this disproportionately impacts Black, Indigenous, and other people of color who face inherent discrimination and additional barriers to accessing safety, services, and justice.

These same systems and institutions, and the wider society at large, can be a part of the solution. They can help turn the tide on sexual violence and create new narratives that support survivors and disrupt the culture of violence. We are calling for a transformation of culture that centers the experiences of all survivors; a culture that doesn’t tolerate or make excuses for the abuse, violence, and harassment by those in power; a culture that encourages being active in preventing and disrupting violence when aware of harmful situations (rather than being a bystander); and a culture that is supportive of survivors of sexual violence, going beyond just “believing” survivors to actively promoting and developing a culture of prevention, accountability, and healing.

WE ARE CALLING FOR:

1. Promotion of survivor leadership in interpersonal, institutional, political, and cultural spaces, centering survivors and supporting them to embrace their strength and voice to bring about change.
2. The creation of language and guidelines for how the media and other institutions talk about survivors in ways that center strength and not victimization, while holding perpetrators accountable.
3. The elevation of survivors’ stories that are inclusive of survivors from diverse backgrounds, varied in their experiences and journeys as survivors, and in which survivors are portrayed as whole people with identities beyond that of their experience with sexual harassment or violence.

4. Resources for community-based organizations led by and for survivors from marginalized communities to develop holistic prevention and response initiatives focused on survivor healing and well-being, and to support alternative approaches to accountability.
5. A change in the social norms that currently reinforce patriarchal violence and a white, male-dominated culture, including the continued allowance of hateful and violent language and behavior directed at survivors who come forward or tell their stories.
6. Following the lead of survivors who are often left out of conversations about sexual harassment and violence, including immigrant survivors, survivors who are disabled, survivors who are formerly incarcerated, and survivors who engage in consensual sex work.

POLICIES THAT MOVE US FORWARD:

- [Consent education](#) beginning in pre-school and elementary school to promote healthy relationships based on communication and the notion that we should respect one another's boundaries and build healthy relationships.
- Consent education as part of a Comprehensive Sex Education program in middle school and high school to promote an understanding of romantic and sexual relationships in the context of healthy communication and boundaries, in order to be safe and preserve dignity.
- Significantly increase investments in [prevention strategies](#) to reduce sexual assault and promote social norms changes, such as programs that support active bystander approaches and those that engage men and boys as allies in changing social norms.
- Provide new and expanded access to grants with increased funding to support local community-based programs to enhance their capacity to [develop effective prevention](#) efforts and community engagement initiatives to prevent sexual assault, particularly those focused on serving communities of color or traditionally underserved communities in a more holistic manner.
- Investment in programs that provide healing for Black girls and Black gender expansive young people and value their safety and bodily autonomy, along the lines of the [National Agenda for Black Girls](#).
- Provide increased funding for planning grants and for research and evaluation to develop a wider range of innovative evidence-based practices focused on addressing the disproportionate impact of gender-based violence and the barriers of systemic inequities and systemic racism on survivors from marginalized communities.
- Increase efforts to promote [culture change in the workplace](#) and ensure that workplaces are free from sexual harassment and sexual violence, including a primary focus on industries such as the hotel and restaurant industry, domestic workers, migrant farmworkers, janitorial workers, and others who face a disproportionate impact of sexual harassment and sexual violence in the workplace.

EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION:

Sexual harassment, assault, and abuse remain common student experiences at all levels of education, and while students of every gender, race, ability, caste, and background can and do experience sexual violence, women and girls, Black, Indigenous, and other students of color, LGBTQIA+ students, students with disabilities, immigrant students, and other students with marginalized identities are particularly harmed. For example, [Black girls](#) who experience sexual assault are more likely to be disbelieved, blamed, and punished when they report, in part because of racist and sexist stereotypes that lead authority figures to perceive Black girls as more adult, more sexual, less innocent, and less deserving of protection than their white peers.

When sexual harassment and violence occurs, institutional responses are often harmful to survivors. Schools depend on policing models and criminal legal models, which do not center survivors' needs. They also focus on protecting the institution, prioritize the needs of assailants over the needs of survivors, and too often punish survivors who report, especially when they do not conform to stereotypes of "ideal" victims. This has resulted in what is recognized as the "[sexual abuse to prison pipeline](#)" for girls. Changing the culture around sexual violence in schools also requires changing schools' approach to discipline. This includes eradicating responses centered on punishment and exclusion that harm survivors, who are often disciplined when they report or when they act out as a result of untreated trauma.

As sites of teaching and learning, schools have the power to meaningfully shift our culture by helping students recognize the harm of sexual violence and disrupt the narratives that perpetuate it. All students should be able to learn with safety and dignity, and schools have a chance to create communities where students can gain an education free from violence—a place where they can feel safe and obtain quality knowledge, skills, and the tools to thrive. Students who experience sexual violence and other forms of sexual harassment deserve responses from educational institutions that prioritize addressing and remedying the harms they have experienced.

WE ARE CALLING FOR:

1. Immediate repeal of the harmful DeVos Department of Education [Title IX regulations](#), which have weakened schools' responses to sexual assault and other forms of sexual harassment, and restoration of Title IX's robust protections for all young people in schools, including LGBTQIA+ and gender nonconforming young people.
2. Universal comprehensive, age- and developmentally appropriate, medically accurate, culturally and linguistically responsive, LGBTQIA-affirming, trauma-informed sexual health education that addresses child sexual abuse, consent, reproductive health, healthy relationships, sexual harassment, and dating violence, as well as resources and training for parents and educators to recognize and respond to signs of sexual abuse and communicate with the youth in their lives about sexual harm.
3. Survivor-centered and trauma-informed restorative approaches to justice in schools that enable a shift away from punitive approaches to school discipline.

4. Removal of police from schools and investments in counseling, mental health support, community supports, and social/emotional learning.
5. Confidential support and resources for students experiencing sexual violence and school investment in partnerships with external community-based agencies to provide this support.
6. Transformation of school culture to disrupt stereotypes and power dynamics that perpetuate rape culture (between authority figures and students, but also power differentials stemming from race, gender, class, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, among others), allowing schools to focus on prevention, bystander intervention, and creating environments where students of all identities can thrive. This includes elimination of dress codes and other practices that police students' bodies (especially the bodies of girls, gender nonconforming students, and students of color) in ways that reflect racist and sexist stereotypes; use of school climate surveys to give students the ability to confidentially share their perceptions; and school commitment to address problems that these surveys reveal.

POLICIES THAT MOVE US FORWARD:

- Pass [H.R. 5388](#), which would rescind the harmful Title IX sexual harassment regulations issued by the DeVos Department of Education.
- Ensure robust protections against discrimination against LGBTQIA+ students, including through Department of Education guidance and passage of the [Equality Act](#), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity in federally-funded programs, and the [Tyler Clementi Higher Education Anti-Harassment Act](#), which requires institutions of higher education to adopt anti-harassment policies that include sexual orientation and gender identity and that recognizes cyberbullying as a form of harassment.
- Invest in trauma-informed services that support mental health, and remove police from schools, including through passage of the [Counseling Not Criminalization in Schools Act](#).
- Provide funding to ensure that K-12 schools have Title IX coordinators who are responsive to the needs of student survivors and that K-12 schools train staff in appropriate responses to sexual harassment.
- Require climate surveys with publicly available results in K-12 and higher education, increased funding for investigations of sexual harassment, and enhance penalties for schools that violate survivors' rights, including passage of the [HALT Campus Sexual Violence Act](#).
- Support student survivors by ensuring all colleges and universities make Sexual Assault Resource Coordinators available to help students who have experienced sexual violence gain access to accommodations and navigate reporting systems, as set out in the [Campus Accountability and Safety Act \(CASA\)](#).

- Address the needs of Black girls and other girls of color who have experienced sexual harm by passing the [Ending PUSHOUT Act](#), which would provide new funding to schools to focus on trauma-informed approaches to keep students safe in school, rather than relying on suspensions, expulsions, and corporal punishment.
- Ensure all public schools implement a prevention-oriented child sexual abuse program for students, teachers/school personnel, and parents/guardians. Support comprehensive, LGBTQIA-inclusive sexual health education and eliminate federal funding for any programs that would withhold information about HIV, are not medically accurate or are proven ineffective, promote gender stereotypes, or are inconsistent with ethical imperatives of public health through passage of the [Real Education for Healthy Youth Act](#).
- Increase funding for the [Grants to Reduce Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking on Campus Program](#), administered by the Office on Violence Against Women, to provide more grants to colleges and universities to improve prevention and response efforts on campuses. Also provide resources to support the development and evaluation of restorative justice initiatives for survivors of sexual assault on college campuses who do not wish to engage with the criminal legal system or campus adjudication process.
- Mirror these federal policy reforms at the state and local level, and otherwise enhance the baseline protections for student survivors required by Title IX and other federal laws.

We believe that change must occur at multiple levels. Institutional, interpersonal, policy, and cultural transformation are all needed. We are pursuing goals and strategies that represent the best and highest use of our collective engagement.

**HEALING
JUSTICE**

INTRODUCTION:

Our society tells us that when we fall down, we should get right back up. When we're sick, we should "suck it up" and go to work anyway. And when we are harmed, we're supposed to just get over it. This mentality is at the root of a culture that doesn't create space for healing. For survivors of sexual violence, there are even more barriers. These include societal stigma around sexual violence, stigma around asking for support, lack of funding for therapy, lack of employer support and paid time off for healing, and unequal access to therapy and services from providers who understand trauma and the power dynamics involved in abuse and oppression. Additionally, the dominant narrative around who is considered a survivor or not, as well as what is considered healing, is Euro-centric and leaves out culturally-competent care.

Those who have been harmed by sexual violence should be treated with care and compassion, and given access to the support and services they need and want. Survivors should be able to dictate their own healing journey without barriers based on money or identity. Survivors should be given the space they need, with the understanding from their employers and loved ones that healing is not linear, it isn't always convenient, and often, there is nothing to "get over" but rather finding ways to carry the trauma while moving forward. Survivors should be treated with dignity and recognition of their humanity at every step.

WE ARE CALLING FOR:

1. Funding of community-rooted, culturally-responsive, and trauma-informed programs that serve survivors whose needs are often ignored by mainstream health care and sexual assault services, including Black, Indigenous, caste-oppressed and survivors of color, LGBTQIA+ survivors, and survivors with disabilities.
2. All health insurance policies to fully cover mental health services without co-pay, including a range of trauma-informed therapies, community healing services, substance abuse treatment, and harm reduction services, and culturally-competent and identity-affirming services and healers.
3. Ensure youth survivors of sexual violence have access to healing services without parental consent, and analyze the impacts and effectiveness of mandatory reporting requirements.
4. Increase access to virtual and phone-based mental health programs to expand the pool of mental service providers available to survivors in rural areas or those geographically separate from their Indigenous/cultural centers, and include efforts to ensure meaningful access for survivors with limited English proficiency and for those impacted by the digital divide with limited access to technology.
5. Incentives and requirements for anti-bias and trauma training for all mental and medical health care providers.
6. Ensure that institutions are held accountable for not keeping children and adolescents safe, and for covering up child sexual abuse, such as in organized religion and sports.

POLICIES THAT MOVE US FORWARD:

- Expand and allow federal funds to be disseminated as direct cash transfers for mental health, medical, holistic, and other healing services.
- Fund the federal Sexual Assault Services Program at \$200 million, a transformative increase from the current appropriation of \$38 million to allow a greater number of survivors to access federally-funded rape crisis centers, and expand the services provided by those programs.
- Provide targeted funding for culturally specific community-based organizations primarily focused on enhancing access to services and well-being for survivors from communities of color, immigrant communities, and other underserved communities.
- Expand Family and Medical Leave Act coverage to include paid safe days for all survivors of sexual violence, regardless of duration of employment and size of the employer.
- Require child and youth-centered, federally mandated safeguarding policies and procedures for all youth-serving organizations—including ongoing training for staff, anonymous reporting mechanisms, and safety committees that include participation of community members and youth.
- Change laws that currently protect religious organizations by limiting the legal recourse of survivors in cases of child sexual abuse and other forms of sexual violence.

**HEALTH
CARE**

INTRODUCTION:

Sexual violence is a public health issue. But when survivors of sexual violence seek health care in the immediate aftermath of a sexual assault, the health care provided is typically focused on evidence collection—a legal response rather than a health care response. Even when attention is paid to the immediate medical needs of survivors, the health care setting typically fails to attend to their long-term mental, physical, and emotional health. Moreover, for many survivors, the care they need is priced beyond their reach. Attacks on access to health care coverage and to comprehensive reproductive health care—including abortion and barriers to LGBTQIA-affirming care—also harm survivors of sexual violence, and disproportionately harm survivors of color. Further, the health care system can itself be a site of sexual harassment, including sexual violence.

No matter their sex, race, class, caste, sexual orientation, gender identity, immigration status, or whether they have a disability, all survivors of sexual violence should receive trauma-informed, culturally competent, linguistically appropriate, identity-affirming health care that addresses both their immediate trauma and the long-term physical and mental impacts of sexual violence. Financial insecurity should not be a barrier to receiving that care. This care must prioritize survivors' needs and be responsive to their own objectives, rather than automatically prioritizing the needs of the criminal legal system. For survivors who can become pregnant, this includes ensuring emergency contraception and abortion are available, affordable, and provided without stigma.

WE ARE CALLING FOR:

1. Universal, quality health insurance that ensures comprehensive coverage is available for short- and long-term health consequences of sexual violence, including reproductive health care (including contraception and abortion) and mental health care, at no cost.
2. All health insurance policies to fully cover mental health services without co-pay, including a range of trauma-informed therapies, community healing services, substance abuse treatment, and harm reduction services, culturally-competent and identity-affirming services and healers.
3. Ensuring health care providers are trained in trauma-informed care, that they routinely screen for sexual violence, that medical schools and national associations provide specialized training in health care that meets the needs of survivors of sexual assault, (including the needs of survivors of color, immigrant survivors, survivors whose preferred language is not English, and LGBTQIA+ survivors) and that those providers receiving training represent a diverse array of communities.
4. Increased availability of health care for survivors, including through federal investments in growing the number of specialized providers (including sexual assault nurse examiners) in underserved areas, increased funding for community health care centers to expand survivor-centered, trauma-informed services, and expanded mobile health care.
5. Robust enforcement of protections against sexual violence and other forms of sexual harassment by health care providers, including public education about these protections.

POLICIES THAT MOVE US FORWARD:

- Expansion of health coverage, including Medicaid and Medicare coverage, and exploration of a publicly-funded, national health insurance program that covers everyone, including full coverage of the services that survivors need to thrive.
- Expand access to abortion care through the [EACH Woman Act](#), which would abolish the Hyde Amendment and ensure abortion coverage in Medicaid and other federal health insurance programs. Eliminate state restrictions to abortion care by passing the [Women's Health Protection Act](#).
- Pass the [Access to Birth Control Act](#) to protect and access to contraception at pharmacies.
- Offer and make available a free of charge full course of HIV Post-Exposure Prophylaxis medication to all survivors including young people (without the need of a consent from a parent or a guardian) and follow-up care.
- Pass the [Dignity for Incarcerated Women Act](#) to protect and restore the dignity of survivors in federal, state and local correctional facilities.

**HOUSING &
TRANSPORTATION**

INTRODUCTION:

Our current housing and transportation systems are insufficient for the needs of survivors. Transitional and permanent housing are often unaffordable and fail to meet standards that make survivors feel safe and secure. Public transportation leaves many neighborhoods under-served or is unaffordable for many survivors. Government-funded programs receive too little funding and have eligibility criteria that are too narrow, leaving folks who are vulnerable at greater risk.

All survivors deserve access to housing and transportation that is affordable, safe, reliable, and maintains their dignity and discretion. This is especially true for Black survivors and survivors of color, low-income survivors, LGBTQIA+ survivors, undocumented survivors, and disabled survivors. Housing and transportation should be well-funded public goods, designed for those who need urgent and immediate services and shelter, and for those who have experienced violence in the past and are seeking ongoing support and healing therapies. This includes widespread access to housing that offers trauma-informed services (those trained in the specific emotional and physical needs of survivors). Housing and transportation services should be especially directed to serve survivors from marginalized communities.

WE ARE CALLING FOR:

1. Increased community investment in more safe and affordable housing for survivors, to reduce the length of time someone needs to stay in emergency and transitional shelters.
2. Programs that include childcare, transportation, and language interpretation as part of housing services (especially in rural or under-served areas).
3. Resources such as mental health support, social services, and crisis support that are free and available online or virtually accessible to survivors.
4. Housing and transportation that are accessible and free from discrimination based on immigration status, criminal record, occupation, or accommodations for accessibility.
5. Tenants' rights that are structured to protect survivors from landlord misuse or abuse, undue evictions, or evictions by landlords based on the presumed likelihood of a survivor's involvement in future violence.
6. Public transportation that is reliable, affordable, and ADA-compliant, as well as on-demand transportation services that maintain safety, discretion, and privacy at all times.

POLICIES THAT MOVE US FORWARD:

- Exploration of no strings attached direct cash transfers to help survivors support themselves and their families while building towards safety and financial security.

- Support the [Rent Relief Act](#), which creates a new, refundable tax credit for households whose housing costs exceed 30% of their income, including rent and utilities, helping families to keep up with the rising cost of rent.
- Increased appropriations for the [Family Violence Prevention and Services Act](#), the primary federal funding stream dedicated to the support of emergency shelter and services for survivors of domestic violence.
- Reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act, to strengthen legal remedies for survivors to stay safely housed or flee to permanent housing, including investment in the [Transitional Housing Program](#) to provide transitional housing, short-term housing assistance, and related support services to survivors, their children, and other dependents.
- Increased investment in the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)'s [Continuum of Care Program](#) to support those experiencing homelessness, including funding to quickly rehouse homeless individuals and families while minimizing trauma, and investing in the self-sufficiency of those experiencing homelessness.
- Increased investment in HUD's [Emergency Solutions Grants Program](#) to assist people to quickly regain stability in permanent housing after experiencing a housing crisis and/or homelessness.
- Expansion of HUD's programs to include 1) access to safe housing for survivors based on a need for psychological and emotional safety, or for recovery purposes and 2) to address sexual harassment and abuse by landlords and housing managers.

**WORKPLACE
SAFETY &
WORKERS
RIGHTS**

INTRODUCTION

Workplace sexual violence is a rampant problem for women and other people employed across industries and sectors. Women of color and immigrants, especially low-paid workers and women in male-dominated industries, are among those who are often preyed upon by bosses, coworkers, customers and other people who wield power over them. Many workers find themselves in positions where they have to endure sexual harassment or abuse to be able to make a living. Workplace policies and practices often favor those who have positional and social power, not those who are expected to put their heads down and do the work no matter what.

Some women workers are particularly vulnerable to sexual harassment, such as domestic workers, restaurant and other tipped workers, janitorial and agricultural work that is often done by women of color, immigrant, and low-paid workers. This harassment is often exacerbated by isolation, poverty, immigration status, the lack of familiarity with the law and legal processes, exclusion from labor law, limited networks for support, contracted work, language barriers, and fear of retaliation, including deportation. And, because domestic workers and agricultural workers cannot legally unionize or collectively bargain, they are unable to obtain access to protections against sexual harassment that a union can sometimes provide, if the union is committed to doing so.

Remedying this problem—in all industries—has proven to be challenging for a range of reasons, including the fact that survivors are often left out of decision-making around what would make them feel safe and secure at work, and are not invited to share their perspectives, priorities or solutions.

We must all be able to work with dignity and free from the threat of sexual violence, including sexual harassment. Survivors must lead and be at the center of the movement for change, workers must be able to build power collectively and advocate for what is best for them and their loved ones, and the solutions to workplace discrimination, including sexual harassment, must be focused on preventing the harm before it ever happens, rather than only addressing the problem after it has occurred.

WE ARE CALLING FOR:

1. Structural workplace reforms that build power at work for women, especially women of color, including paid leave, access to quality and affordable child care, fair work schedules, and fair and adequate wages. This also includes protections for domestic workers, agricultural workers, tipped workers, gig workers, youth workers, incarcerated workers, and others.
2. Increased resources for and pathways to worker organizing and collective action in every industry.
3. Policymakers and enforcement agencies to center and work directly with survivors and workers when creating public policy solutions and enforcing worker protections.
4. The removal of barriers to accessing justice for survivors of workplace harassment, including extending the statute of limitations for workplace discrimination and harassment claims to at least three years.

5. Robust anti-harassment and anti-discrimination prevention measures in every workplace, including peer-to-peer and bystander intervention training, annual climate surveys, and independent worker committees to diagnose workplace problems and drive solutions.
6. The expansion of all existing labor and employment protections to all workers, including independent contractors, temp workers, domestic workers, agricultural workers, gig workers, guest workers, and undocumented workers.
7. Increased transparency to hold employers accountable and prevent employers from sweeping harassment under the rug. Prohibit employers from forcing individuals to sign nondisclosure agreements (NDAs) or using forced arbitration to prevent workers from talking about discrimination, including harassment. Require employers to conduct annual climate assessments and report findings to the Board, to employees, and/or as part of their corporate filings, as well as to the public so that consumers and investors can make informed decisions, and publicly report harassment claims.
8. More trusted, accessible, and trauma-informed systems for reporting harassment and discrimination, including the possibility of making reports to a third party, and better protections against backlash and reprimands against workers who file complaints. Ensure that undocumented individuals reporting these acts are not threatened with or subject to detention, deportation, or other legal consequences for reporting.
9. Employers provide the full minimum wage before tips for tipped workers so that workers no longer have to put up with unacceptable and inappropriate behavior to be able to make a living. Also require employers to provide tipped workers paid sick days, paid family leave, and other benefits based on full wages to ensure workers can take care of themselves and their loved ones when necessary.

POLICIES THAT MOVE US FORWARD:

- Pass the [BE HEARD in the Workplace Act](#) to prevent employment discrimination and harassment in the workplace by ensuring that all workers are covered by anti-discrimination laws, closing loopholes that have led courts to dismiss harassment complaints, extending the time to file a complaint, expanding the remedies available in court, and more. It would also require employers to pay tipped workers the full minimum wage before tips.
- Pass the [EMPOWER Act](#), which would limit employers' ability to impose nondisclosure and non-disparagement agreements to cover up harassment, require publicly-traded companies to make new public disclosures about harassment judgments and settlements, provide a new avenue for employees to confidentially report harassment, and strengthen anti-harassment training programs.
- Pass the [Domestic Workers Bill of Rights Act](#), the first ever national bill that will provide concrete workplace protections for the entire care sector. This legislation addresses the exclusions of the past and establishes innovative solutions to long held problems within this sector.

- Reduce vulnerability to harassment by raising wages, including by passing the [Raise the Wage Act](#), which would raise the federal minimum wage from \$7.25 to \$15 dollars an hour and ensure that tipped workers, workers with disabilities, and youth workers, are entitled to the same minimum wage as everybody else, and the [Paycheck Fairness Act](#), which would protect against pay discrimination.
- Strengthen workers' power to organize and address harassment collectively by passing the [PRO Act](#),
- Reduce the workplace gender inequality that fuels sexual harassment, by passing the [FAMILY Act](#) and [Healthy Families Act](#), to provide access to paid family and medical leave and paid sick days for all, including access to paid time off for medical and mental health care, legal proceedings, and other needed services for survivors to address sexual violence; the [Pregnant Workers Fairness Act](#), to require employers to provide reasonable accommodations to employees who need it because of pregnancy, childbirth, or a related medical condition; the [Schedules That Work Act](#) to give workers more stable and predictable work schedules that they have a voice in setting; and the [Child Care for Working Families Act](#) and [Universal Child Care and Early Learning Act](#) to ensure every family has access to high-quality, affordable child care and early learning opportunities.

We believe that the people closest to the pain of these systems and histories should be at the center of and driving survivor-centered solutions.