

Dear Dr. Erin Whitmore,

Thank you for sharing federal priorities on behalf of Ending Violence Association of Canada. New Democrats welcome your feedback and appreciate the time you have taken to read our platform and share the six priority areas on these issues.

Women have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic, bearing the brunt of an unprecedented wave of job losses while shouldering huge burdens of unpaid care. On top of this, New Democrats are greatly concerned about the shadow pandemic of intimate partner violence and violence against women that has increased over the course of the pandemic.

Below are responses to the insightful questions that you have posed.

1. How do you plan on moving forward with the implementation of a National Action Plan on Violence Against Women and Gender-Based Violence and a National Action Plan to End Violence Against Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ People?

The work to end violence against women and gender-based violence has been delayed for far too long. Canada needs to replace the patchwork of services and supports with a federal plan to meaningfully tackle these issues.

If elected, New Democrats will immediately move forward to implement our plans to end violence against women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIA+ people, starting with updating the Canada Labour Code to include ten days of paid leave for people dealing with family and domestic violence.

New Democrats will work with provinces, territories, and stakeholders like yourself to create a roadmap to implement the national plan. Many of the recommendations for the roadmap have already been developed – what has been missing is the political will to prioritize this work.

A NDP government will also move forward on the recommendations from the National Inquiry on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women. We will work in partnership with Indigenous women and gender justice organization to develop a comprehensive, culturally appropriate plan to ensure full gender equality for First Nations status as a matter of priority, consistent with Canadian and international court rulings.

2. How will you ensure survivors of sexual violence have access to the services they need no matter where they live in Canada?

NDP Response: Ending Violence Association of Canada

A NDP government will properly fund shelter services and programs that help women and those experience gender-based violence have access to temporary safe housing and services.

We will apply a Gender-Based Analysis+ lens to our National Housing Strategy to ensure that people fleeing from domestic violence can afford to safely leave shelter services because they have access to transitional housing.

New Democrats will ensure that supports for programs and services for survivors of sexual violence are culturally appropriate and provided in underserved regions.

3. How will you hold state institutions such as the Canadian Armed Forces, accountable for the sexual violence taking place within them?

We are committed to putting an end to sexual harassment and assault in the military. The Liberals have talked about the issue for six years but have failed to make needed changes, while survivors of sexual misconduct continue to suffer from a culture of silence and impunity that extends right to the top of the chain of command. We will immediately implement the recommendations of the Deschamps Report, including establishing independent oversight and accountability for sexual harassment and assault in the military

4. How will you ensure that communities disproportionately affected by sexual violence, including women with disabilities, Indigenous women, racialized women, members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, sex workers, youth and others marginalized in our society are able to live free from violence?

The pandemic shed light on the systemic gaps and inequities that make specific populations most vulnerable to gender and sexual discrimination and violence.

New Democrats believe that the key to helping these communities – women with disabilities, Indigenous women, racialized women, members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, sex workers, youth, and others – is to tackle the root causes of inequities.

New Democrats will commit to breaking patterns of poverty that make these communities more susceptible to experiencing domestic abuse or gender-based violence. We will spur a large-scale economic recovery that creates over one million good, quality jobs while also expanding health care services in mental health, dental care, and pharmacare and affordable housing so that no one falls through the cracks.

Jagmeet Singh and the NDP will combat misogyny head on. Often gender-based violence goes hand-in-hand with other forms of discrimination and hate crime. A NDP government will convene a national working group to counter online hate. We will also immediately begin work to ensure that all major cities have dedicated hate crime units within local police forces.

NDP Response: Ending Violence Association of Canada

New Democrats believe that our families, our communities, and our country are stronger when we stand up for the most marginalized people and enable them to thrive. New Democrats are committed to building a Canada where we end sexual discrimination and violence.