

What does a survivor-centered approach look like?

A survivor-centered approach means:

- recognizing the unique perspectives and experiences of people who have been harmed
- focusing on the experiences of those who have been harassed not on the harasser's intentions

A survivor-centered approach commits to:

1. listening to the unique perspectives and experiences of people who disclose sexual harassment and violence
2. treating everyone with dignity and respect
3. centering the rights, needs, and wishes of those who experience sexual harassment and violence

A survivor-centered approach recognizes the consequences of trauma for people who experience harassment and violence, which includes:

- understanding the delays in and barriers to reporting
- understanding how trauma may impact memory – people may not remember details of their experiences in a linear way, and details may escape them in the moment as a way of coping with the trauma
- realizing that people may not behave in expected ways – some may be cool and collected, while others may appear confused
- recognizing that people cope in different ways and may need varied supports

3 STEPS TO A SURVIVOR-CENTERED APPROACH



STEP 1

Learn about sexual harassment and violence.

Participate in awareness and training offered in your workplace. Learn about workplace policies and procedures to support anyone experiencing sexual harassment or violence.

The impacts of sexual harassment and violence can be significant. No one should have to go through it alone.



STEP 2

Listen attentively and with compassion and learn about available resources.

Remember to respect the rights, needs and wishes of the co-worker. Talk about options before taking action. Some of these options include:

- reading your workplace harassment and violence policy
- finding supports available
- talking with your union representative
- talking with your supervisor or manager
- talking with human resources
- talking with other parties in your workplace, such as Health & Safety Committee, Equity & Inclusion Department, and Labour Relations Department
- contacting your local sexual assault centre, worker's action centre, and/or legal clinic

Under the Canada Labour Code, your employer is required by law to make resources available.



STEP 3

Maintain confidentiality when possible.

People feel safe to come forward with their experiences if their confidentiality is respected.

Ways to ensure confidentiality include:

- don't gossip
- if seeking advice, don't mention a co-worker's name without their permission

Confidentiality is not always possible. You may need to make a report if there is an imminent risk to safety in the workplace.