

Ontario's Action Plan to Stop Sexual Violence and Harassment

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Lawyers You Should Know: Maria Kotsopoulos

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Ontario's government released its Action Plan, "It's Never Okay: An Action Plan to Stop Sexual Violence and Harassment" this month. The Action Plan outlines the government's proposals to raise public awareness and strengthen laws combatting sexual violence and harassment.

The Action Plan outlines the following goals:

1. Raising public awareness;
2. Providing more training for professionals;
3. Developing better outcomes for survivors through the justice system;
4. Creating generational change;
5. Creating safer workplaces; and,
6. Creating safer school campuses.

With respect to Ontario's workplaces, the Action Plan indicates that the government's goals include:

- Introducing legislation to strengthen the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* ("OHSA"). This will include a definition of sexual harassment and will set out requirements for employers to investigate and address workplace harassment, including sexual harassment, complaints in the workplace.
- Creating a new Code of Practice under the OHSA to describe steps employers can take to comply with the legislation and to assist employers to make their workplace safer for all employees.
- Establishing a special enforcement team of inspectors trained to specifically address complaints of workplace harassment, including sexual harassment, and to enforce the OHSA's harassment provisions in the province.

- Developing educational materials to help employers create a safer workplace, free from harassment.

A copy of the Action Plan can be found here: <http://www.ontario.ca/document/action-plan-stop-sexual-violence-and-harassment>

We will keep you updated as this Action Plan evolves into legislation.