

The Cost of Inaction:

**Measuring the Economic
Impact of Gender-Based
Violence in BC**

Territorial Acknowledgement

We respectfully acknowledge that our main office is located on the traditional, ancestral and unceded territories of the x^wməθk^wəy'əm (Musqueam), Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh (Squamish) and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations, and that our work across British Columbia spans the territories of more than 200 First Nations. We also acknowledge the First Nations, Métis and Inuit who live in our communities.

YWCA BC is committed to truth and reconciliation. This includes understanding the truth and impact of our shared colonial history, making positive changes within our organization and taking actions that advances safety, justice and equity for Indigenous peoples.

Indigenous women and girls experience disproportionately high rates of gender-based violence, underscoring the importance of Indigenous-led and culturally appropriate approaches to ending gender-based violence.

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Executive Summary

Gender-based violence (GBV) is preventable and the economic case to do so is compelling. Investing upstream will save public dollars, strengthen productivity and, most importantly, reduce harm and loss of life. With coordinated leadership and sustained funding, British Columbia can meaningfully reduce the prevalence and cost of GBV, while building safer, more inclusive communities.

Gender-based violence imposes a substantial and recurring burden on BC, costing an estimated \$1.12 billion each year and affecting many women, girls and gender-diverse people. Using conservative annual incidence estimates, at least 177,000 people in BC experience some form of GBV each year; broader prevalence measures suggest up to 545,000 women and gender-diverse people are affected across multiple forms of violence. These figures underscore the scale of harm and the economic drag that GBV places on families, communities, employers and public systems.

For decades, the anti-violence sector has highlighted the profound human costs of GBV and advanced strong ethical arguments for meaningful action, yet these calls have not been met with the level of response or investment required to match the scale of the crisis.

Against this backdrop, our study quantifies the economic costs borne by governments and employers and demonstrates the fiscal case for upstream prevention. However, significant data limitations mean this analysis cannot capture the full costs of gender-based violence. Many forms of GBV—most notably psychological abuse, which is the most common form of intimate partner violence—are not included due to the absence of reliable, publicly available data. As a result, the findings presented here are necessarily conservative and understate the true social and economic burden. To ensure consistency across available data sets, we group GBV into three categories: femicide, physical and sexual assault and harassment (criminal, workplace and public). We then measure impacts across core cost domains: public safety and justice (policing, courts, corrections), health care (physician and hospital use), social services (transition housing and supports) and productivity losses (absenteeism and presenteeism).

The results are stark:

- Physical and sexual assault drive 89.9% of total costs, with public services spending (justice, health, social services) totalling \$307 million and lost productivity from assault reaching \$702 million annually.
- Costs associated to femicide including lost human life (annualized) and public services spending totals \$27.6 million.
- Workplace sexual harassment contributes an additional \$86 million each year through reduced productivity and employment churn.

Altogether, BC governments face at least \$295 million in direct service costs and \$40 million in foregone income and sales tax (\$336 million in combined fiscal impact) exclusive of costs borne by victims' families, not including the profound and unquantifiable emotional costs borne by victims, their families and loved ones, who endure trauma, fear, loss of safety and long-term psychological harm.

The case for upstream investment is clear: prevention is far cheaper than downstream response and far more humane:

- Community and social programs to address GBV average \$1,000 per client, compared with \$15,000 per sexual-assault investigation. Each suicide linked to sexual assault results in approximately \$60,000 in lost provincial tax revenue, and each sexual assault costs the economy \$1,000 in productivity alone.

Redirecting resources toward prevention reduces reliance on costlier policing, courts, health care and social services, while decreasing human suffering and improving labour-force participation.

To convert this fiscal logic into results, British Columbia should implement the full set of recommendations from Dr. Kim Stanton’s *Systemic Review of the Legal System’s Treatment of Sexual and Intimate Partner Violence* (see Appendix C). These reforms span three pillars — Prevention, Response and Governance, including education and coordination, stronger survivor-centred justice and enhanced accountability. In parallel, BC should close gaps in workplace sexual harassment by expanding public education and awareness, restricting non-disclosure agreements in harassment and discrimination cases, extending the BC Human Rights Tribunal filing window from six to 12 months and increasing funding for legal clinics. The province should also establish a Gender-Based Violence Commissioner to coordinate standards, training, enforcement and data sharing, including on workplace harassment.

Introduction – The Cost of Inaction

Despite its prevalence and price tag, gender-based violence receives limited political and policy attention. Public discourse still frames it as a private dispute rather than a systemic, solvable issue. Treating GBV as a matter for policy reform — on par with other core public priorities — shifts the focus to prevention, accountability and sustained support. This study provides the evidence base to do so.

Gender-based violence is widely understood as a profound moral and social crisis. But it is also a systemic economic drain on British Columbia. It reduces labour productivity, increases health care, policing, justice and housing costs, destabilizes families, and weakens community cohesion. The economic consequences of GBV ripple far beyond individual survivors. They shape the fiscal pressures faced by governments, the operational realities of employers, the stability of local communities and the long-term well-being of survivors and their children across the province.

The definition of gender-based violence we use to anchor this report is the same used by the federal government in *It’s Time: Canada’s Strategy to Prevent and Address Gender-Based Violence*. Gender-based violence encompasses cyber, physical, sexual, psychological, emotional and economic violence, as well as neglect and harassment because of a person’s gender expression, gender identity or perceived gender.¹ Anyone can experience GBV, but women, girls and gender-diverse individuals—especially those who are Indigenous, Black or racialized—are at far greater risk.

This study quantifies the economic costs of GBV in British Columbia and makes visible the scale of the losses we incur each year when violence is allowed to persist. As Dr. Kim Stanton’s *2025 Systemic Review of the Legal System’s Treatment of Sexual and Intimate Partner Violence* observes, reform debates too often fixate on “the cost of change, while underestimating the cost of inaction.”² Our analysis addresses this gap by measuring the fiscal burden borne by governments, employers and taxpayers.

We examine femicide, physical and sexual assault, and harassment in the workplace and in public settings. The costs are concrete: lost productivity; increased demand for shelter and housing; higher health care utilization; and elevated policing, court and corrections costs, among other expenditures. By translating these impacts into dollar terms, this study reveals how GBV erodes public resources and constrains economic growth, strengthening the case for robust prevention and comprehensive support for survivors.

Why Economic Evidence Matters

Policymakers consistently ask: “What will it cost to act?”

This report answers the equally important and often overlooked question: “What is the cost of failing to act?”

Economic evidence provides a common language for decision-making. It allows governments to compare the fiscal burden of the status quo with the potential return on investment from prevention, early intervention and survivor supports. When public budgets are strained, demonstrating that gender-based violence imposes ongoing, avoidable costs helps shift the discussion from discretionary spending to economic necessity.

While no empirical study can fully capture every instance of gender-based violence or every cost associated with it, this analysis succeeds in estimating the general magnitude of the economic burden in British Columbia. Appendix A details specific methodological limitations, including challenges in incident reporting, definitional boundaries and data availability. Despite these constraints, the findings offer a clear, evidence-based picture: GBV imposes significant, ongoing economic losses—and addressing it is both a moral imperative and a financially sound investment.

- In the first section of the study, we briefly review the policy landscape with respect to addressing gender-based violence provincially and federally.
- In the second section, we outline the costs of gender-based violence in BC and outline the return on investment that adequate social supports and prevention initiatives represent.
- In the third and final section of the study we outline recommendations that prioritize prevention efforts and addressing the systemic drivers that perpetuate and entrench gender-based violence across the province.

Section 1:

Government Response to Gender-Based Violence

Governments across Canada, including in British Columbia, have begun to more formally recognize the scale and urgency of gender-based violence. In January 2025, BC Premier David Eby’s mandate letter to the Minister of Finance directed her to “address the national epidemic of gender-based violence as it relates to our province,” signalling growing recognition of GBV as a systemic issue.³ Elsewhere, several provincial and municipal governments, and Indigenous communities, have gone further by declaring GBV or intimate-partner violence an epidemic, including Nova Scotia,⁴ New Brunswick,⁵ and numerous municipalities in Ontario.⁶

At the same time, both the BC and the federal government have introduced action plans, legislative reforms and targeted funding aimed at prevention, survivor support and systemic change. Table 1 summarizes a non-exhaustive list of key initiatives.

Table 1: Gender-Based Violence Initiatives in BC and Canada

Jurisdiction	Initiative	Key Components	Funding
British Columbia	Safe and Supported: BC's Gender-Based Violence Action Plan (2023–2026) ⁷	Four priorities: (1) increase safety and supports for survivors, (2) lift up Indigenous-led approaches, (3) break cycles of violence through prevention, healing and accountability, (4) strengthen data and monitoring. Actions include doubling transition-housing spaces to 3,000 units; five new sexual assault centres; two 24/7 crisis lines; 70 new sexual-assault programs (22 Indigenous-specific); updated policing standards; consent-based education and workplace/post-secondary initiatives. ⁸	Over \$60M in annual provincial funding plus \$62M in federal cost-sharing over four years to support implementation. ⁹
British Columbia	Employment Standards Act – Domestic and Sexual Violence Leave ¹⁰	Up to five paid and five unpaid days per year, plus up to 15 weeks unpaid leave, for workers impacted by domestic or sexual violence; no qualifying-period requirements.	N/A
British Columbia	Violence Against Women in Relationships Policy ¹¹	Sets out the protocols, roles and responsibilities of service providers across the justice and child welfare systems that respond to domestic violence with the goal of ensuring an effective, integrated and co-ordinated justice and child welfare response to domestic violence.	N/A
British Columbia	Housing and Rent Supplements for Survivors of GBV ¹²	BC Housing provides rent supplements targeted to survivors, including a “Survivors of GBV” benefit.	Nearly \$37M in matched federal/provincial funding (2019–2023), averaging about \$600/month for roughly 1,700 households.
Federal	Criminal Code and Legislative Reforms (1990–present) ¹³	Creation of criminal harassment offences, expanded sexual-assault protections and provisions addressing domestic violence and firearms in family settings. Creation of criminal offences involving choking, suffocation, or strangulation and aggravated sexual assault offences involving choking, suffocation or strangulation.	N/A
Federal	It's Time: Canada's Strategy to Prevent and Address Gender-Based Violence (2017) ¹⁴	National framework led by Women and Gender Equality Canada, emphasizing prevention, support for survivors and responsive justice systems.	The federal government states that it has invested more than \$820M in programs to end GBV since 2017. ¹⁵

Jurisdiction	Initiative	Key Components	Funding
Federal	National Action Plan to End Gender-Based Violence (2022) ¹⁶	Ten-year plan with funding commitments to provinces and territories; aims to coordinate prevention, support services and systems change across Canada.	Multi-year federal funding agreements with provinces and territories, totalling \$525M over five years. ¹⁷
Federal	Sexual Harassment Advice, Response and Prevention (SHARP) for Workplaces (2026) ¹⁸	Provides free legal advice and education to help address workplace sexual harassment in BC.	\$1.5M in federal funding as part of the Legal Support and Awareness to Address Workplace Sexual Harassment, announced in Budget 2024.
Federal / Indigenous	Indigenous-Specific Initiatives (2014–2021) ¹⁹	2014 <i>Action Plan to Address Family Violence and Violent Crime Against Aboriginal Women and Girls</i> ; 2016 <i>National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls</i> ; 2019 <i>National Action Plan to Address Violence Against Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ People</i> .	In 2014, the federal government committed \$25M over five years. ²⁰ Likewise, in 2021 they proposed \$2.2B over five years and \$160.9M ongoing. ²¹

Despite these important steps, the economic and social costs of gender-based violence in BC and across Canada remain substantial. Service demand continues to outstrip capacity;²² survivors and their children face ongoing housing and income insecurity;²³ and employers and communities bear significant productivity and cohesion losses. This persistent burden underscores the need for deeper, systemic and prevention-focused investment, the case for which is developed in the next section.

Section 2:

The Costs of Gender-Based Violence in BC

In this section, we outline the costs of gender-based violence in BC, with a primary focus on expenditures by the provincial government, local governments and private funders. The aim is to show the fiscal returns that proactive, upstream prevention could deliver. Details of the methodology and limitations are provided in Appendix A.

Due to data limitations, the analysis quantifies three broad forms of GBV: femicide, physical and sexual assault, and harassment (criminal, workplace and public sexual harassment). Within these broad categories, we measure impacts across core cost areas:²⁴

- Public safety and justice: police investigations, court utilization, legal aid and corrections programming
- Health care: family physician visits, hospital care and other medical services accessed by victims
- Social services: transition housing and related supports for survivors, including victim support services
- Productivity losses: absenteeism and presenteeism affecting employers and the broader economy

The infographic below highlights key findings from our analysis. Gender-based violence costs the BC government and employers an estimated \$1.12B annually. Even under the most conservative assumptions, more than 177,000 people in BC experience some form of GBV annually, underscoring the scale of harm and the ongoing drain on public resources and productivity.²⁵

Figure 1: Infographic of annual economic costs of gender-based violence, 2025 dollars

Total cost*	\$1,122,700,000
Total instances	545,000
Femicide	
Total costs*	\$27,600,000
Percentage of total	2.5%
Instances	14
Public services spending	
Law enforcement	\$9,100,000
Economic costs	
Lost human life (annualized)	\$18,600,000
Physical and Sexual Assault	
Total costs*	\$1,008,800,000
Percentage of total	89.9%
Instances	110,000
Public services spending	
Law enforcement	\$109,700,000
Health care	\$90,200,000
Social services	\$106,600,000
Economic costs	
Absenteeism and turnover	\$101,500,000
Lost human life (suicide), annualized	\$600,800,000
Harassment	
Total costs*	\$86,300,000
Percentage of total	7.69%
Instances	400,000
Public services spending	
Law enforcement and health care	\$300,000
Economic costs	
Absenteeism	\$51,000,000
Presenteeism**	\$8,400,000
Turnover	26,500,000
Government Costs and Potential ROI	
Direct government costs	\$295,400,000
Lost government tax revenue	\$40,400,000

*Total Cost: Not all figures will sum to totals due to rounding.

**Presenteeism is defined as “less productivity at work.”

Overall, the largest contributor to the cost of gender-based violence is physical and sexual assault, making up nearly 90% of all costs examined. Public services spending related to sexual assault, including law enforcement, public health care and social services, totals \$307M. Lost productivity from assault is estimated to be \$702M.

Sexual assault is disproportionately costly. Police investigations of sexual assault cases average \$15,000 per investigation, compared to \$2,000 for physical assault. Court cases involving sexual assault are also typically longer and more resource intensive, increasing justice system costs. There is also strong evidence linking sexual assault to elevated risk of suicide attempts and suicide, adding substantial health care costs and the profound economic losses associated with premature mortality.

Loss of life is the single largest cost in this analysis, both in fiscal terms and in the immeasurable toll it takes on families and communities. Femicide and suicides associated with sexual assault are estimated at \$619M, making up 55.2% of all costs. These figures capture the net present value of lost wages, lost employer profit and lost government revenues (income and sales taxes) that would have been generated.

Workplace sexual harassment adds significant economic burden. It is widespread, with hundreds of thousands of women in British Columbia experiencing it directly or indirectly. In 2018, 104,000 women in BC reported experiencing three or more instances of egregious harassment (e.g., unwanted physical contact) in the previous 12 months. The impacts are tangible: absenteeism, presenteeism (less productivity at work) and early exit from employment reduce productivity and earnings.²⁶ In total, workplace harassment contributes \$86M to the annual cost of GBV in BC.

Governments bear large direct and indirect fiscal impacts. BC spends at least \$295M on services addressing and supporting the victims of gender-based violence, and loses \$40M in lost income and sales tax revenues, totalling \$336M. Importantly, these costs do not include additional health care and social service costs incurred by victims' family members, suggesting the true public burden is much higher.

To put what these costs mean in practical budget terms, annual public sector costs associated with gender-based violence rival or exceed major capital and operating commitments. For example:

- \$203M for a new, 1,900-seat Smith Secondary School in Langley.²⁷
- \$108M for a new West Shore Learning Centre Campus for Royal Roads University in Langford.²⁸
- \$208M for all operating expenses of BC Transit.²⁹
- \$350M for improvements to BC Highway 5.³⁰

Taken together, these comparisons underscore the magnitude of GBV as a fiscal issue, driving substantial, recurring costs across justice, health, social services and the broader economy. Proactive prevention and survivor supports would not only save lives, they would also relieve sustained pressure on public budgets and improve productivity growth.

The Return on Investment of Upstream Interventions

Upstream prevention delivers substantial fiscal savings and reduces profound human harm. If governments, particularly the provincial government, invest in upstream interventions that prevent gender-based violence, they can curb public expenditures while reducing victimization, including loss of life associated with femicide.

Prevention is far cheaper than downstream responses. Our costing analysis shows that delivering social programs to prevent victimization is far less expensive, per person, than providing public services after violence occurs.

Figure 2: Per-intervention costs, 2025



Data from social services organizations in BC indicates that community and social programs average about \$1,000 per person.³¹ By contrast, police investigations of sexual assault average \$15,000 per case, 15 times the per-person cost of prevention. The fiscal impact extends beyond justice costs. Each suicide related to sexual assault translates into \$60,000 in lost provincial income and sales tax revenues, and the BC economy loses \$1,000 per sexual assault in worker productivity.

The return on prevention is twofold: governments reduce reliance on costlier policing, courts, health care and social services, while employers benefit from higher productivity and lower absenteeism and presenteeism. Most fundamentally, upstream investment reduces victimization – an ethical imperative and sound economic choice.

The next section outlines concrete steps governments, particularly the provincial government, can take to prevent gender-based violence and reduce its economic costs.

Section 3:

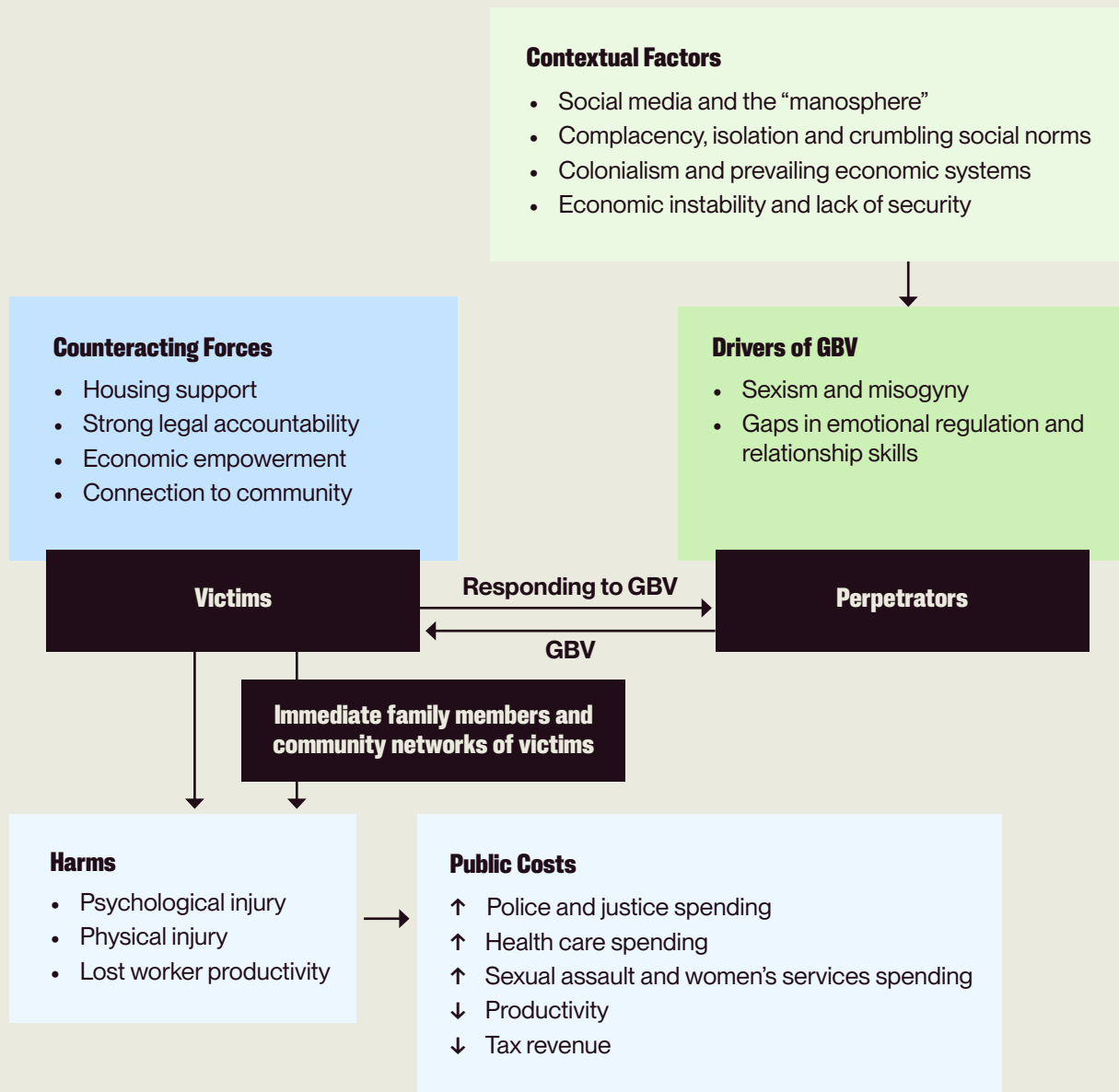
Recommendations – Government Savings from Addressing Gender-Based Violence

Addressing gender-based violence generates substantial savings and reduces human harm, mitigating the widespread emotional, social and economic ripple effects that extend far beyond individual incidents. Building on the previous section’s costing from the perspective of the provincial government and other funders, a coordinated, upstream approach that addresses the root causes of GBV can save millions and prevent suffering for survivors, families and communities.

To unpack the drivers of GBV and how focused interventions can disrupt it, we surveyed gender-equity and anti-violence organizations in BC and drew extensively from Dr. Kim Stanton’s report. The survey questionnaire is presented in Appendix B. Respondents emphasized that GBV is produced by intertwined political, economic and social systems that perpetuate inequality. Economic insecurity, driven by poverty, housing instability and gendered labour inequities keep many survivors trapped in unsafe situations. Rural isolation, the housing crisis and an under-resourced, retraumatizing justice system compound risk. Technology plays a dual role: enabling harassment and surveillance but also offering tools for safety and support (e.g., safety planning apps, community resources, etc.). Respondents cited weak political coordination and fragmented governance as barriers to progress, and called for trauma-informed, restorative approaches and stronger community connections that prevent violence before it occurs. Respondents also called for greater income supports, child care access and employment and training opportunities that enable survivors to leave violence and rebuild their lives.

We consolidated survey and interview insights into a system map to illustrate how drivers and consequences are connected.³²

Figure 3: System map of gender-based violence

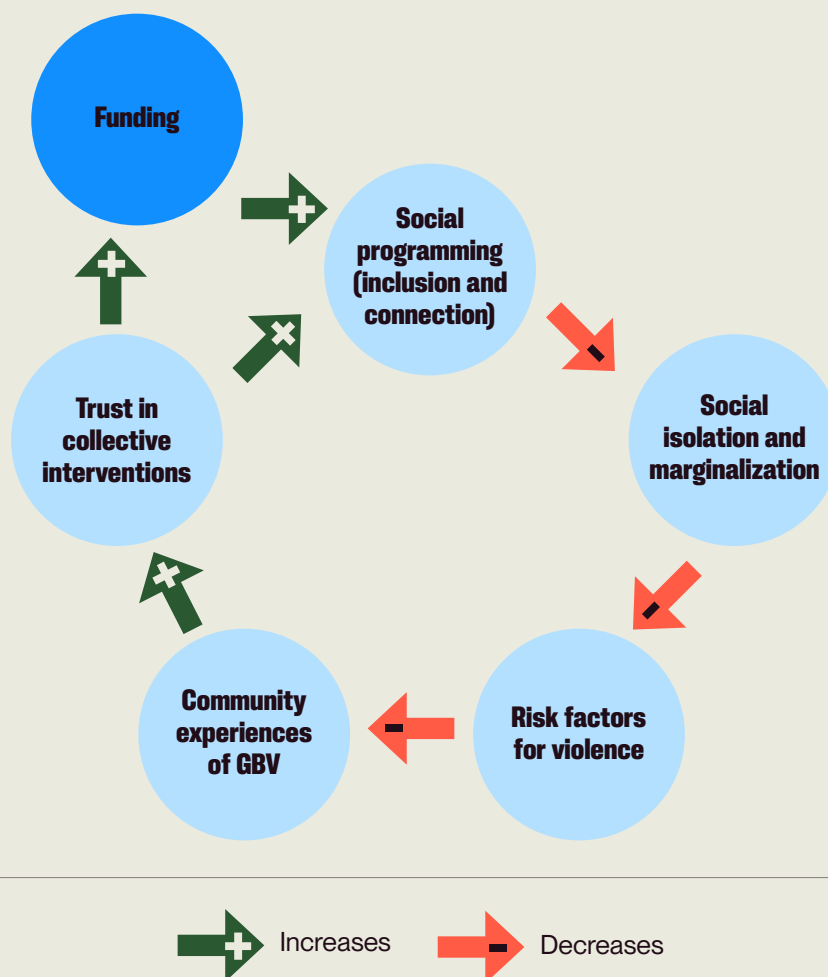


Gender-based violence is perpetrated predominantly by men, and those choices are shaped by cultural attitudes (sexism, misogyny) and gaps in emotional regulation and relationship skills. External influences can be aggravating factors for GBV, such as economic instability, housing insecurity and lack of security. Online media ecosystems that normalize entitlement and promote misogyny reinforce harmful norms. Furthermore, persistent gaps in the judicial system that leave women vulnerable to GBV reinforce cultural norms of misogyny and the devaluation of women, leading to greater acceptance of misogynistic behaviour. Growing isolation, weakening community institutions and the absence of healthy role models for masculinity leave space for toxic narratives to build.³³

Intervening on both sides – reducing drivers of male violence and strengthening survivors’ power to exit harm – delivers the greatest impact and savings. Economic and housing supports act as a counteracting force against GBV, equipping survivors to leave abusive situations. The same is true of strong community connections that improve access to resources and increase social accountability. Effective legal accountability, including clear laws, trauma-informed processes and courts that hold perpetrators to account, counteract GBV by reducing impunity and recurrence. Together, these interventions lower reliance on costlier downstream services.

A key insight from our survey is the importance of social programs that build inclusion, cohesion and connection. Community building reduces isolation and marginalization, making it less likely that men turn to online communities that promote misogyny; while simultaneously providing survivors with tangible support so violence is not kept in the shadows.

Figure 4: Positive feedback loop of social programs



By reducing risk factors for perpetrators and survivors, communities experience less gender-based violence and greater trust in collective prevention and interventions, creating a positive, self-reinforcing feedback loop that lowers incidence and public costs over time.

Recommendations

As a starting point, the provincial government should implement all recommendations from Dr. Kim Stanton's *Systemic Review of the Legal System's Treatment of Sexual and Intimate Partner Violence*. The 21 recommendations (listed in Appendix C) collectively address gender-based violence across three pillars.

- Prevention: strengthen education, prevention and cross-departmental coordination to reduce violence before it occurs.³⁴
- Response: improve justice system performance and accountability and survivor supports so violence is addressed promptly and consistently without further re-traumatization.³⁵
- Governance: enhance accountability and oversight, such as appointing a Gender-Based Violence Commissioner, to ensure sustained, cross-ministry leadership and measurable progress.³⁶

Enacting these reforms would align British Columbia with other jurisdictions taking confident, cross-sectoral action on GBV, such as Australia, and help shift resources upstream where they deliver great impact and savings.³⁷ For example, Australia is investing in consent and respectful relationships education for young people and supporting community-led sexual violence prevention pilots. It has also committed more than \$100 million to primary prevention efforts through Our Watch, the country's national leader in preventing GBV.

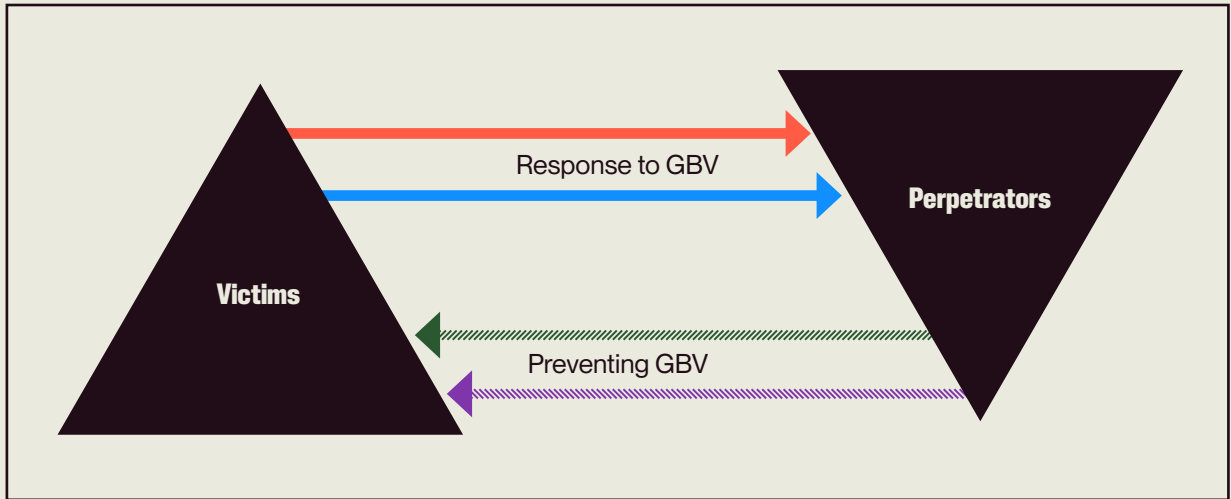
A dimension not addressed by Dr. Stanton's report is sexual harassment in the workplace. While human rights legislation and occupational health and safety policies under the *Workers Compensation Act* provide avenues for redress, more decisive action is needed. Other provinces have responded to rising complaints with public awareness campaigns, underscoring the value of proactive education and prevention.³⁸ For example, in 2024, Quebec launched a campaign with advertising, educational materials and a dedicated website aimed at both employers and employees to raise awareness about.³⁹






To prevent and counteract workplace sexual harassment, the province should:

- Expand public education and awareness to shift norms, clarify rights and employer duties and improve reporting and early resolution.
- Restrict non-disclosure agreements in cases of workplace discrimination or harassment to prevent concealment and serial misconduct, as put forward in a 2023 private member's bill by then-BC Green Party leader Sonia Furstenau.⁴⁰
- Extend the filing window for sexual harassment complaints at the BC Human Rights Tribunal from six months to 12 months, recognizing delayed reporting due to trauma, job insecurity and fear of retaliation.⁴¹
- Enhance supports for legal clinics focused on human rights and labour law, ensuring victims have access to the legal assistance they need.
- Prioritize workplace harassment within the mandate of a Gender-Based Violence Commissioner to coordinate standards, training, enforcement and data sharing across ministries.

These recommendations complement Dr. Stanton's recommendations by addressing a high-prevalence, high-cost area of GBV that affects productivity, retention and public confidence in institutions.

Figure 5: Policy recommendations plotted on the system map



-  Strengthen BC legal system and victim supports (Stanton, 2025)
-  Restrict forced non-disclosures, improve access to the Human Rights Tribunal, enhance funding to legal clinics.
-  Education, supports for men who use violence, and coordination and collaboration across organizations addressing GBV (Stanton, 2025)
-  More resources to public awareness campaigns on workplace harassment (e.g. Quebec)
-  Improve Governance with a new GBV Commissioner, declaring GBV an epidemic, and improving coordination across ministries (Stanton, 2025)

Conclusion

As highlighted in this study, gender-based violence is not only a profound social and moral crisis — it is a systemic economic burden that costs British Columbia an estimated \$1.12 billion annually. These costs span justice, health care, social services and lost productivity, with physical and sexual assault alone accounting for nearly 90% of the total. The fiscal impact on government budgets and employers is significant, rivaling major infrastructure and operating expenditures, while the human toll — loss of life, trauma and diminished well-being — remains incalculable.

The evidence presented in this study highlights that prevention is far more cost-effective than response. Upstream investments in education, housing, income supports and community programs can reduce reliance on costly policing, courts and health services, while improving labour-force participation and social cohesion. Each dollar spent on prevention yields measurable savings and, more importantly, reduces harm and loss of life.

British Columbia has taken important steps through its Gender-Based Violence Action Plan and related initiatives, but gaps remain. Implementing the full suite of recommendations from Dr. Kim Stanton's systemic review, alongside targeted measures to address workplace harassment, will facilitate a robust and transformative policy response that will reduce the prevalence and economic costs of gender-based violence in the province. As this report shows, these reforms are not discretionary; they are essential and fiscally sound investments.

Gender-based violence is preventable. Interventions that work towards reducing drivers of male violence and strengthening survivor's ability to thrive after experiencing violence must be prioritized. With coordinated leadership, sustained funding and a commitment to systemic change, British Columbia can shift from managing the consequences of violence to eliminating its root causes. Doing so will save public dollars, strengthen productivity and build safer, more inclusive communities for all.

Appendix A

Costing Methodology

The economic costs of GBV outlined in this report are based on methodologies and approaches from two core studies.

The first is the study *An Estimation of the Economic Impact of Spousal Violence in Canada, 2009*, published by the Department of Justice Canada (the “2009 DOJ Report”).⁴² Our aim was to follow the approaches used in this study as closely as possible, when possible. Furthermore, Women and Gender Equality Canada (WAGE) of the federal government is undertaking an update to this study. Many methodology decisions were made in consultation with the WAGE team undertaking this update.

The second report is *The Economic Costs of Sexual Harassment in the Workplace* by Deloitte Access Economics in 2020.⁴³ The report estimates the cost of workplace sexual harassment in Australia using data from the *Fourth national survey on sexual harassment in Australia, 2018* (the “Deloitte Report”). It provides impacts of gender-based violence that are not considered in the 2009 DOJ Report, namely workplace harassment. Together, these two reports cover the of the core dimensions of GBV: femicide, assault (sexual and physical) and harassment.

To compile these estimates, the main data source we draw from is Statistics Canada’s Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces (SSPPS 2018).⁴⁴ The data come from a custom data request fulfilled by Statistics Canada and a public table showing the number of gender-motivated murder of women and girls by province.⁴⁵ The last year for which we have data from this survey was 2018. Therefore, 2018 is used as the base year of the analysis, with 2018 dollar values being inflation-adjusted to 2025 values.

The costs that are the focus of this study are those incurred by governments and businesses within BC. Costs to private and charitable funders are also included in estimates for social services. Federal government costs are not included in this analysis. If you have questions about the costing methodology please reach out to contact@2rstrategy.ca.

Model Overview

We examine three categories of gender-based violence: femicide, assault (physical and sexual) and harassment (criminal harassment (i.e., stalking) and workplace and public harassment). In the Excel workbook that contains the model used to calculate the costs of GBV, each class of GBV is separated into its own tab: the “Homicide Worksheet,” the “Assault & Sexual Assault Worksheet,” and the “Harassment Worksheet.” The results from these sheets are summarized in the “Summary Table” tab.

Additionally, there are further calculations for estimating the cost of policing, court costs, corrections costs and social services costs. These costs are calculated in tabs “Policing Costs,” “Policing Costs -- Incidence,” “Court Costs,” “Corrections Costs,” and “Social Services Costs.” The sheets titled “Economy Impacts,” “Lost Prod from Turnover (SA),” and “Suicide Impacts (SA)” contain supplementary calculations to support costing related to lost productivity.

Detailed Calculation Descriptions

The following sections describe in detail the approaches and data used for each section of the model.

Justice Cost Approaches

Policing Costs Calculations

The approach for calculating the per-incident cost of femicide (homicide), physical and sexual assault, and criminal harassment follows the approach taken in the 2009 DOJ Report. The Uniform Crime Reporting Survey is one key data source for these calculations and provides both the Crime Severity Index for 2016-2020 and incident-based crime statistics by detailed violations.⁴⁶ The Statistics Canada table *Canadian Classification of Functions of*

*Government (CCOFOG) by consolidated government component*⁴⁷ is another key data source and provides total spending by provincial and local governments on police services.

To calculate the per-incident policing costs for femicide, physical and sexual assault, and criminal harassment, we begin by calculating the value of 60.8% of total spending by provincial and local governments on police services for 2018. This 60.8% captures the costs attributable to crime-related activities, as was done in the 2009 DOJ Report.⁴⁸ This amount is allocated proportionally across all criminal violations by the number of incidents in 2018 and the violation's severity weight, which comes from the Crime Severity Index. For each violation, the total police spending attributable to that violation is divided by the total number of violations to get an average, per-violation cost. A detailed description of this cost allocation method can be found in the 2009 DOJ Report.⁴⁹

The per-incident police cost of homicide is the average of the per-incident cost of first- and second-degree murder and manslaughter, weighted by the number of incidents. Likewise, the police cost of sexual assault is the weighted average of Level 3 (aggravated), Level 2 (weapon or bodily harm) and Level 1 sexual assault. The assault per-incident cost aggregates Level 3 (aggravated), Level 2 (weapon or bodily harm) and Level 1 assault. The only violation included in the per-incident cost of stalking is criminal harassment.

Court Costs

The average cost of a court case is used as a baseline for estimating the court costs of gender-based violence for this study. To calculate this average, we start with total spending on courts for provincial and local governments for law courts.⁵⁰ This spending includes the following:

*"[...] administration, operation, or support of civil and criminal law courts and the judicial system, including enforcement of fines and legal settlements imposed by the courts and operation of parole and probation systems; and legal representation and advice on behalf of government or on behalf of others provided by government in cash or in services."*⁵¹

The total spending for the average of fiscal years 2017/2018 and 2018/2019 is divided by the total number of cases (also the average of the 2017/2018 and 2018/2019 fiscal years), including adult and youth criminal cases and civil cases, to create an average cost per case.

For each criminal violation, the per-case cost is further modified to reflect the varying complexity, and thus length, of cases involving criminal activities that are relevant to gender-based violence (see the "Court Costs" tab). The authors of the 2019 DOJ Report undertook a similar modification process, albeit with different data.

An important difference between the calculation approach taken here and that of the 2019 DOJ Report is that the total spending on law courts comes from a more recent data program from Statistics Canada that was not used in the 2019 DOJ Report. However, this new data source is more up to date. One limitation of this data is that it includes spending for both criminal and civil counts. While it would be ideal to exclude civil spending from this value, doing so was not possible within the scope of the project.

Corrections Costs

Similar to the approach for calculating court costs, we calculate the average annual cost for governments in British Columbia per year for a person in corrections, including both adult and youth offenders. The data used for the calculations are limited to provincial facilities. Total provincial and local spending on corrections for 2018 (the average of the (2017/2018 and 2018/2019 fiscal years)⁵² is divided by the total number of adults⁵³ and youth⁵⁴ in provincial corrections services (also the average of the 2017/2018 and 2018/2019 fiscal years). This total number of people in corrections includes people who are incarcerated and those on probation or supervised in the community.

Incident Calculations

Femicide

The total incidence of femicide comes from the 2023 Statistics Canada report *Gender-related homicide of women and girls in Canada*. The report examines solved homicides by a male accused that involved an intimate partner, family member, sexual violence as part of the killing, or where the victim was a sex worker.⁵⁵ This data source was selected based on consultation with the WAGE research team updating the 2009 DOJ Report. Since the report only provides femicides for British Columbia for 2016 and 2021, the average for these two years is used.

Criminal Law Enforcement - Police costs

The cost of policing directly attributable to femicide is calculated by multiplying the number of femicides for a given year by the police costs of homicide calculated in the “Policing Costs” tab.

Criminal Law Enforcement - Court costs

Drawing from the 2023 Statistics Canada report *Gender-related homicide of women and girls in Canada*, 98% of examined homicides from 2011 and 2021 were cleared by laying charges.⁵⁶ Every charge is brought as a case to a Canadian court, but there can be multiple charges in one case. Based on data from fiscal years 2017/2018 and 2018/2019, the number of homicide cases was about half the number of charges.⁵⁷ Therefore, the model assumes about half of all charges related to femicide have a case. The number of estimated cases is multiplied by the average cost per case, (tab “Court Costs”).

Criminal Law Enforcement - Corrections costs

Using 2017/2018 and 2018/2019 data on charges and decisions, the proportion of charges leading to a guilty decision is calculated.⁵⁸ Persons that are guilty of first- or second-degree murder are sentenced to life imprisonment with the potential for parole.⁵⁹ For this calculation, the years for the typical life sentence is the difference between the life expectancy of men in British Columbia in 2018 and the estimated median age of people (the vast majority of which are men) who were found guilty of murder in 2017/2018 and 2018/2019 fiscal years.^{60,61} Sentencing for manslaughter can vary, but is assumed to be 9.5 years for these calculations, which is the mid-point of the six to 12 year range put forward by the Department of Justice in its 2023 report on sentencing for manslaughter in cases involving intimate relationships.⁶² A weighted average of these two durations is calculated based on the percentage of charges that were for manslaughter and first- or second-degree murder in 2018 (see the “Corrections Costs” tab).⁶³ Since the cost of corrections is incurred over decades, the average annual cost of corrections for each year is adjusted to net present value using a social discount rate of 2.85%.⁶⁴ The estimated average lifetime cost of corrections per person times the number of estimated femicides leading to a guilty charge gives the total provincial corrections cost per year.

Economy Impacts - Cost of loss of human life

Given the focus of this study, the factors we consider when estimating the economic impacts of lost life are forgone earnings, profit and government tax income. Standard cost-benefit methodologies often use the “value of statistical life” when estimating the impact of lost life. This approach is not taken here because the value of statistical life captures concepts that are not pertinent to this analysis, most notably intangible costs.

Annual earnings is based on the average hourly wage of a worker in British Columbia in 2018, assuming a 7.5-hour workday, and a five-day workweek over an entire year.⁶⁵ Drawing on Statistics Canada data, the median age at which a victim is murdered is estimated, and foregone lifetime earnings is adjusted based on this median age of death.⁶⁶ Building from these assumed earnings, provincial income and sales tax revenues are estimated using data drawn from Statistics Canada’s Social Policy Simulation Database/Model (V30.0). The income and sales tax values are the averages for individuals with market incomes ranging from \$49,600 and \$54,600. Forgone profit is assumed to be 5.2% of invested employee income, following the methodology from the 2009 DOJ Report.⁶⁷ The stream of lost income, profit and tax revenue is annualized assuming a social discount rate of 2.85%.⁶⁸

Physical and Sexual Assault

The number of incidents of physical and sexual assault are drawn from a custom tabulation of the 2018 SSPPS. All sexual assaults experienced by women are captured as incidents of GBV. For physical assault, we limit incidents to those that were perpetrated by men. Given sample size limitations, we were unable to obtain an estimate of the count of physical assaults perpetrated by men against women in British Columbia. Therefore, the count of physical assaults is estimated by scaling the Canadian count to the BC population using the lower-bound estimate provided in Statistics Canada's custom tabulation.⁶⁹

Criminal Law Enforcement - Police costs

For both physical and sexual assault, the total number of incidents is multiplied by the percentage of incidents that are reported to the police. These percentages are drawn from the Public Use Microdata File of the *2019 General Social Survey, Canadians' Safety* (the 2019 GSS PUMF). The number of reported incidents is multiplied by the average police costs associated with each incident type, calculated in the "Policing Costs" tab.

Criminal Law Enforcement - Court costs

The number of police-reported incidents that lead to charges is calculated using Statistics Canada data on all incidents and charges involving physical and sexual assault.⁷⁰ The proportion of charges that lead to cases is then used to calculate the number of cases involving assault. A case can involve multiple charges, and those cases where assault is the "most serious offense" as defined by Statistics Canada are considered.⁷¹ The total number of cases is multiplied by the cost per court case, adjusting for the longer duration of physical and sexual assault cases compared to the average (see the "Court Costs" tab).

Criminal Law Enforcement - Corrections costs

Statistics Canada data on the number of cases for physical and sexual assault and cases with a guilty verdict is used to estimate the number of cases that lead to a guilty verdict.⁷² The average years spent in corrections (custody and probation) is estimated using data from the Juristat article *Adult criminal court statistics, 2008/2009*.⁷³ While the report is somewhat dated and only includes data on adult sentencing, it provides an approximation of the duration of custody or probation for the types of assault considered here. The average years spent in corrections is a weighted average of the mean length of custody and probation since the average corrections cost per year includes both custody and probation.

Health Care – Family doctor visits

The number of incidents that lead to physician visits is calculated using the percentage of victims that self-report visiting a doctor or nurse after they were assaulted, based on the 2019 GSS PUMF. These self-reported doctor visits were then divided into visits to a family doctor and visits to an emergency department, assuming a division in-line with the relative number of patients served by family and emergency doctors based on provincial data.⁷⁴ This value was then multiplied by the average cost of a physician visit based on the average billing of a family doctor in Canada.⁷⁵ While this cost per physician visit is a Canadian average, the average compensation of Canadian doctors aligns with that of doctors in British Columbia.

Health Care - Emergency department visits

The number of victims of physical and sexual assault that see a doctor through an emergency department is calculated using the division of family and emergency doctor visits calculated in the previous section. The average treatment cost in an emergency department is a Canadian average not including physician compensation.⁷⁶ This cost includes direct costs only, and not the full cost of an ER visit for a victim of physical or sexual assault (e.g., diagnostic imaging, administration, housekeeping). The average physician cost is based on the average billing of an emergency doctor in Canada.⁷⁷

Health Care – Suicide attempts

The difference in lifetime suicide rate between the general population and those that have experienced sexual assault provides the percentage likelihood of suicide attempts.⁷⁸ The health care cost per suicide attempt (the cost

of “Other Mental Health” intervention) is applied to generate the total health care spending for suicide attempts that are attributable to sexual assault.⁷⁹

Social Services – Shelters and transition homes

The total, non-federal spending on shelters and transition homes for victims of abuse in Canada is scaled to British Columbia’s population to provide the total spending for BC. The vast majority of users of these shelters are victims of gender-based violence, so all costs are considered in this calculation.⁸⁰

Social Services – Crisis lines

The percentage of sexual assault victims that are estimated to call a crisis line is provided by WAGE and comes from a custom tabulation of the GSS 2019. This percentage reflects only those people who experienced assault from an intimate partner. However, for the purposes of this analysis, we apply this percentage to all people who report experiencing sexual assault. In following the approach taken in the DOJ Report, the per-clients cost for crisis lines is drawn from annual reports of service delivery organizations. For this study, we use the annual report of Crisis Centre BC.⁸¹

Social Services – Support centres

Following the approach taken in the DOJ Report, the per-clients cost of support services is estimated using financial data from service delivery organizations. In this case, we use the WISH Drop-In Centre Society and the North Shore Crisis Services Society.⁸² The calculations are found at the “Social Services Costs” tab. The number of victims that use these services is calculated as a percentage of all victims of sexual assault. The percentage used is provided by WAGE and comes from a custom tabulation of the GSS 2019. It reflects only those people who experienced assault from an intimate partner. However, for the purposes of this analysis, we apply this percentage to all people who report experiencing sexual assault.

Economy Impacts – Lost productivity (physical or sexual assault)

The percentage of people reporting barriers to performing everyday tasks resulting from physical or sexual assault is drawn from the 2019 GSS PUMF, and the average days off for victims of sexual assault is drawn from a 2019 survey outlined in the report *Pilot Survey of Prevalence and Costs of Intimate Partner Violence in the Workplace*.⁸³ The average daily compensation of a victim of sexual assault is based on the average wage of a worker in British Columbia from Statistics Canada’s Labour Force Survey, assuming a 7.5 hour work day.⁸⁴ This value is used to calculate both the productivity loss from lost labour and lost profit associated with that labour (estimated as 5.2% of labour investment).⁸⁵

Economy Impacts – Lost productivity from turnover (sexual assault)

Drawing from the 2019 survey outlined in *Pilot Survey of Prevalence and Costs of Intimate Partner Violence in the Workplace*, the estimated annualized rate at which victims of IPV leave their job is estimated.⁸⁶ This value is used to calculate turnover resulting from sexual assault more generally. The calculation assumes a standard working age of 15 to 65. The Deloitte Report contemplates the productivity impacts of higher turnover rates in the context of workplace harassment, which informs the calculations in this section. In their modelling, they consider the fact that in the Australian labour market (as in Canada), there is a regular rate of worker turnover. Therefore, many workers that report leaving their work due to harassment likely would have left anyway, just later. Their modelling assumes that the worker turnover rate for people facing harassment is twice that of other workers. The same assumption is adopted here. Therefore, half of the job separations resulting from sexual violence are counted as imposing extra costs on employers (which the Deloitte Report calls “bring forward” time). Also drawing from the Deloitte Report, the average hours spend onboarding a new worker is assumed to be 26. The average wage in British Columbia for 2018 is applied to these onboarding hours given that these hours capture time spent by workers in various roles – management, admin and the occupation of the new employee.⁸⁷

Economy Impacts – Victim suicide (sexual assault)

Building from the analysis on suicide attempts, this section estimates the number of suicides attributable to sexual assault. Drawing on the datasheet *Suicide in Canada: Key statistics (infographic)*, the ratio of suicides to self-

harm incidents is calculated and used to create an estimate of future suicides resulting from sexual assaults that occurred in 2018.⁸⁸ The approach used to calculate the economic costs of suicide follows that used for calculating the economic costs of femicide.

Harassment

The total incidence of harassment, which includes workplace sexual harassment, public sexual harassment and criminal harassment, is drawn from the 2019 SSPPS custom tabulation. Instances of workplace and public harassment captured in this study include both being a direct victim of harassment and being a witness to harassment.

To estimate the impacts of workplace harassment, this model follows the Deloitte Report. In that study, the authors create categories of workplace harassment severity (categories 1, 2, 3 and 4). Using results from the 2019 SSPPS custom tabulation, severity categories are created that mirror those of the Deloitte Report (categories 1, 2 and 3).⁸⁹

Criminal Law Enforcement – Criminal harassment

The calculation methods used to estimate police, court and corrections costs is the same as the approach used for estimate costs for sexual and criminal harassment. For details on this approach, see those sections.

Health care – Physician visits – Workplace harassment

The Deloitte Report provides the percentage of people who experienced harassment who report visiting a doctor as a result of the harassment. Using these percentages, the number of people who visited a family doctor is estimated, using the average cost of a family doctor used in the assault cost estimations.

Health care – Physician visits – Public harassment

Drawing from a 2019 study by scholars Maria DelGreco and John Christensen, the percentage of people who experience public harassment that develop a mood disorder is estimated.⁹⁰ This calculation assumes that a score of four or greater on the *Anxiety Subscale of the Brief Symptom Inventory* would qualify as having a mood disorder. The percentage of people that seek medical attention for a mood disorder is drawn from the 2023 Statistics Canada study *Mental disorders and access to mental health care*.⁹¹

Economic Impacts – Productivity loss – Absenteeism from workplace harassment

This estimation follows the method in the Deloitte Report. The average number of hours a worker that experienced workplace harassment is drawn from the report and used to calculate the total hours of leave taken by all victims of workplace harassment. Likewise, the number of hours spent by managers and administrators for each day off taken by workers is calculated, based on the method used in the 2019 DOJ Report.⁹² From these percentages, the total number of days lost resulting from public harassment is calculated.

Economic Impacts – Productivity loss – Presenteeism from workplace harassment

The productivity loss from presenteeism is estimated using the approach laid out in the Deloitte Report. The average reduction in productivity and duration of that reduction for victims in each harassment intensity category are used to calculate the average hours of lost productivity. These averages are then used to calculate the total number of lost hours for all victims of workplace harassment.

Economic Impacts – Productivity loss – Staff turnover from workplace harassment

Like the estimates for absenteeism and presenteeism, the productivity loss associated with turnover due to workplace harassment is calculated based on the approach in the Deloitte Report. The percentage of victims and perpetrators that left their jobs is used to calculate the total number of job separations, based on the same logic used for the calculations of the lost productivity associated with worker turnover due to sexual assault.

Appendix B

Survey Questionnaire

1. In your view, what are the main social, economic or institutional systems that influence the safety and well-being of women and gender-diverse people in your context (e.g. justice system, education system, labour market, housing, social assistance)?
2. What do you see as the root causes or drivers of GBV in British Columbia? Please list and briefly explain as many as you feel are relevant.
3. How do economic structures (e.g. employment patterns, poverty, economic dependence) contribute to GBV risks?
4. For each of the drivers you identified above, how does it specifically lead to or exacerbate GBV? Please briefly describe the pathway or mechanism. (Example: “Driver X contributes to GBV because it creates Y condition, leading to Z outcome.”)
5. Based on your understanding, where within these systems would interventions have the greatest impact on preventing or reducing GBV?
6. Please rank the following types of interventions in terms of perceived potential to reduce GBV in your context (1 = highest potential, 5 = lowest potential):
 - Policy and legislative reform
 - Economic empowerment initiatives
 - Cultural and educational interventions
 - Institutional practice changes (e.g. within justice, health care, housing)
 - Community-based prevention programs
7. Are there any innovative or emerging approaches (locally or globally) that you believe could shift systemic drivers of GBV effectively?
8. What are the biggest barriers to addressing systemic drivers of GBV in your work or context?
9. Is there anything else you wish to share about systemic risks, drivers or potential solutions related to GBV that we have not asked about?

Appendix C

Recommendations from Independent Systemic Review: The British Columbia Legal System's Treatment of Intimate Partner Violence and Sexual Violence, 2025

Enhance Governance

RECOMMENDATION 1: The Review recommends that the BC government declare that gender-based violence is a provincial epidemic.

RECOMMENDATION 2: The Review recommends that the BC government create a strong internal government accountability mechanism.

RECOMMENDATION 3: The Review recommends the appointment of an independent GBV Commissioner.

RECOMMENDATION 7: The Review recommends that the province create a standing Gender-Based Violence Death Review Committee (GBV-DRC).

RECOMMENDATION 8: The Review recommends the development of a broad and collaborative gender-based violence data strategy across government agencies and legal system institutions, with participation from academic and frontline experts.

RECOMMENDATION 9: The Review recommends that the BC government lead a process to update and reinvigorate the VAWIR policy to improve the legal system's treatment of intimate partner violence and sexual violence.

Prevent GBV

RECOMMENDATION 4A: The Review recommends that the BC government prioritize support for prevention initiatives, including public education, to reduce and prevent violence before it escalates to the point of engaging the legal system.

RECOMMENDATION 4B: The Review recommends that in addition to prioritizing support services for survivors (recognizing that sexual violence and intimate partner violence disproportionately affect women and gender-diverse people), the BC government support quality, accredited services for men who use violence

RECOMMENDATION 4C: The Review recommends strengthening the system-wide framework for education and training of institutional actors (including government agencies, police, Crown counsel, courts and corrections) on the causes and dynamics of gender-based violence, unconscious bias and the elements of effective trauma-informed practice. This framework should include: a) a system of core competencies and certification; and b) evaluation of whether education and training for system actors is being utilized, whether the programs are effective and whether outcomes are improved.

RECOMMENDATION 6A: The Review recommends that the BC government provide ongoing support for collaborative mechanisms between entities that address gender-based violence, including Violence Against Women in Relationships/Violence in Relationships (VAWIR/VIR) tables, interagency case assessment teams (ICATs), domestic violence units (DVUs) and the Community Coordination for Survivor Safety (CCSS) program.

RECOMMENDATION 6B: The Review further recommends that wraparound (hub) models of service provision to survivors be supported and sustained, including Child and Youth Advocacy Centres (CYACs), Indigenous Justice Centres (IJC) and Family Law Centres.

RECOMMENDATION 5A: The Review recommends strengthening established anti-violence community-based organizations across the province by providing stable, core funding to hire, retain and appropriately train CBSWs to support survivors.

RECOMMENDATION 5B: The Review recommends that survivor support services with stable and adequate core funding be available to survivors navigating the legal system, whether through civil or criminal processes. In particular, programs underway to support survivors in the family law system should be continued and strengthened.

RECOMMENDATION 10A: The Review recommends that specified listed key amendments to the Family Law Act and associated policy changes be adopted without delay.

RECOMMENDATION 10B: The Review recommends that the BC government engage with Indigenous partners to implement the Indigenous justice strategies already endorsed by the BC government, including the BC First Nations Justice Strategy and the Métis Justice Strategy.

RECOMMENDATION 10C: The Review recommends that specified additional amendments to the Family Law Act be implemented at the earliest opportunity.

RECOMMENDATION 10D: The Review recommends several changes to family law Protection Orders.

RECOMMENDATION 11: The Review recommends that the BC government design law reforms in civil and administrative law matters regarding sexual violence and intimate partner violence in order to mirror the protections in criminal law against the improper application of myths and stereotypes.

RECOMMENDATION 12: The Review recommends that the BC government co-design changes to Supreme Court and Provincial Court rules and other court practices that will alleviate challenges faced by survivors who are engaged in family law litigation.

RECOMMENDATION 13A: The Review recommends expanding the scope and funding of legal aid for GBV survivors to cover family law services.

RECOMMENDATION 13B: The Review recommends that when the privacy or safety interests of survivors are affected in matters going to trial, independent legal advice should be made available to them (while observing appropriate fair trial safeguards).

RECOMMENDATION 14: The Review recommends that section 5.4.5 of the BC Policing Standards be amended so as to replace the biannual case conference model with a more frequent, collaborative advocate case review model.

RECOMMENDATION 15: The Review recommends that the BC government and policing bodies responsible for development of policing standards work with anti-violence sector experts (including Indigenous organizations and representatives of marginalized survivors) to update and improve policing protocols for intimate partner violence investigations.

RECOMMENDATION 16: The Review recommends that Crown counsel policy be updated to clarify that when a decision not to prosecute has been made and the survivor, the public or another significantly interested person is aware of the police investigation, it is in the public interest that the survivor, public or other significantly interested person be given adequate reasons for the non-prosecution.

RECOMMENDATION 17: The Review recommends that a robust cross-sectoral standard and set of guidelines be developed on an urgent basis for police and Crown counsel to treat breaches of conditions with the seriousness required.

RECOMMENDATION 18A: The Review recommends that a transparent, accessible process be provided for survivors (or their representatives) to make complaints about Crown counsel conduct and decisions.

RECOMMENDATION 18B: The Review recommends that Crown counsel develop an automatic review mechanism of sexual violence and intimate partner violence files to identify areas for improvement or reinforcement.

RECOMMENDATION 18C: The Review recommends that the BC Prosecution Service annual reports include reporting on the uptake and outcomes of both the complaints mechanism and the automatic review mechanism.

RECOMMENDATION 19: The Review recommends that the Ministry of Attorney General and the BC courts work together (in consultation with anti-violence experts and practitioners) to create a Court Coordinator role to gather and manage information across different legal processes.

RECOMMENDATION 20A: The Review recommends that recommendations made by the Rise Women's Legal Centre and the Canadian Bar Association BC with regard to physical infrastructure improvements at BC courthouses be implemented without delay.

RECOMMENDATION 20B: The Review recommends that testimonial aids be available in both criminal and family law proceedings.

RECOMMENDATION 21: The Review recommends that the Ministry of Attorney General create a working group to explore the use of restorative responses to sexual violence and intimate partner violence in BC

Endnotes

- ¹ https://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2017/cfc-swc/SW21-172-2017-1-eng.pdf
- ² P. 6. https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/law-crime-and-justice/about-bc-justice-system/justice-reform-initiatives/systemic-review/dr_kim_stantons_june_2025_final_report_-_independent_systemic_review_the_british_columbia_legal_systems_treatment_of_intimate_partner_violence_and_sexual_violence.pdf
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- ⁷ <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2023FIN0072-001953>
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- ²³ <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2022001/article/00006-eng.htm>
- ²⁴ The costs outlined in this report are best understood as conservative estimates and there are many dimensions of GBV costs that are not considered here. For example, not all direct government spending on programs serving victims and their families are included. More broadly, long-term health impacts of GBV on children and other family members of victims are not included, although we know from past studies that these impacts of substantial and far-reaching. Productivity loss estimates are likely underestimates due to the gender pay gap. See the following: [https://www.ajpmonline.org/article/S0749-3797\(16\)30615-8/fulltext](https://www.ajpmonline.org/article/S0749-3797(16)30615-8/fulltext)

²⁵ This estimate is very conservative. There is limited data to determine whether a person has experienced two or more types of GBV. The most prevalent form of GBV identified in this study is workplace sexual harassment. Therefore, we use the number of people who have experienced one or two instances workplace harassment as our lower-bound estimate. This harassment includes acts like being whistled at and unwanted physical contact.

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³⁶ Recommendations 1 to 3 and 7 to 9.

³⁷ <https://www.dss.gov.au/national-plan-end-gender-based-violence>; <https://www.pmc.gov.au/office-women/womens-safety#:~:text=Domestic%2C%20Family%20and%20Sexual%20Violence,Commission>

³⁸ <https://www.ctvnews.ca/montreal/article/workplace-harassment-cnesst-launches-awareness-campaign/>

³⁹ <https://www.ctvnews.ca/montreal/article/workplace-harassment-cnesst-launches-awareness-campaign/>

⁴⁰ <https://fipa.bc.ca/greens-take-lead-to-stop-ndas-from-silencing-victims/>

⁴¹ <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/law-crime-and-justice/human-rights/human-rights-protection/sex-discrimination-harassment.pdf#:~:text=To%20make%20a%20complaint%20under,exceptions%20to%20this%20time%20frame>

⁴² https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/rp-pr/cj-jp/fv-vf/rr12_7/rr12_7.pdf

⁴³ <https://www.deloitte.com/content/dam/assets-zone1/au/en/docs/services/economics/deloitte-au-economic-costs-sexual-harassment-workplace-240320.pdf>

⁴⁴ However, results from the new survey done in 2024/2025 will be released in 2026. We do not use any results from this survey.

⁴⁵ See table <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2023001/article/00003/tbl/tbl01-eng.htm>

⁴⁶ <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/cv.action?pid=3510017701>.

⁴⁷ <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/cv.action?pid=1010000501>

⁴⁸ This 65% of total spending reflects the amount police spend on addressing crime specifically and was determined in the 2009 DOJ Report. See page 25 of the report.

⁴⁹ See page 25 of the report.

⁵⁰ <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/cv.action?pid=1010000501>

⁵¹ <https://www23.statcan.gc.ca/imdb/p3VD.pl?Function=getVD&TVD=201435&CVD=201438&CPV=7033&CST=01011960&CLV=3&MLV=4>

⁵² <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/cv.action?pid=1010000501>

⁵³ <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/cv.action?pid=3510015401>

⁵⁴ <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=3510000301&pickMembers%5B0%5D=110&cubeTimeFrame.startYear=2017+%2F+2018&cubeTimeFrame.endYear=2019+%2F+2020&referencePeriods=20170101%2C20190101>

⁵⁵ <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2023001/article/00003-eng.htm>

⁵⁶ <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2023001/article/00003-eng.htm>

⁵⁷ <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/cv.action?pid=3510002701>

⁵⁸ <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/cv.action?pid=3510002701>; <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/cv.action?pid=3510003801>

⁵⁹ <https://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/cj-jp/victims-victimes/sentencing-peine/imposed-imposees.html#:~:text=years%20after%20that-,Life%20Sentences,different%20periods%20of%20parole%20ineligibility>

⁶⁰ <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/200128/dq200128a-eng.htm>

⁶¹ <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/cv.action?pid=3510002701>

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⁶³ <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/cv.action?pid=3510017701>

- ⁶⁴ https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwiki.gccollab.ca%2Fimages%2F8%2F8e%2FCBA_Guide-EN.doc&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK
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- ⁶⁶ <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2023001/article/00003-eng.htm>
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- ⁶⁹ <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=1710000901&cubeTimeFrame.startMonth=01&cubeTimeFrame.startYear=2018&cubeTimeFrame.endMonth=10&cubeTimeFrame.endYear=2018&referencePeriods=20180101%2C20181001>
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- ⁷¹ <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/cv.action?pid=3510002701>; <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/cv.action?pid=3510003801>
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