



Response to the Scottish Parliament Consultation on Code of Conduct changes to give effect to the recommendations of the Joint Working Group on Sexual Harassment and Sexist Behaviour

29 January 2020

About us

The Scottish Women's Rights Centre (SWRC) is a unique collaborative project that provides free legal information, advice, representation and advocacy support to women affected by violence and abuse in Scotland. The SWRC exists because of abuses of power and because a gap persists between women's experiences of violence and abuse and their ability to access justice.

In August 2019, the SWRC launched a specialist Sexual Harassment Legal Service funded by the Justice and Equality Fund to support women who have experienced sexual harassment at work, in further education and online.

Response to the Consultation

The SWRC welcomes the proposed further change to section 7 of the Code of Conduct for Members of the Scottish Parliament (MSPs). We broadly support the proposed change, which would enable anyone who has experienced bullying, harassment, sexual harassment, or other inappropriate behaviour by an MSP, in the course of their role as a parliamentarian, to report a breach of the Code.

This change would underscore Parliament's commitment to a zero-tolerance approach in tackling sexual harassment and ensure that MSPs in breach of the Code can be held to account. In terms of implementation, we consider that it is imperative for this change to be widely publicised, and that reporting processes are clear and accessible to victim/survivors, and are not open to abuse.