



2019 Provincial Election Questionnaire

VIOLENCE

1 in 2 women over the age of 15 living in NL will experience sexual or physical violence in their lifetime.

What strategies and policies will you put in place to address violence against women?

NL Alliance:

Domestic violence is a pandemic that is hard to solve, but a challenge we cannot ignore. In many cases, there are underlying causes for domestic abuse that need to be addressed. Poverty, substance abuse, and mental health issues are all serious areas that Government needs to be focusing more resources. Helping to alleviate those causes will also help reduce the outcome. Secondly we need to do better on education, especially to young men. This, once again, comes back to curriculum presented in secondary schools. Thankfully, with cultural movements like 'Me Too' and 'Time's up', media and society are hopefully moving towards a respectful and healthy place on this topic. But we cannot take that for granted.

Finally, for victims of abuse and violence, we need to ensure that the supports and resources are there for them to find a safe place that will protect them and ensure that they are taken care of in whatever transition they may find themselves in. That includes supports through counselling, financial supports, shelter supports, and judicial supports. We feel that in situations like this, Government should work with local nonprofits to assist in some areas of support.

Liberal Party of Newfoundland and Labrador:

We've taken concrete measures throughout our time in government to reduce the incidence and impact of violence against women and girls.

Recognizing the lifelong effects of domestic violence on women and children, we have expanded the definition of family violence in the *Family Violence Protection Act* to include psychological or emotional abuse. Expansion of the definition to include psychological or emotional abuse within the family will capture situations where family violence involves using words or actions to control, isolate, intimidate or dehumanize someone as well as situations related to financial abuse within the family.

These changes will ensure that the act reflects the reality of the experience of family violence and that the legal system has the tools to deal with it effectively. By broadening the definition of family violence, it will be easier for victims to seek an Emergency Protection Order to protect them and their children.

We have also introduced family violence leave where the employee or a person to whom the employee is a parent or caregiver has been directly or indirectly subjected to family violence. With the introduction of family violence leave, an employee can use 3 days of paid leave and 7 days unpaid leave in a year as family violence leave.

We've transferred oversight for transition houses from the Regional Health Authorities to Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation in an effort to improve linkages along the housing continuum.

Our government is proud to have delivered on the Way Forward commitment to increase access to legal advice for survivors of sexual violence. In a partnership with the Public Legal Information Association of Newfoundland and Labrador and the Newfoundland and Labrador Sexual Assault Crisis and Prevention Centre, and with funding from the federal government, the Sexual Violence Legal Support Service has trained 20 lawyers who provide up to four free hours of legal advice to survivors of sexual violence. The service is available anywhere in the province and by phone or email for those who experienced sexual violence here but are now living elsewhere.

In its first six months of operation, the program has served over 50 clients. Our goal is to increase access to justice and support anyone from this province who is a survivor of sexual violence and who may feel unsure about their legal rights and options. We will continue the program we created, in collaboration with the Federal Government, to ensure survivors are well informed about the legal system and understand their rights.

We established our Justice Minister's Committee on Violence against Women and Girls, which will continue its work toward ending violence against women and girls.

Through the work of the Justice Minister's Committee on Violence Against Women and Girls, electronic monitoring was discussed as a way to protect those exiting violent relationships. Enhancing supervision of offenders convicted of domestic related crimes would increase victim and public safety as well as keep offenders accountable to no-contact conditions. Budget 2019 includes \$354,000 for bail supervision and electronic monitoring programs to help lower levels of recidivism and improve safety for women.

We will build on these efforts by bringing forward new legislation, such as the Interpersonal Violence Disclosure Protocol – also known in the United Kingdom as Clare's Law – aimed at increasing the safety of women in intimate relationships. This would allow police agencies, in some cases, to disclose to a person their partner's criminal history.

We will be engaging in consultations across the province as we develop a new violence prevention strategy. This work will be guided and supported by a diverse committee of community stakeholders and senior staff from key government departments.

Progressive Conservative Party of Newfoundland and Labrador:

We will bring forward a renewed Violence Prevention Strategy to build on the advances of the most recent Violence Prevention Strategy. Initiatives will relate to child protection, victim safety, shelters and support networks, transition houses, cyber-violence, workplace harassment, gang violence, human trafficking, protective police presence, restorative justice, victim impact, legal aid and support, Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, elder abuse, persons with disabilities, racism and hate crime, gender-based violence, bullying, safe and caring schools, violence in care facilities, and other matters. We will create a safe and healthy environment in every school. By carrying out targeted and schoolwide mental health interventions, we can simultaneously improve students' well-being and academic achievement. A Crosbie government will ensure the Seniors' Advocate has powers similar to those of the Child and Youth Advocate to investigate and report on specific cases. We will work with the Seniors' Advocate on strategies to address elder abuse, exploitation and consumer protection, particularly in relation to marketing fraud. We will work with Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners to explore opportunities to improve access.

Newfoundland and Labrador New Democratic Party:

The provincial budget will include a Social and Emotional Learning curriculum in schools, which is long overdue. We also need to integrate positive messages about women and girls in the regular curriculum.

Women stay with the offender longer because of poverty, so anti-poverty measures are important.

Women-serving organizations need more funding to provide services to women who have experienced violence.

Social workers, police, nurses, etc., need more training in how to help women experiencing trauma from sexual and physical violence.