

Women's Advocate Program

What if we had a Women's Advocate in every Unifor workplace?



Women are **five times** more likely to speak to someone they know when they are looking for help.

A Unifor Women's Advocate is a specially-trained work colleague, there to help women access workplace or community services and support them to get the help they need, when they need it.

We believe workplaces are safer, and help create safer communities, when we provide support and connection when it's needed most.

What does a Women's Advocate do?

 **Learns to support and advocate**

A Women's Advocate is a specially-trained workplace representative who assists women with concerns such as:

- workplace harassment,
- intimate partner violence and abuse,
- mental health concerns, and more.

The Women's Advocate is not a counsellor but rather provides support for women seeking workplace and community resources.

 **Raises awareness about violence against women**

While some men do experience violence within an intimate relationship, the vast majority of victims are women.



In 2019, a third of all police-reported violence in Canada was intimate partner violence. Women represented 79% of the 107,000 victims that year alone.

Assists women escaping domestic violence

Women who are in abusive relationships risk further violence, even death, as they seek to leave or break contact with the abuser.

The *Women's Advocate* needs to be trained to recognize signs of abuse, make appropriate referrals and work with the employer to consider safety planning for the workplace if necessary.



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After what happened, I wanted to curl into a little ball and disappear.

The Advocate at my workplace was supportive and linked me to someone trained to help.

She was a life saver.

Why should this be an important program for your employer?

- When women are provided with assistance and support from their *Women's Advocate* they are more often able to remain at work, reducing absenteeism and staffing shortages.
- Early prevention strategies minimize the effects of violence for women by providing avenues through which they can seek assistance.
- Supporting a member to take the week-long training course is an investment in the health and safety of employees and builds trust.
- Violence is a recurring issue and if not addressed through workplace violence prevention programs it can end tragically.
- Employers have an obligation to take every precaution reasonable for the protection of a worker. A *Women's Advocate* can protect employees and at the same time do what is required under the law.



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