



Domestic and Sexual Violence Leave

Prepared for: B.C. Government Communications
and Public Engagement

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Executive Summary

Domestic and sexual violence has significant consequences for those who experience it. Not only is there an emotional toll that comes with experiencing violence, but there can be heavy economic consequences for those who leave abusive home situations. When people are worried about losing their homes or their jobs, it can be a significant barrier to seeking help.

Since Budget 2018, the B.C. provincial government has taken a number of steps to address gender-based violence – including delivering the first targeted funding for transition housing in more than two decades.

But housing is just one of the financial concerns facing people who are dealing with domestic or sexual violence. People also worry about whether they can keep their job – or afford to live if they can't make it in to work.

Currently, employers in British Columbia are required to provide unpaid leave of up to 10 days, plus an additional period of up to 15 weeks, if an employee and/or their child (or other eligible person) faces domestic or sexual violence. These requirements were put into effect during the province of British Columbia's spring 2019 legislative session.

In the same legislative session, government committed to exploring the possibility of requiring employers to provide a portion of the newly legislated leave as paid leave.

To meet that commitment government asked people for their views on requiring employers to provide paid leave to survivors of domestic and sexual violence. The public responded with overwhelming support for this kind of leave.

As a whole, 93 per cent of those who participated in government's consultation on the creation of paid domestic and sexual violence leave said they support this kind of leave, with the majority saying this leave should be of up to five days.

Presently, B.C. is one of only two provinces in Canada (Alberta being the other) that does not require employers to provide paid leave to survivors of domestic and sexual violence. Among those provinces that do offer paid leave, the length of paid leave varies from two to five days.

Those who offered their views to government would like to see B.C. join most other provinces in closing this gap. While there are some differences in opinion in how much leave should be offered or how it should be administered, government's consultation efforts revealed broad-based public support for paid domestic violence leave in British Columbia – from both workers and employers.

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Introduction

Background

Currently, employers in British Columbia are required to offer unpaid leave of up to 10 days, plus an additional period of up to 15 weeks, if an employee and/or their child (or other eligible person) faces domestic or sexual violence. These requirements were put into effect following decisions made during the province of British Columbia's spring 2019 legislative session.

In the same legislative session, interest was generated for possibly requiring employers to offer a portion of the newly legislated leave as paid leave.

Presently, B.C. is one of only two provinces in Canada (Alberta being the other) that does not require employers to offer paid leave to survivors of domestic and sexual violence. Among those provinces that do offer paid leave, the length of paid leave varies from two to five days.

Public Consultation

The Government of British Columbia is currently exploring the possibility of implementing a requirement for employers to offer paid leave for domestic and sexual violence in B.C., and has sought feedback from the public and stakeholders about this potential change. Consultations included administration of an online survey which was accessible to all British Columbians between August 30 and October 8, 2019, as well as acceptance of written submissions from stakeholders in B.C. Finally, the Ministry of Labour and the Gender Equity Office held in-person engagement sessions with stakeholder organizations.

Online Survey

Feedback from B.C. citizens was largely collected using a standardized survey tool, available online at <https://engage.gov.bc.ca/domesticviolenceleave>. The survey consisted of seven survey questions on the topic of employer-paid domestic and sexual violence leave. Six of the items were closed-ended questions. The final question was an open-ended text box which allowed respondents to write freely about their opinion on employers offering paid leave for employees who are impacted by domestic and sexual violence. The survey also included nine demographic questions. These questions allowed for the collection of information on stakeholder group, region, gender, and minority group identities.

The online survey was available to members of the public from August 30 to October 8, 2019. A total of 6,261 survey completions were included in the development of the present report. Of these completions, 115 came from respondents who reported that they live outside of B.C. As the purpose of this consultation was to collect feedback from British Columbians on paid leave for domestic and sexual violence, these 115 cases were excluded from analysis and reporting.



Written Submissions

Stakeholder groups – such as employers, employer and business associations, unions, and employee organizations – were able to submit written submissions through email, to DVLeave@gov.bc.ca. A set of guidelines for the submissions is published on the engagement website and can be found at: <https://engage.gov.bc.ca/domesticandsexualviolenceleave/organizational-submissions/>.

Written submissions were accepted throughout the consultation period (August 30 through October 8, 2019). In total, 32 relevant submissions were collected during this period.

Analysis of Feedback Received

Analysis of feedback obtained through surveys and written submissions was conducted by R.A. Malatest & Associates Ltd. (Malatest), an independent research company, on behalf of the government. Notes from in-person engagement sessions were recorded and analyzed by staff; a summary of findings from this line of evidence was then shared with Malatest, for inclusion in this report. The sub-sections below provide a summary of how analysis of survey results and written stakeholder submissions was undertaken by Malatest.

Quantitative Analysis

The majority of survey responses were analyzed quantitatively. Summary statistics methods were used to create an overall picture of responses to closed-ended questions. Open-ended text fields in the survey were coded thematically according to a coding framework (attached in **Appendix A**) and codes applied were then also summarized using statistical methods.

Where appropriate, some cross-tabulations and comparisons of responses by group type (e.g., by region, by stakeholder group) were undertaken to identify whether the sub-groups differed in their assessment of a given question. Demographic variables of interest for these comparisons were identified *a priori* by GCPE, in consultation with Malatest. Decisions were based on existing knowledge about these sub-groups and interest in better understanding diverging trends between them.

Qualitative Analysis

Written submissions from stakeholder groups were qualitatively coded using an inductive, iterative approach with the software package NVivo. An initial coding framework was developed based on the first 18 documents (both transcripts and submissions) received in the consultation process; development of the coding framework stopped after saturation was reached.¹ Once saturation was reached, the remaining submissions were coded according to the existing framework.

¹ Saturation was defined as the point when no new codes or themes were identified over ten consecutive stakeholder submissions.

Summary of Participants

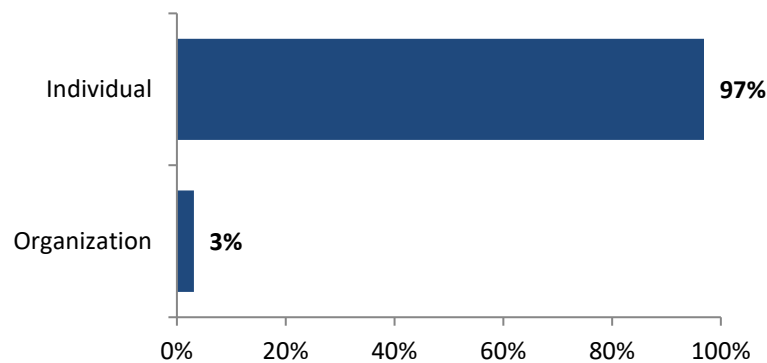
Online Survey

Respondents' answers to survey questions regarding stakeholder group, region, gender, and other qualities were used to assess relative levels of participation in this consultation. The tables and figures in this section summarize how participation in the web survey broke down according to different demographic and employment qualities.

Stakeholder Group

The large majority of survey respondents reported that they were answering the survey as individuals, while a small number indicated that they were answering the survey on behalf of an organization. The breakdown of stakeholder type is reflected in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Stakeholder Group Membership



Valid n=6,117.

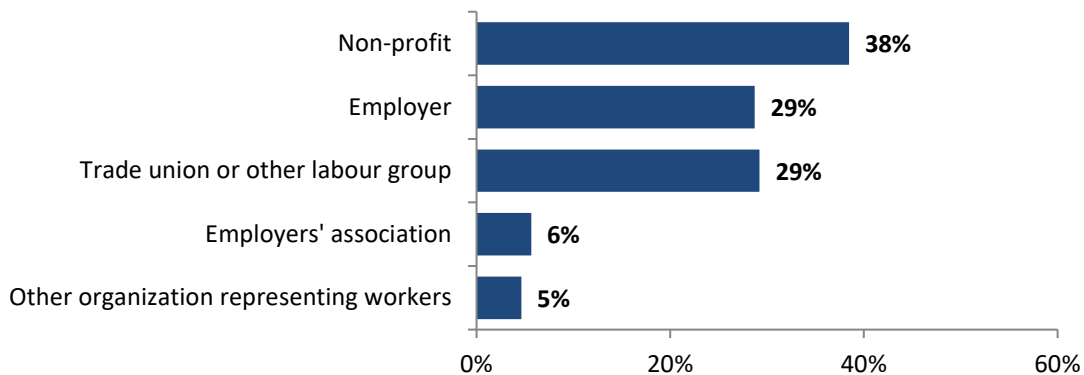
Sample numbers may change across survey items due to missed or skipped questions.

Source: Paid Leave for Domestic and Sexual Violence Survey, 2019

For more information, please see Table B1 in Appendix B.

Respondents who reported that they were answering on behalf of an organization were asked what type of organization they represented. Since respondents could select as many answers as applied, the list below is not mutually exclusive. However, only three respondents did identify their organization as “mixed” – of these, all identified their organizations as both non-profits and employers.

Figure 2: Organization Type



Valid n=195

Sample numbers may change across survey items due to missing or skipped questions.

Source: Paid Leave for Domestic and Sexual Violence Survey, 2019

Percentages may add up to more than 100% due to the option to select as many responses as applied.

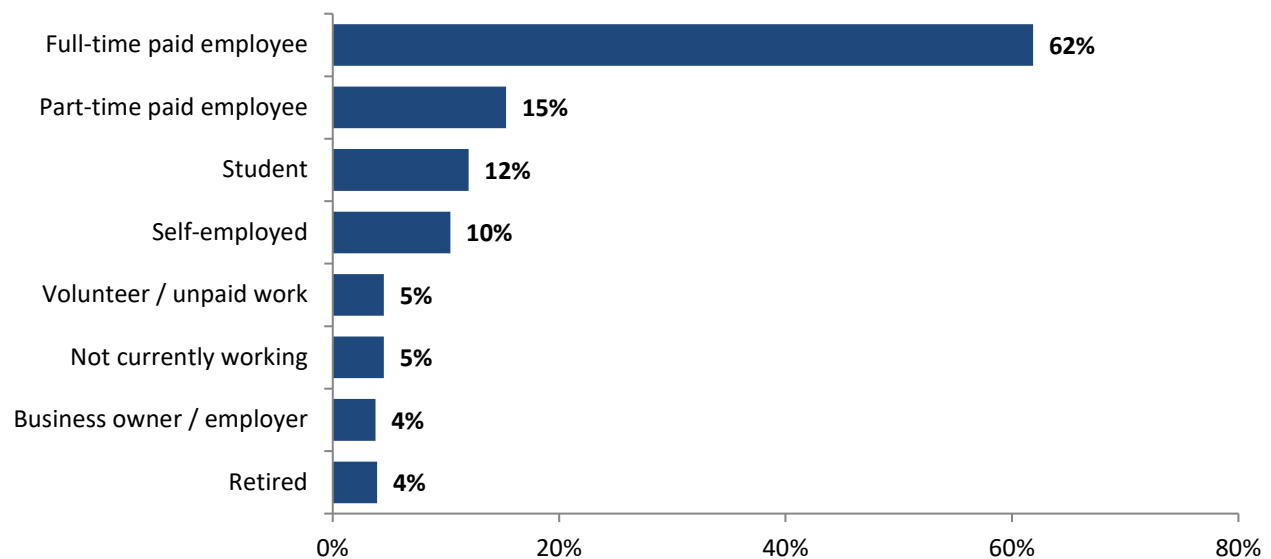
For more information, please see Table B2 in Appendix B.

Employment Status

Survey respondents who answered as individuals were asked to indicate their current employment status. As with the “organization type” question above, respondents could select as many as applied to their situation. As a result, percentages add up to more than 100%.

As shown in Figure 3, the most common response among individuals by far, was that they were full-time paid employees at the time of the survey (62%). Part-time employees, students, and self-employment were the next most common options, ranging from 10% to 15% each. The remaining employment status options each represented five percent or less of individual respondents.

Figure 3: Employment Status



Valid n=5,951

Sample numbers may change across survey items due to missing or skipped questions.

Source: Paid Leave for Domestic and Sexual Violence Survey, 2019

Percentages may add up to more than 100% due to the option to select as many responses as applied.

For more information, please see Table B3 in Appendix B.

For analysis purposes, the above groupings were consolidated into two categories: employees and employers. If respondents indicated being both an employee (part-time or full-time) and a business owner or employer, they were classified as employers for the purpose of this analysis. Respondents who indicated that they were neither employees of any sort nor an employer (e.g., retired, student) were not included in the comparative analysis of employers and employees. Employees represented the large majority of respondents, at 96%.

Gender

Women were over-represented in the survey sample (when compared to the general population), comprising 81% of individual respondents; men, in contrast, made up 14% of the sample. Those who identified as gender diverse represented 5% of individual survey respondents.

Region

The majority of survey respondents (90%) reside in the three most populous regions in the province: the Lower Mainland / Fraser Valley; Vancouver Island and the Sunshine Coast; and the Thompson / Okanagan. Table 1 provides a summary of the proportion of responses from each region of B.C., and the proportion of B.C.'s population that resides in each of these regions (according to the 2016 Canada Census).

Table 1: Survey Responses and B.C. Population, by Region

Region	Proportion of Survey Responses	Proportion of B.C. Population
Lower Mainland / Fraser Valley	53%	60.9%
Vancouver Island and Sunshine Coast	28%	17.2%
Thompson / Okanagan	9%	11.8%
Kootenay	3%	3.3%
Cariboo	3%	3.4%
Northwest and North Coast	2%	1.2%
Nechako	2%	0.8%
Northeast	1%	1.5%

Valid n=5,929

Percentages may add up to more than 100% due to rounding.

Sample numbers may change across survey items due to missing or skipped questions.

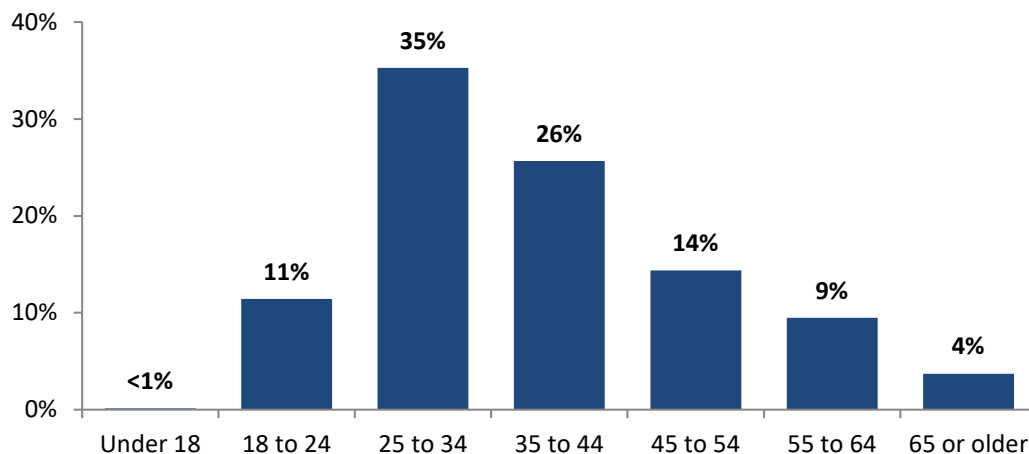
Source: Paid Leave for Domestic and Sexual Violence Survey, 2019; Census Profile, 2016 Census

For more information, please see Table B11 in Appendix B.

Age

Younger adults (those aged 25 to 34 years) made up over 35% of the individual respondents to the survey. Those aged 45 years and over represented slightly over one-quarter of the survey sample, and those aged 24 years and younger represented approximately 12% of the survey sample.

Figure 4: Age Groups



Valid n=5,927

Sample numbers may change across survey items due to missing or skipped questions.

Source: Paid Leave for Domestic and Sexual Violence Survey, 2019

For more information, please see Table B5 in Appendix B.

Indigenous Heritage

Indigenous people represented 7% of respondents to the Paid Leave for Domestic and Sexual Violence Survey. Overall, Indigenous people achieved roughly proportional representation among

individual survey respondents, as Indigenous people represent 6% of B.C.'s total population (based on 2016 Census figures). Please refer to Table B10 in Appendix B for more information.

Minority Group Status

Individual respondents were asked whether they identified as a member of one or more minority groups. Approximately 42% of respondents reported identifying with at least one of the groups listed below.

Table 2: Survey Responses and B.C. Population, by Minority Group

Minority Group	Frequency	Valid Percent (of 5,951 individual respondents)
Visible minority	812	14%
First Nations	280	5%
Inuit	8	<1%
Métis	173	3%
Persons with disabilities	610	10%
LGBTQ2S+	1,242	21%
None of the above	3,424	58%

Valid n=5,951

Sample numbers may change across survey items due to missing or skipped questions.

Source: Paid Leave for Domestic and Sexual Violence Survey, 2019

Percentages may add up to more than 100% due to the option to select as many responses as applied.

For more information, please see Table B9 in Appendix B.

Stakeholder Submissions

A total of 32 written submissions were received from interested groups during the consultation period. These submissions were grouped according to stakeholder type, a summary of which is provided below (Table 3).

Table 3: Written Submission Sources

Group Type	Number of Submissions
Victims' services organization or NGO	15
Union or employees' association	14
Employers' association or organization	1
Law enforcement representative or organization	1
Other ²	1

² This was a transcript of an interview with the representative for the Minister's Advisory Council on Indigenous Women.

Findings – Support for Employer-Paid Leave

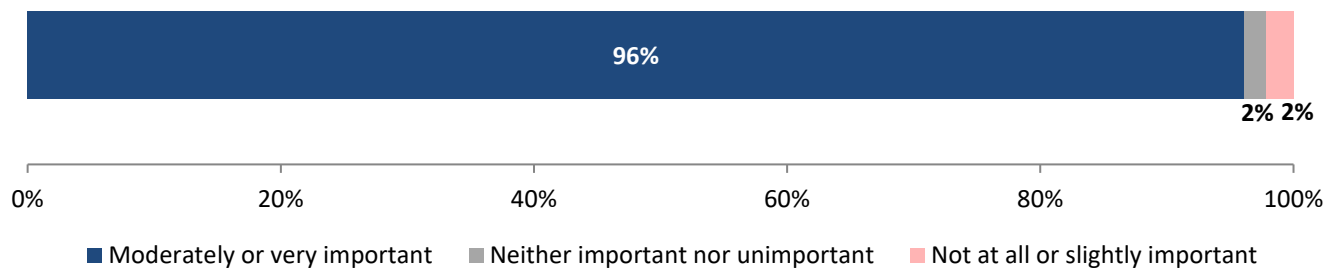
Both the general public and stakeholder groups are strongly supportive of paid leave for domestic and sexual violence survivors. Although organizations and employers were significantly more resistant to the paid leave, as a group, the large majority of these respondents did support the introduction of paid leave. Two organizations – a labour group and a women’s services group –also reported strong support for the implementation of a paid leave.

General Public’s Support for Employer-Paid Leave

A large majority of survey respondents support the implementation of paid leave for domestic and sexual violence survivors: 93% support this leave, 4% oppose it, and 3% are unsure.

Further, 96% of all respondents indicate that they believe that access to paid leave is “moderately important” or “very important” for British Columbians experiencing domestic or sexual violence.

Figure 5: How important do you think having a certain amount of paid leave is for British Columbians experiencing domestic or sexual violence? All respondents



Valid n=6,124

Sample numbers may change across survey items due to missing or skipped questions.

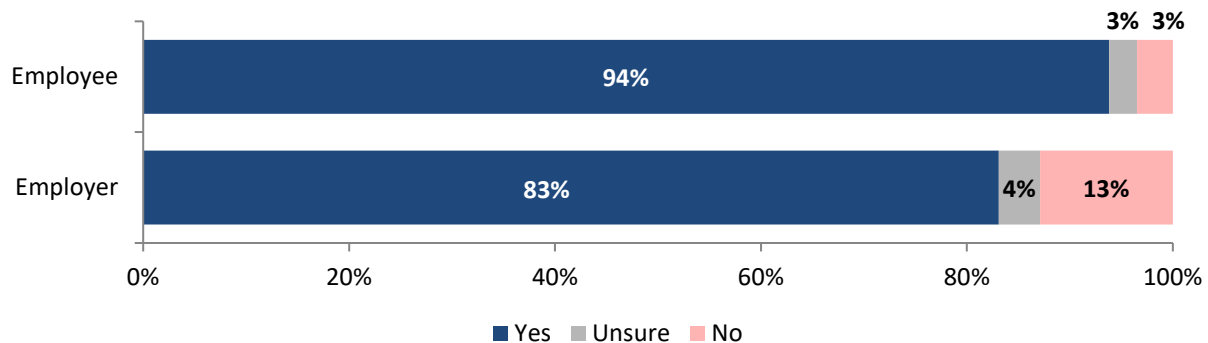
Source: Paid Leave for Domestic and Sexual Violence Survey, 2019

For more information, please see Table B13 in Appendix B.

Overall, large majorities of both organizational and individual respondents support the implementation of paid leave for domestic and sexual violence survivors (83% and 93%, respectively). However, while overall support is quite high within both groups, organizational respondents are more likely to oppose the implementation of such a leave (10% of organizational respondents do not support paid leave for domestic and sexual violence survivors, compared to 4% of individuals).³ Similarly, employers were significantly less likely to support, and more likely to oppose, the implementation of this paid leave compared to employees.

³ For more information, please see Table B19 in Appendix B.

Figure 6: Should there be new rules put in place that mean employees would continue to be paid their regular wages by employers for part of the domestic or sexual violence leave? Organizations and individuals



Valid n=5,040

Sample numbers may change across survey items due to missing or skipped questions.

Source: Paid Leave for Domestic and Sexual Violence Survey, 2019

For more information, please see Table B23 in Appendix B.

Overall, these findings suggest that while there is more resistance to the introduction of paid domestic and sexual violence leave among organizations and employers compared to individuals and employees, large majorities of both groups support the implementation of a paid leave.

Women and gender diverse individuals are also more likely to support a paid leave when compared to individual respondents who identified as men; 94% of women and gender diverse respondents support the leave, compared to 88% of men. Men are three times as likely as women and gender diverse individuals to oppose the leave (9% compared to 3%, respectively).⁴ Similarly, those who identify as LGBTQ2S+ are more likely than their counterparts to support the paid leave (97% compared to 92%).⁵

While women, gender and sexual minority respondents are more likely to support the implementation of paid leave for domestic and sexual violence compared to men and non-LGBTQ2S+ people, support for the implementation of this leave is high among all groups.

Stakeholders' Submissions about Employer-Paid Leave

The vast majority of written submissions were supportive of the implementation of paid leave for domestic and sexual violence: 30 of 32 submissions were supportive, while one was mixed in its support of the proposal and another was opposed.

Submissions from organizations that were supportive of the implementation of this paid leave tended to emphasize two main reasons for their support. First, the implementation of a paid leave

⁴ For more information, please see Table B27 in Appendix B.

⁵ For more information, please see Table B31 in Appendix B.

for domestic and sexual violence (DSV) would safeguard survivors from being forced to make a difficult choice between loss of income, and staying in an abusive relationship or not seeking treatment and support after an attack. Second, some organizations identified domestic and sexual violence as a societal issue rather than a private one, and argue that the implementation of paid leave for DSV is an important step towards redistributing the burden of such violence away from women and onto society more generally.

One submission, which indicated mixed support, came from a victims' services organization that suggested the proposal be altered to include some form of provincial governmental support to offset the costs to employers for providing this leave, or to have the leave covered entirely through national Employment Insurance (EI). Finally, the one submission that was opposed to the implementation of this leave came from an employers' organization or association; this submission recommended that this short-term leave be paid for solely through EI, and not by employers.

A few (n=3) groups did anticipate the suggestion that this leave be provided through EI, and provided counterarguments in their submissions. It was noted that the types of tasks that are eligible for this kind of leave – finding housing, attending medical appointments, dealing with police and court issues, among others – are typically smaller time investments, often taking half a day or less to accomplish. As such, these groups suggested that an option be made available whereby the total leave could be taken in pieces over the course of several weeks (or even months, in the situation that a survivor is involved in a court case). These groups noted that it would be impractical to have employees fill out the paperwork required to collect partial wages for this time off; in the interests of making this leave accessible to survivors of domestic and sexual violence, these groups supported the leave being paid directly by employers.

Consultation Session Findings on Employer-Paid Leave

Participants at consultation sessions with gender equity office stakeholders and labour stakeholders were strongly in favour of the implementation of paid leave for domestic and sexual violence. Gender equity stakeholders identified that this paid leave would provide vital support to survivors to attend to their own health and safety. Labour stakeholders emphasized the need for paid DSV leave within the context of paid leave, generally (i.e., other types of paid leave were discussed such as sick leave). Some labour stakeholders noted that while these types of benefits are available to many people in unions, government action is needed to ensure that these benefits are available to workers in non-union positions as well.

Two consultation sessions were held with employers. Participants at these consultation sessions tended to agree that while paid leave for survivors of domestic and sexual violence is necessary, it is inappropriate to place the financial burden for this leave on employers. At one of the two sessions with stakeholder groups, employers suggested that paid DSV leave should be handled through the Employment Insurance (EI) process. Other participants suggested, however, that applying for EI benefits may not be quick enough for short leaves of up to two weeks, particularly



in urgent or emergency situations that victims of domestic and sexual violence are likely to find themselves in.

Findings – Standards for Employer-Paid Leave

The majority of all respondents, as well as the majority of employers and organizations, support a paid leave of five days for domestic and sexual violence. Stakeholder organizations support a paid leave of at least ten days. A plurality, but not a majority, of respondents support keeping the same evidence requirements for both paid and unpaid leave for domestic and sexual violence leave; among those who believe the evidence requirements should be different, 63% indicate that the Act should be more specific about what qualifies as evidence.

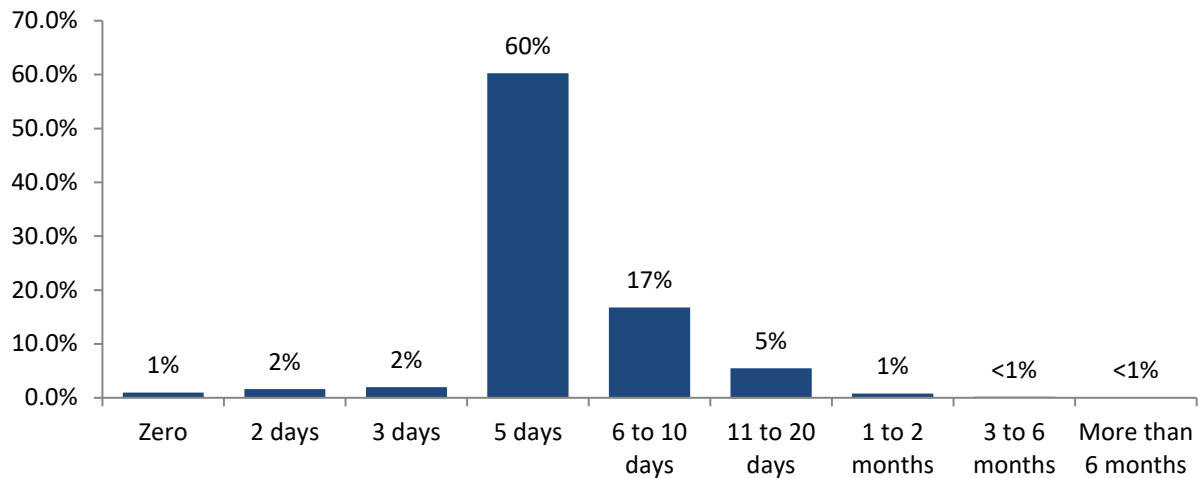
General Public's Recommendations for Employer-Paid Leave

Length of Paid Leave

The engagement survey asked respondents what they believed would be an appropriate number of paid days for this leave. Respondents tended to favour longer leaves: 60% endorsed a paid leave of five days, and a further 17% favoured a paid leave of six to ten days.

Three per cent of respondents indicated that the paid leave should be “as long as needed”. In addition, some of the comments provided in response to this question indicated that some respondents may not have been distinguishing between employer-paid leave, and a leave of absence from work that is covered by some type of employment insurance coverage, when answering this question.

Figure 7: What do you feel would be an appropriate number of paid days?



Valid n=5,345

Percentages may add up to more than 100% due to rounding.

Sample numbers may change across survey items due to missing or skipped questions.

Please note that respondents who were “unsure” or who supported “undefined” lengths of leave were excluded from this figure.

Source: Paid Leave for Domestic and Sexual Violence Survey, 2019

For more information, please see Table B14 in Appendix B.

Organizations were more likely than individuals to support shorter leaves of two or three days (13% of organizations compared to 4% of individuals); nonetheless, the majority of organizational respondents (64%) still supported a five-day paid leave. Men were more likely than women and gender diverse individuals to support shorter paid leaves of two or three days (7% compared to 3% and 4%, respectively).

Evidence Requirements for Paid Leave

There was no clear consensus from respondents on whether evidence requirements for paid leave should be the same as those for unpaid leave for domestic and sexual violence. Slightly less than half (46%) of all respondents believed the requirements should be the same, while 31% disagreed and 23% were unsure.⁶

Respondents who indicated that the evidence requirement should not be the same were then asked what the evidence requirements for paid leave for domestic and sexual violence should be. A considerable majority (62%) indicated that they believed the Act should be more specific in what counts as proof. Other responses to this question included:

- The opinion that no evidence should be required (17%);
- Uncertainty of what counted as evidence (10%); and
- Concern that proof may be too large a burden to place on survivors (8%).

⁶ For more information, please see Table B15 in Appendix B.

The issue of proof was also raised in open-ended comments at the end of the survey. Of all respondents who provided comments, four percent (n=73) emphasized that proof should not be required for this leave, and a further two percent (n=42) suggested that employees should not have to submit proof of domestic or sexual violence to an employer; instead evidentiary requirements should be managed by a third party, such as a service provider.

Support for equivalent evidence requirements for paid leave as for unpaid leave was more often voiced by organizational respondents compared to individuals: 62% of organizations agreed that the current standard of “reasonably sufficient proof” should be retained, compared to 46% of individuals.⁷ There were no significant differences in support for retaining the evidence requirement, or suggestions for how evidence should be handled, between employers and employees.⁸

Stakeholders’ Recommendations for Employer-Paid Leave

Allowance of days

Twenty-six organizations made recommendations on length of time of a paid leave for domestic and sexual violence. Of these, 24 indicated that they believed 10 days of paid leave would be appropriate; these suggestions came from victims’ services organizations, NGOs, unions and employees’ organizations, and a provincial government representative. Nineteen of these submissions emphasized that this number of days would afford survivors the time to access needed services, such as meetings with lawyers, health practitioners, and other services that are often only available during business hours. Several of these submissions (n=6) also noted that this aligned with leading practice from New Zealand on paid leave for domestic and sexual violence.

One submission, from a victims’ services organization, recommended that 30 days of leave be paid for survivors of domestic and sexual assault. Finally, one submission, from an employers’ organization, preferred that this leave not be implemented at all, but if it did go ahead that the employer-paid leave be limited to only two or three days.

On the topic of allowance of days, six organizations elaborated on their recommendations and included the suggestion that there be flexibility with the leave in terms of a start date and that the total term could be used intermittently over a longer period of time. For people who may currently still be in an abusive domestic situation, they may need to take a portion of paid leave before they leave their situation, in order to prepare (e.g., securing housing, setting up new accounts at financial institutions). For people who seek justice in the court system, court dates and related affairs that require the victim’s attendance may occur months or even years after the incident. In both of these situations, and many others, flexibility is needed to allow them to attend to these issues without loss of pay.

⁷ For more information, please refer to Table B21 in Appendix B.

⁸ For more information, please refer to Table B25 in Appendix B.

Stand-alone entitlement

Thirteen organizations included the recommendation in their submission that the leave be protected as stand-alone and separate from any other forms of personal leave, such as paid sick leave or bereavement leave. It was noted by two organizations that folding DSV leave in with other employer-paid leave may be in violation of Charter protections, as it would require survivors of DSV (statistically more likely to be women, people of colour, Indigenous women, and people with disabilities, among other groups) to “give up” other forms of paid leave in order to take their DSV leave entitlement. This would create a *de facto* discriminatory policy and could be open to legal challenges.

Evidence Requirements

Twenty-six organizations that provided a written submission commented on the topic of evidence requirements for accessing paid DSV leave. Of these, 19 were unsupportive or opposed to any type of evidence requirement, while six expressed mixed views and three were supportive.⁹

Among organizations that recommended there be no evidence requirement attached to paid DSV leave, a few common themes or reasons for this suggestion were noted. Several noted that domestic and sexual violence are under-reported, and so survivors may have no evidence to offer to their employers. A few organizations also noted that it would constitute an invasion of privacy for employers to require employees to disclose medical information such as injuries, or details about court cases. Overall, organizations that favoured no evidence requirement at all emphasized that an evidence requirement may deter survivors from taking the leave and make it inaccessible to survivors who should be eligible.

Three submissions from organizations supported maintaining the current requirement of “reasonably sufficient proof in the circumstances” for taking paid DSV leave. Of these, two stated that they did not see this definition as unreasonably burdensome and felt it was appropriate. The third submission, from an employers’ organization, stated that concern around the broad definition of “domestic or sexual violence” could result in employees taking advantage of the leave, and therefore employers’ rights to require evidence should be protected.

Finally, the six submissions that expressed mixed views on the evidence requirement indicated that some form of evidence requirement may be appropriate. A couple of organizations noted that greater definition is required in the legislation, as “reasonably sufficient proof in the circumstances” is too vaguely defined and leaves too much to the interpretation of employers. Most organizations indicated that the proof requirement should be “low barrier” so as not to create accessibility challenges for survivors seeking paid DSV leave. To that end, these organizations suggested that a range of evidence options be considered acceptable to employers, including: a note from a health practitioner; a note, email, or phone call from a community support

⁹ Submissions could express multiple views throughout the document, so numbers may add up to more than 26.

or social services organization; confirmation from a lawyer; a police report or court documents; and correspondence from a religious community leader. A couple of submissions emphasized that while police reports or court records are acceptable as evidence, they should not be requirements to access DSV leave, as low reporting rates mean that most survivors would not be able to produce this type of evidence to their employers.

Finally, one submission indicated that, although they were against any type of evidence requirement at all, if it is included in the legislation then employers should give a reasonable period of time (60 days after returning to work) for employees to produce the evidence, and that employers should be required to cover any costs incurred by the employee to obtain the evidence (e.g., fees for written doctors' notes).

Protecting Access for Vulnerable Workers

Fourteen submissions from organizations identified opportunities to strengthen the legislation to protect workers who may be in more vulnerable situations. Three specifically noted the need to ensure that protections for part-time workers are also considered. Suggestions include ensuring that part-time workers have the right to refuse shifts without penalty for DSV leave purposes, and leave payments are calculated based on the average number of hours worked per week over the past several months.

Fourteen submissions also recommended that the legislation stipulate that there be no minimum length of service requirements for paid leave eligibility. These submissions emphasized that refusing eligibility for paid DSV leave until an employee finishes a probation period or other set length of time forces a victim of domestic violence to choose between sacrificing income and remaining in an abusive situation out of financial necessity.

Consultation Session Recommendations on Employer-Paid Leave

Length of Paid Leave

Similar to the majority of written submissions, all participants at the gender equity and labour stakeholders consultations endorsed a minimum five-day paid leave period, with many urging the government to go further and implement a ten-day, or two-week, paid leave for domestic and sexual violence.

Employers were less supportive of paid leave. If implemented, however, employers were more likely to support shorter leaves of one or two days. Participants noted that the longer the period of paid leave, the more likely they would be to ask for supporting proof from employees taking the leave.

Evidence Requirements

The majority of participants in labour and gender equity stakeholder consultation sessions recommended that there be no evidence requirements for employees to access paid DSV leave.

Participants in the in-person consultation sessions indicated that seeking proof of abuse or assault can re-victimize and re-traumatize survivors. Proof requirement might also intimidate or discourage survivors from requesting the leave they need.

Employers in this group also indicated confusion around what constitutes “reasonably sufficient” proof; these participants suggested that employers might feel uncomfortable adjudicating the appropriateness of proof. Some also noted that requesting evidence from their employees would be “awkward” or “uncomfortable” for them, particularly in small workplaces without a dedicated HR department.

Findings – Concerns around Employer-Paid Leave

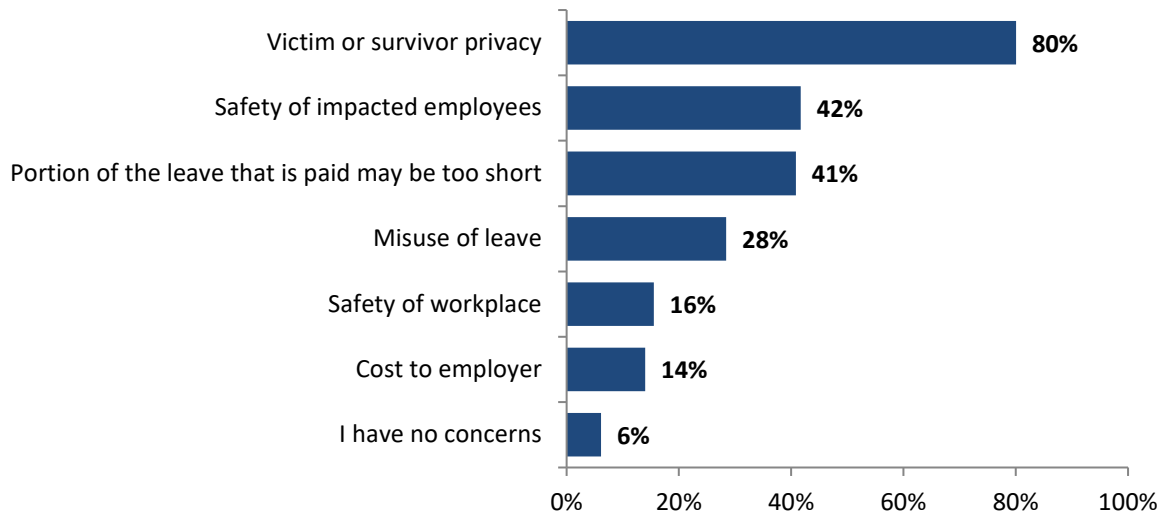
Protecting the privacy and safety of survivors was identified as a major area of concern by both the general public and stakeholders that provided submissions. Some written comments also highlighted concerns with whether employers are equipped to handle such sensitive disclosures appropriately, and whether this paid leave may become a “liability” to employers that results in discriminatory hiring practices against groups at higher risk of domestic and sexual violence. More than ten percent of survey respondents noted that they had concerns about the cost of this leave to employers and businesses, and indicated that they believed that this type of leave should be covered by government insurance programs rather than, or in addition to, private businesses.

General Public’s Concerns around Employer-Paid Leave

Survey respondents were asked what concerns, if any, they had about the introduction of paid leave for domestic and sexual violence. A variety of response options were offered for this question, and respondents could select as many as they felt applied; further, there was an open-ended comment field available for respondents to voice any concerns they had that did not fall into the provided categories.

Only a small minority of survey respondents (6%) reported that they had “no concerns” about the introduction of paid leave for domestic and sexual violence. The three most common concerns were survivor privacy, safety of impacted employees, and that the portion of the leave that is paid by the employer may not be long enough. Figure 8 below provides a graphic summary of the main concerns reported by survey respondents.

Figure 8: What would be your concerns around implementing a paid leave for domestic and sexual violence? (All respondents)



Valid n=6,146

Sample numbers may change across survey items due to missing or skipped questions.

Source: Paid Leave for Domestic and Sexual Violence Survey, 2019

Percentages may add up to more than 100% due to the option to select as many responses as applied.

For more information, please see Table B17 in Appendix B.

In addition to the main themes presented in the graph above, open-ended comments were coded and additional themes or concerns were also identified. One percent or fewer of respondents raised concerns on each of the following issues:

- Employer discrimination against employees who make use of the paid leave, or discriminatory hiring practices towards groups at higher risk of domestic or sexual violence such as women, youth, LGBTQ2S+ people (n=43);
- The requirement for evidence may be too large a barrier for employees (n=41);
- Employers and HR departments may need training for handling such sensitive disclosures from employees, including trauma-informed approaches (n=26);
- Stigma-related barriers to access may mean that not everyone who is in need of the leave will access it (n=16); and
- Employer abuse in granting or refusing paid leave (n=15).

The types of concerns raised varied substantially between the stakeholder groups. Organizations and employers were more likely to raise concerns regarding workplace safety and cost to employers, while individuals were more likely to be concerned about the privacy of employees.

Organizations were more likely to emphasize concerns with workplace safety when compared to individuals (21% compared to 15%), and costs to businesses or employers (26% compared to 14%). Individuals, in contrast, were more likely to report concerns about survivor privacy (81% compared

to 71%) and that the portion of leave that would be employer-paid would be too short (41% compared to 33%).¹⁰ Comparisons between employers and employees showed similar areas of discrepancy, with employees being more concerned about the safety of impacted employees (42% compared to 35%), while employers were more concerned about the cost to employers (29% compared to 13%).¹¹ Only very small proportions of individuals and organizations, and employees and employers, reported having no concerns with the introduction of paid leave for domestic and sexual violence.

Gender differences about paid leave concerns were also noted. Women were more likely than men to report having no concerns about the implementation of paid leave for domestic and sexual violence (7% compared to 4% of men). Other areas of differing concern included:

- Safety of impacted employees (56% of gender diverse respondents expressed concern, compared to 51% of men and 40% of women);
- Portion of leave that is employer-paid may be too short (55% of gender diverse respondents expressed concern, compared to 40% of both men and women);
- Misuse of paid leave (34% of men were concerned about this, compared to 28% of women and 12% of gender diverse respondents); and
- Cost to businesses or employers (18% of men were concerned about this, compared to 13% of women and 7% of gender diverse respondents).¹²

Respondents also had the opportunity to provide additional comment on the implementation of a paid leave for domestic and sexual violence. The most common themes identified in the comments were:

- General support for this suggested paid leave (44% of comments);
- Highlighting the need for services to support recovery from domestic or sexual violence (20% of comments);
- A need for government-paid leave or assistance to victims of domestic and sexual violence, such as access to Employment Insurance (15%); and,
- Concerns about the safety and privacy of the survivor when claiming paid leave (15%).¹³

¹⁰ For more information, please refer to Table B22 in Appendix B.

¹¹ For more information, please refer to Table B26 in Appendix B.

¹² For more information, please refer to Table B30 in Appendix B.

¹³ For more information, please refer to Table B18 in Appendix B.

Stakeholders' Concerns around Employer-Paid Leave

Evidence Requirements Creating Barrier to Access

As noted in the previous section regarding standards for paid leave, many stakeholders expressed opposition to an evidence requirement and were concerned that such a requirement could create a barrier to access for survivors. Please refer to page 15 for further details on this discussion.

Workplace Repercussions to Implementing and Claiming Leave

Several formal submissions identified a number of possible negative side effects from claiming paid DSV leave. Potential outcomes noted include: risks to the employee's privacy and confidentiality within the workplace; an unsupportive workplace culture that shames or looks down on an employee for taking paid DSV leave; and differential treatment in the workplace after claiming paid DSV leave. These issues were also reflected in the submission from an employers' organization; this submission indicated that it would be uncomfortable for employers when reviewing proof for paid leave, and that the leave could create jealousy or tension in the workplace among employees whose personal leave requests are not related to domestic or sexual violence and may therefore be unpaid (e.g., sick leave, bereavement time).

In addition, a number of written comments from the online survey also noted another potential negative repercussion from the implementation of paid DSV leave: the requirement could incentivize employers to discriminate in hiring against women, gender and sexual minorities, people with disabilities, and other groups at higher risk of experiencing domestic and sexual violence in their lifetimes.

Written comments suggested that many of these issues could be addressed through comprehensive training for employers, including their legal obligations under any new legislation for paid DSV leave and best practices on handling disclosures of trauma from employees. Fifteen written submissions included recommendations to make training on these topics available to employers.

Costs to Employers and Businesses

The single submission from an employers' organization suggested that the cost of providing paid DSV leave to employees would impose a financial burden on most businesses.

Four other submissions, from unions and NGOs, also addressed this issue. These submissions suggested that the cost to businesses to provide these paid leave days would be negligible. Three of these submissions cited the study "Economic Aspects of Paid Domestic Violence Leave Provisions," based on the experience of Australian employers who provided paid DSV leave to their employees. This research found that the cost to employers to provide this paid leave

averaged about 0.02% of existing payrolls.¹⁴ All four submissions suggested that the costs to employers would be more than offset by gains in employee productivity that would be realized by allowing employees to attend to urgent health, safety, and stability needs.

In a similar vein, ten submissions discussed the negative impact that ongoing domestic violence can have on workplaces, resulting in decreased productivity from employees who are distracted by their home situations. Four submissions also identified higher employee turnover as a workplace impact of domestic and sexual violence, due to poor job performance (and eventual termination by an employer), or employees leaving their jobs as abuse escalates.

Potential for Employer Abuse

Several submissions raised concerns about the potential for unusual, but particularly harmful, situations to arise if paid leave for domestic and sexual violence were implemented. In discussing evidence requirements, four submissions raised concern over leaving too much discretion to employers in determining what constitutes “reasonably sufficient proof in the circumstances”, which could result in employers unfairly demanding a high burden of proof or otherwise denying leave to employees who should be eligible. Further, three submissions raised concerns with available recourse for victims of domestic or sexual violence who either work with or are employed by their abuser, or their employer is a friend or family member of their abuser. In these situations, a request for a DSV leave would likely be denied or exacerbate an already unsafe situation.

Five written submissions suggested that one potential remedy to these issues is to ensure that the Employment Standards Branch is given the authority and resources to review employer denials of paid DSV leave at the request of employees, and even to directly authorize paid DSV leave in extenuating circumstances such as when an abuser is also an employer.

Consultation Session Concerns around Employer-Paid Leave

Cost to Businesses and Employers

Participants in the employers’ consultation sessions strongly emphasized that the cost for employers to provide such a paid leave would be unaffordable for some businesses. It was noted that most businesses in B.C. are small businesses – 98% have 50 employees or fewer. Participants in employer sessions believed that smaller businesses would be least able to afford this leave, and would be least likely to see the anticipated benefits in terms of increased employee productivity and reduced employee turnover from such a leave.

¹⁴ Stanford, J. (2016). *Economic Aspects of Paid Domestic Violence Leave Provisions*. Retrieved from the Australia Institute Centre for Future Work website:
[https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/theausinstitute/pages/1408/attachments/original/1482351910/Economic_A
spects_Domestic_Violence_Leave.pdf?1482351910](https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/theausinstitute/pages/1408/attachments/original/1482351910/Economic_Aspects_Domestic_Violence_Leave.pdf?1482351910)

Further, employers indicated that implementation of such a leave could have impacts on their hiring practices and strategic planning. In one group, some participants noted that requirements for paid leave could make employers less likely to hire or employ women, who are more likely to be victims of sexual violence. In another consultation session, employers indicated that these types of changes incentivize employers to move jobs out of the province or overseas, where costs to employ people are lower.

Consultations with labour and gender equity stakeholders tended to refute the idea that this paid leave would place an unreasonable burden on employers. These stakeholders noted that employees would be healthier and more productive if they were able to take the time off to attend to their physical and emotional health, and take care of financial or practical considerations. Participants in one session also referenced the Stanford study on costs of a similar leave to employers in Australia, noting that the cost to employers to provide this leave was minimal.

It was noted in multiple sessions with labour stakeholders that implementing this paid leave should not be seen as employers taking on the burden of problems that exist at a societal level – employers benefit from a healthy, well-functioning society and, by extension, workforce. For that reason, many felt that employers have a responsibility to support social goods as well.

Workplace Safety

Both employers and labour stakeholders noted in consultation sessions that they had some concerns about workplace safety, and the possibility of abusers continuing their harassment and abuse at work sites. While training and best practices on how to handle these types of situations would be beneficial for employers, this continuation of abuse at the workplace is already common in abusive relationships.¹⁵ Stakeholders also noted that employers and workplaces are already faced with these situations, and there is no evidence that implementation of paid leave for domestic and sexual violence would cause an increase in these incidents.

Employee Privacy

Participants from all stakeholder groups noted in consultation sessions that they had concerns about the privacy of impacted employees. Employers, and in particular those with small workplaces without a dedicated HR department, may not be equipped to: handle disclosures of domestic or sexual violence from employees; handle evidence requirements appropriately so as to ensure privacy is maintained; manage staff in such a way as to reduce rumours or other discussions of an employee's reason for taking leave.

It was noted by participants in several of these sessions, as well as in written submissions (discussed in the previous section) that employer training and the provision of best practices

¹⁵ Western Education Centre for Research & Education on Violence Against Women & Children (2014). *Can Work Be Safe, When Home Isn't?* Retrieved from https://www.unifor.org/sites/default/files/attachments/domestic_violence_survey_results.pdf



resources would be valuable and would help to address some of these concerns if paid leave for domestic and sexual violence is implemented in B.C.

Conclusions

How does the public feel about the introduction of employer-paid leave for domestic and sexual violence in B.C.?

The large majority of British Columbians – both employers and employees, individuals and organizations – support the introduction of paid leave for domestic and sexual violence. Stakeholder groups who sent in formal submissions nearly unanimously favoured the introduction of such a paid leave. Both the general public and stakeholder groups also emphasized that access to paid leave for domestic and sexual violence is important for survivors for healing and recovery. Employers tended to believe that as domestic and sexual violence is a “social issue,” the cost for supporting survivors should be paid through a social safety net such as Employment Insurance, rather than by employers.

Overall, findings from this engagement suggest that the introduction of paid leave for domestic and sexual violence would be supported by most of the public in British Columbia, although there may be some resistance among employers.

How should this paid leave operate?

More than one-half (60%) of all survey respondents supported a paid leave of five days. Organizations were more likely to prefer shorter leaves of two to three days, but even so, a majority of organizational respondents (54%) supported a paid leave of five days. Nearly all stakeholder groups, with the exception of employer representatives, advocated for paid leave of ten days; a similar preference was stated by 17% of survey respondents, who indicated that they would prefer a paid leave of six to ten days. Employer stakeholder groups were more likely to suggest that leave should be paid for only one to three days.

The issue of provision of evidence by employees when requesting paid leave had a variety of responses from participants. On the issue of whether the “reasonably sufficient in the circumstances” standard for unpaid leave should be retained in the case of paid leave being implemented, 46% of survey respondents agreed while 31% disagreed, and 23% were unsure. Among the 54% who were asked a follow-up question of what the requirement for proof should be, the most common response was that the Act should be clearer about what is sufficient for evidence (62%).

A large majority of stakeholder groups recommended that no proof requirement be attached to paid DSV leave at all. Among those who did support some sort of evidence requirement, most recommended that legislation be clearer about what is acceptable as evidence, and recommended that consideration should be given to keeping the allowable evidence “low barrier” for survivors of domestic and sexual violence. Stakeholders suggested that one way to do this would be to include a range of allowable types of evidence, including notes from health practitioners (e.g., doctors, nurse practitioners, or counsellors), documentation or confirmation from community supports or

social services, police records, court or legal documentation, and confirmation from religious community leaders.

Stakeholder groups also identified other recommendations to support the implementation of paid DSV leave, or further protections already being considered. These recommendations were:

- Ensuring that the leave be standalone, not rolled up in other paid leave that employees may have access to (from gender equity and labour stakeholder groups only);
- Including DSV leave within a broader “personal leave” classification (suggested by employer stakeholders only);
- Clarifying in the legislation that there are no minimum length of service requirements for employees to have access to this leave (i.e., they do not need to complete a probation period or other minimum length of employment to be eligible for the leave); and
- Incorporating protections in the legislation to provide support to part-time and casual employees.

How would the introduction of paid leave affect employees?

Slightly less than one-half (44%) of open-ended comments in the survey expressed general support for the introduction of paid leave. Many of these comments highlighted how important it is for victims of domestic violence to have the financial security to escape their abusers, and this paid leave would help provide that financial security for them. Stakeholder organizations that provided submissions also highlighted a number of benefits to employees in having access to this paid leave:

- It is precisely when a victim of domestic abuse is preparing for, and making, their exit from an abusive relationship that they are in greatest need of financial security and stability (n=21);
- Providing paid leave helps survivors access necessary support services such as medical appointments, interviews with police and lawyers, finding alternative housing and child care situations, and other services that tend to have limited availability outside of regular business hours (n=19);
- A paid leave would allow a survivor to execute an exit plan without alerting an abuser (who monitors financial statements) as the paycheque amount would not change due to reduced hours worked, (n=4); and,
- The ability for employment to mitigate some of the effects of domestic abuse, by reducing isolation and helping a victim of domestic violence maintain a social support network (n=3).

Despite the strong public support for this leave, a number of concerns were raised about potential negative impacts on employees. These included concerns about victim privacy in the workplace when claiming such a leave, employer sensitivity in handling disclosures of abuse and trauma, and concerns that this paid leave may incentivize hiring discrimination against groups of people more likely to be at risk for domestic and/or sexual violence. Further, some concerns were raised by

stakeholder groups regarding the potential for employers to require a high level of proof to access the leave, given the current wording in the legislation on evidence requirements, and the issues that could arise if a victim of domestic or sexual violence has been victimized by an employer, a co-worker, or a friend of their employer.

How would the introduction of paid leave affect employers?

Open-ended comments from employers themselves did not specifically identify any anticipated benefits from offering paid leave for domestic and sexual violence. However, open-ended comments from other survey respondents, as well as from stakeholder submissions, identified the return on investment in productivity from ensuring workers are healthy (both physically and emotionally) and have access to safe living situations. A few submissions from stakeholder organizations also identified the comparatively small cost that would be imposed on businesses in requiring them to implement this leave.

Employer survey respondents raised many of the same concerns that employees and individuals did. The most common concerns among employers were for survivor privacy, safety of impacted employees, and concern that the portion of the leave that is employer-paid may be too short. Employers were also, however, significantly more likely to raise concerns about the cost to businesses and employers in offering this leave. In their open-ended comments, some employers (n=22) emphasized that coverage for this type of leave should come through a government employment insurance scheme rather than directly from employers.

Employer stakeholders who participated in consultation sessions strongly emphasized the cost to employers that paid DSV leave would entail, and indicated that they could not afford such a burden. Some also noted that this leave could strain their relationships with employees, as it would be “uncomfortable” or “awkward” for them to learn about an employee having experienced this abuse, and/or asking for evidence to document such abuse.

How could potential drawbacks be addressed?

Both stakeholder submissions and survey respondent comments noted that employers should be required to undergo some form of training on how to appropriately deal with disclosures of abuse and trauma, if this paid leave were to be implemented. While required training for all employers throughout B.C. may not be feasible, the Province could offer a number of resource packages and/or webinar recordings online to provide guidance to employers on trauma-informed approaches to such requests for leave. Similarly, these resources could offer guidance on how to safeguard survivor privacy in the workplace and discourage gossip among co-workers.

Further, several stakeholder submissions recommended that the Employment Standards Branch be authorized and sufficiently resourced to review and revise denials of requests for paid DSV leave, if requested by an employee. In sensitive situations where a request for paid DSV leave

directly to an employer is likely to be unsafe, the ESB could be authorized to provide a decision and enforce it with the employer.

Issues of evidence for accessing leave were raised by many respondents. On one hand, many felt that the requirement for evidence may be too large a burden, particularly if a stringent standard were applied such as police reports or charges being laid against the abuser. This concern was shared by a majority of stakeholders who provided formal submissions. These stakeholders advocated that no evidence requirements be attached to paid DSV leave at all. On the other hand, some respondents raised concerns with misuse of a paid leave, which evidence requirements could help to guard against. There was, however, a clear demand from respondents that legislation should be clearer on what, specifically, is sufficient evidence of domestic or sexual violence.

When drafting legislation, if the Province chooses to allow employers to require evidence for paid DSV leave, any specific requirements should consider both the potential of required evidence to re-traumatize the victim (e.g., requiring police reports would demand victims go to the police, when they may find the prospect intimidating), and the accessibility of evidence to survivors (e.g., domestic violence shelters may be less accessible in rural areas, so documentation from a shelter may be difficult for survivors in rural areas to access). Offering a wide variety of acceptable evidence types may help to minimize the potential challenges of evidence requirements, such as notes from health care practitioners (including therapists and counselors), police documentation, documentation from victims' services, and possibly others (e.g., confirming statements from victims' spiritual leaders, community leaders, or other). The wording of the legislation does identify "in the circumstances" as an important consideration to defining reasonably sufficient proof, and therefore protects privacy and safety concerns of survivors by requiring flexibility and reasonableness on the part of employers. These submissions further the efforts of the government to provide flexibility to survivors, by providing clear direction on what types of proof are seen as reasonable and not unduly burdensome to survivors. It is important to note, however, that many submissions also advocated for no proof requirements at all. Providing clear direction that emphasizes protecting survivor safety and privacy, as well as flexibility for survivors in what can be considered proof, may help to balance competing views on this topic.

A number of employers highlighted, in their open-ended comments, the view that this should be a benefit provided by the government rather than directly by employers, through some form of insurance scheme. Currently, Employment Insurance does not offer leaves for victims of crime, outside of the Parents of Missing and Murdered Children benefit. Further, several organizations noted that it would be impractical to have EI cover lost wages for such a short leave that would likely be taken incrementally on an as-needed basis over the course of a few weeks or months. While short-term leaves of two weeks or less may be most appropriately handled directly by employers, there may be opportunities for the Province to consider implementing an insurance scheme either directly for employees, or for employers who do pay out paid leave for domestic and sexual violence, to minimize the impacts on small businesses.

APPENDIX A: CODING FRAMEWORKS

DOMESTIC AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE PAID LEAVE ENGAGEMENT

Coding Frameworks

<i>Q2_other: If the B.C. government were to establish employer paid leave for domestic or sexual violence leave, what do you feel would be an appropriate number of paid days? Other, please describe...</i>		
Code	Code Name	Code Description
1	Two days	Respondent indicates survivors should get two days' paid leave
2	Three days	Respondent indicates survivors should get three days' paid leave
3	Five days	Respondent indicates survivors should get five days' paid leave
5	Unsure	Respondent indicates they are unsure how many days of paid leave survivors should get
10	Zero	Respondent indicates survivors should not get any days of paid leave
11	Six to ten days	Respondent indicates survivors should get between six and nine days' paid leave (i.e. one to two weeks)
12	11 to 20 days	Respondent indicates survivors should get between 11 and 20 days' paid leave (i.e., more than two weeks, up to one month)
13	One to three months	Respondent indicates survivors should get between more than one month (i.e., one month plus a day) and three months' paid leave
14	Three to six months	Respondent indicates survivors should get between more than three months (i.e., three months plus a day) and six months' paid leave
15	More than six months	Respondent indicates survivors should get more than six months' paid leave
16	Undefined – more	Respondent indicates survivors should get more days' paid leave than the response options, but does not provide a specific number
17	Undefined – as much as needed	Respondent indicates survivors should get as many days' paid leave as they need, based on their situation
96	Off-topic – Government pays	Respondent indicates that the cost of paid leave for domestic and sexual violence should be borne by the provincial and/or federal governments
97	Off-topic – abuser pays	Respondent indicates that the abusers should be held financially responsible for time taken off work / other recovery
98	Off-topic – complaint about survey itself	Response complains about the structure of the survey or a specific question itself
99	Off-topic – unrelated	Response does not respond to the question about paid leave, or meaning cannot be reliably interpreted

Q4_other: What should the requirement for proof for paid leave be? Other, please describe...		
Code	Code Name	Code Description
1	Employee should provide proof without the employer having to ask for it	Respondent indicates that the burden should be on the employee to prove their need for the leave
2	The Act should be more specific on the proof required	Respondent indicates that legislation should define what counts as evidence and/or that “reasonably sufficient” is too vague to be a good benchmark for proof
10	Proof not needed	Respondent indicates they believe that women should not have to show proof that they are leaving / recovering from abuse; also include things like “employee’s word” or “verbal confirmation from employee” in this category
11	Proof provided after the fact	Respondent indicates that survivors should have an extended period of time after taking their leave to provide evidence of it
12	Proof required – health practitioner’s note	Respondent indicates that a note from a doctor, psychologist, counselor, or other health care practitioner should be accepted as reasonable evidence
13	Proof required – victim’s services’ note or documentation	Respondent indicates that a note from a victims’ services organization, or documentation of receiving services from them, should be sufficient. Note that victims’ services includes domestic violence shelters, rape crisis centers, and police-based victims’ services
14	Getting proof may be too large a burden	Response describes the difficulty of obtaining proof for survivors or the potential for re-traumatizing them WITHOUT giving specifics about what should be considered proof, how proof should be handled, etc.
98	Off-topic – complaint about survey itself	Response complains about the structure of the survey or a specific question itself
99	Off-topic – unrelated	Response does not respond to the question about evidence, or meaning cannot be reliably interpreted

Q5_other: What would be your areas of concern around implementing a paid leave for domestic and sexual violence?		
Code	Code Name	Code Description
1	Victim / survivor privacy	Respondent indicates concern around the victim / survivor's privacy; may involve privacy related to proof requirement, or privacy about their circumstances within the workplace
2	Safety of impacted employees	Respondent indicates that they have concerns about the safety of other employees in the workplace
3	Safety of workplace	Respondent indicates that they have concerns about the safety of the workplace that the survivor is taking leave from
4	Cost to business or employer	Respondent indicates that they have concerns about the cost to businesses / employers as a result of offering paid leave in these circumstances
5	Portion of leave that is employer-paid would be too short	Respondent indicates that they are concerned that the paid leave would not be long enough for survivors to address their needs
6	Misuse of paid leave	Respondent indicates they have concerns about people abusing the paid leave / making false claims about abuse to get paid days off
10	Employer abuse in granting / refusing leave	Respondent indicates that they have concerns about employers not being reasonable in granting leave / accepting proof, or ignoring a victim's request in favour of business needs
11	Employer discrimination	Respondent indicates that they have concerns about employers discriminating / treating differently employees that have claimed the leave, and / or hiring discrimination against women or other groups (e.g., sexual minority groups) at higher risk of domestic and sexual violence
12	Evidence requirement may be too big a barrier	Respondent indicates that requiring survivors to provide evidence is retraumatizing, humiliating, an invasion of privacy, or an unrealistic expectation of someone who has just gone through trauma
13	Training / sensitivity for employers	Respondent indicates that they have concerns that employers or HR departments may not be equipped to deal with employees coming forward with claims of abuse or violence; need to educate these parties about handling it. Also include considerations of cultural safety, inclusiveness, intersections of multiple axes of marginalization, etc.
14	Stigma-related barriers to access	Respondent indicates that they believe that victims of domestic or sexual violence will not be able to get access to leave anyways, due to shame of admitting their abuse, social relations / complications making it difficult (e.g., word getting back to assailant about accusations), etc. Note that if respondent identifies concerns specifically about proof as too big a burden, code as 12
15	Other	Response is somewhat on-topic, but cannot be coded to any of the above
96	Off-topic – victim-blaming	Respondent indicates that they think victims of domestic or sexual violence will just return to an abusive relationship or find themselves in circumstances where they will be victimized again
97	Off-topic – suggestion for additional services outside the scope of this consultation	Respondent indicates that additional services or supports should be made available to survivors of domestic or sexual violence that are outside the scope of this consultation
98	Off-topic – complaint about survey itself	Response complains about the structure of the survey or a specific question itself
99	Off-topic – unrelated	Response does not respond to the question about evidence or meaning cannot be reliably interpreted

Q7: Please share any additional suggestions you feel would be helpful to assist government in improving domestic and sexual violence leave.		
Code	Code Name	Code Description
1	Government-paid assistance	Respondent indicates that this leave should be covered (partially or fully) by EI or some other (federal or provincial) program
2	Abuser pays	Respondent indicates that the abusers should be held financially responsible for time taken off work / other recovery
3	Employer education needed	Respondent suggests that if the policy moves forward, employers will need education on how to handle disclosures of abuse and violence
4	Proof should not be required	Respondent indicates they believe that women should not have to show proof that they are leaving / recovering from abuse; also include things like “employee’s word” or “verbal confirmation from employee” in this category
5	Proof should be handled by third parties	Respondent indicates that employee requesting leave should not be responsible for submitting proof to employer, but either a third party should transfer documentation or employer should get it directly from doctor, counselor, police, etc.
6	Concerns that employers will be withholding of paid leave	Respondent indicates that they are concerned that employers will require high standard of proof, not believe victims, etc.
7	Concerns that employers will discriminate due to this paid leave	Respondent indicates concerns that employers may be more likely to discriminate in hiring practices or treatment of people at work based on their history of claiming paid leave for domestic violence, or belonging to a group likely to be victimized (e.g., women, sexual minorities, young people)
8	Support services needed	Response highlights the need for support services after experiencing violence (e.g., counseling, medical care, child care, help finding a new place to live, etc.)
9	Support for paid leave	General support for paid leave for domestic and sexual violence. Include comments that highlight the ROI / benefit to employers by having healthy, functioning employees at work. Also include comments that discuss how important financial security is for someone leaving an abusive situation
10	More time needed	Response indicates that more than 5 days is needed for survivors to address their needs
11	Cost to employers	Concerns about the cost to employers of providing this paid leave, including small businesses
12	Tie paid leave to recovery / support requirements	Respondent suggests that it would be appropriate to require survivor to seek certain types of care or services (e.g., counseling, medical care, services from shelter, etc.) in order to make use of paid leave
13	Leave should be available to part-time and low-wage workers	Respondent highlights concerns about access to this paid leave for people who work part-time or in “precarious employment” such as low-wage, casual, or on-call work
14	Other	Response substantively responds to the question but cannot be coded to any of above codes
15	Resistance / sexism	Response indicates resistance to taking action against sexual and domestic violence <i>in principle</i> (rather than just in this particular instance for a particular reason, e.g. not wanting employers to pay for this support). Also include responses that allege oversight of male victims of domestic and sexual violence here because nowhere in the Act, or in the survey, does the proposal discuss victims, abusers, or potential beneficiaries of this change in gendered terms
97	Off-topic – justice system	Response discusses problems with criminal justice system or family courts being insufficient to stop abusers

Q7: Please share any additional suggestions you feel would be helpful to assist government in improving domestic and sexual violence leave.

Code	Code Name	Code Description
98	Off-topic – complaint about survey itself	Response complains about the structure of the survey or a specific question itself
99	Off-topic – unrelated	Response does not respond to the question about evidence or meaning cannot be reliably interpreted

APPENDIX B: SURVEY DATA TABLES

Completions and Respondent Demographics

Table B1: Survey Respondents, by Respondent Type

Are you responding on behalf of yourself as an individual, or on behalf of an organization?	Frequency	Valid Percent
Individual	5,922	97.0%
Organization	195	3.0%
Valid Total	6,117	100.0%
Missing	29	-
Total	6,146	-

Percentages may not add up to 100% as presented, due to rounding.

Table B2: Organization Respondents, by Organization Type

What type of organization do you represent?	Frequency	Valid Percent (of 195 organizational respondents)*
Non-profit	75	38.5%
Trade union or other labour group	57	29.2%
Other organization representing workers	9	4.6%
Employer	56	28.7%
Employers' association or business group	11	5.6%

*Please note that respondents were able to select as many responses as applied, therefore percentages may add up to more than 100%.

Table B3: Individual Respondents, by Employment Status (detailed)

What is your current employment status?	Frequency	Valid Percent (of 5,951 individual respondents)*
Full-time paid employee	3,681	61.9%
Part-time paid employee	911	15.3%
Self-employed	618	10.4%
Business owner / employer	225	3.8%
Student	714	12.0%
Retired	233	3.9%
Volunteer / unpaid work	268	4.5%
Not currently working	268	4.5%

*Please note that respondents were able to select as many responses as applied, therefore percentages may add up to more than 100%.

Table B4: Individual Respondents, by Employee / Employer Status

Are individual respondents employees, or employers?	Frequency	Valid Percent
Employer	225	4.4%
Employee	4,846	95.6%
Valid Total	5,071	100.0%
Missing	1,075	-
Total	6,146	-

For analysis purposes, respondents that indicated they were both a business owner / employer and an employee were categorized as employers.

Percentages may not add up to 100% as presented, due to rounding.

Table B5: Individual Respondents, by Age Category

Which of the following age categories do you belong to?	Frequency	Valid Percent
Under 18	8	0.1%
18 to 24	677	11.4%
25 to 34	2,090	35.3%
35 to 44	1,520	25.7%
45 to 54	851	14.4%
55 to 64	561	9.5%
65 or older	220	3.7%
Valid Total	5,927	100.0%
Missing	219	-
Total	6,146	-

Percentages may not add up to 100% as presented, due to rounding.

Table B6: Individual Respondents, by Gender

What is your gender?	Frequency	Valid Percent
Woman	4,814	81.3%
Man	841	14.2%
Gender diverse	269	4.5%
Valid Total	5,924	100.0%
Missing	222	-
Total	6,146	-

Percentages may not add up to 100% as presented, due to rounding.

Table B7: Individual Respondents, by Caregiver Status

Do you have children under 19, or care for a dependent adult for whom you are the parent or former guardian?	Frequency	Valid Percent
No	4,142	70.0%
Yes	1,778	30.0%
Valid Total	5,920	100.0%
Missing	226	-
Total	6,146	-

Percentages may not add up to 100% as presented, due to rounding.

Table B8: Individual Respondents, by Living Situation

How would you describe your current household status or living situation?	Frequency	Valid Percent
Living alone	1,042	17.6%
Living with a partner or spouse	2,001	33.8%
Living with a partner or spouse and children (under 18)	1,089	18.4%
Living with children (under 18) and no partner or spouse	410	6.9%
Living with other family members	567	9.6%
Living with roommate(s)	655	11.1%
Other	160	2.7%
Valid Total	5,924	100.0%
Missing	222	-
Total	6,146	-

Percentages may not add up to 100% as presented, due to rounding.

Table B9: Individual Respondents, Identities with Special Groups

With which of the following groups do you identify?	Frequency	Valid Percent (of 5,951 individual respondents)*
Visible minority	812	13.6%
First Nations	280	4.7%
Inuit	8	0.1%
Métis	173	2.9%
Persons with disabilities	610	10.3%
LGBTQ2S+	1,242	20.9%
None of the above	3,424	57.5%

*Please note that respondents were able to select as many responses as applied (with the exception of “none of the above” which was exclusive of all other categories), therefore percentages may add up to more than 100%.

Table B10: Indigenous Identity

Indicates whether respondent reported Indigenous identity (any of First Nations, Métis, or Inuit)	Frequency	Valid Percent
Does not identify as Indigenous	5,528	92.9%
Identifies as Indigenous	423	7.1%
Valid Total	5,951	100.0%
Missing	195	-
Total	6,146	-

Percentages may not add up to 100% as presented, due to rounding.

Table B11: Region

In what region of B.C. do you live?	Frequency	Valid Percent
Vancouver Island / Sunshine Coast	1,687	28.5%
Lower Mainland / Fraser Valley	3,113	52.5%
Thompson / Okanagan	538	9.1%
Cariboo	157	2.7%
Kootenay	186	3.1%
Nechako	95	1.6%
Northeast	35	0.6%
Northwest and North Coast	118	2.0%
Valid Total	5,929	100.0%
Missing	217	-
Total	6,146	-

Percentages may not add up to 100% as presented, due to rounding.

Responses to Survey Questions on Paid Leave (Overall)

Table B12: Attitude towards paid leave for sexual and domestic violence

Should there be new rules put in place that mean employees would continue to be paid their regular wages by employers for part of the domestic or sexual violence leave?	Frequency	Valid Percent
Yes	5,661	93.0%
No	249	4.1%
Unsure	180	3.0%
Valid Total	6,090	100.0%
Missing	56	-
Total	6,146	-

Percentages may not add up to 100% as presented, due to rounding.

Table B13: Importance of access to paid leave

How important do you think having a certain amount of paid leave is for British Columbians experiencing domestic or sexual violence?	Frequency	Valid Percent
Not at all important	93	1.5%
Slightly unimportant	33	0.5%
Neither important nor unimportant	105	1.7%
Moderately important	640	10.5%
Very important	5,253	85.8%
Valid Total	6,124	100.0%
Missing	22	-
Total	6,146	-

Percentages may not add up to 100% as presented, due to rounding.

Table B14: Appropriate length of paid leave for sexual and domestic violence

What do you feel would be an appropriate number of paid days for this leave?	Frequency	Valid Percent
Two days (the same as Quebec)	98	1.6%
Three days (the same as Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland and Labrador)	120	2.0%
Five days (the same as Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, New Brunswick, and the Federal Jurisdiction)	3,657	60.3%
Unsure	196	3.2%
Zero	57	0.9%
Six to ten days	1,018	16.8%
11 to 20 days	332	5.5%
One to three months	48	0.8%
Three to six months	11	0.2%
More than six months	4	0.1%
Undefined - more	266	4.4%
Undefined - as much as needed	263	4.3%
Valid Total	6,070	100.0%
Off-topic - government pays	18	-
Off-topic - abuser pays	1	-
Off-topic - unrelated	34	-
Missing	23	-
Total	6,146	-

Percentages may not add up to 100% as presented, due to rounding.

Table B15: Maintenance of evidence requirement from unpaid leave

Do you feel that the evidence requirement for employer paid leave should be the same as for unpaid leave for domestic or sexual violence?	Frequency	Valid Percent
Yes	2,828	46.3%
No	1,906	31.2%
Unsure	1,372	22.5%
Valid Total	6,106	100.0%
Missing	40	-
Total	6,146	-

Percentages may not add up to 100% as presented, due to rounding.

Table B16: Views on evidence requirement for paid leave

What should the requirement for proof for paid leave be?	Frequency	Valid Percent (of 1,906 total respondents)*
Employee should provide proof without the employer having to ask for it	65	3.4%
The Act should be more specific in what counts as proof	1,181	62.0%
Unsure	181	9.5%
Other: Proof should not be required	316	16.6%
Other: Proof should be provided after the fact	16	0.8%
Other: Proof should be required - health practitioner's note sufficient	87	4.6%
Other: Proof should be required - victims' services' note or documentation sufficient	24	1.3%
Other: Getting proof may be too large a burden	146	7.7%

*Please note that respondents were able to select multiple responses, therefore percentages may add up to more than 100%. Also please note that the number of respondents to this question reflects the fact that only those who answered "No" to the previous question were then prompted to answer questions about requirements for paid DSV leave, therefore the total n (1,906) is considerably lower than the number of total respondents to the survey.

Table B17: Areas of concern related to paid leave for domestic and sexual violence

What would be your areas of concern around implementing a paid leave for sexual and domestic violence?	Frequency	Valid Percent (of 6,146 total respondents)*
Victim / survivor privacy	4,919	80.0%
Safety of impacted employees	2,564	41.7%
Safety of workplace	954	15.5%
Cost to business or employer	860	14.0%
Misuse of paid leave	1,747	28.4%
Portion of leave that is employer-paid would be too short	2,509	40.8%
I have no concerns	377	6.1%
Other: Employer abuse in granting / refusing paid leave	15	0.2%
Other: Employer discrimination	43	0.7%
Other: Evidence requirement may be too big a burden	41	0.7%
Other: Sensitivity / training for employers	26	0.4%
Other: Stigma-related barriers to access	16	0.3%
Other: Other	39	0.6%

*Please note that respondents were able to select multiple responses, therefore percentages may add up to more than 100%.

Table B18: Additional comments or concerns about paid leave for domestic and sexual violence

What other comments or concerns do you have in relation to an employer-paid leave for sexual and domestic violence?	Count	Valid Percent (of 1,785 respondents who provided comment)*
Government-paid leave or assistance	264	14.8%
Abuser pays	14	0.8%
Employer education needed	114	6.4%
Proof should not be required	73	4.1%
Proof should be handled by third parties	42	2.4%
Concerns that employers will be withholding of paid leave	24	1.3%
Concerns that employers will discriminate due to paid leave	52	2.9%
Support services needed	359	20.1%
General support for paid leave for domestic and sexual violence	782	43.8%
More time needed	183	10.3%
Cost to employers	112	6.3%
Tie paid leave to recovery / support requirements	98	5.5%
Leave should be available to part-time and low-wage workers	25	1.4%
Other	283	15.9%
Resistance / sexism	31	1.7%
Safety or privacy of victim	264	14.8%

*Please note that comments may have included multiple themes; up to three codes were applied to each comment to reflect multiple themes, therefore percentages may add up to more than 100%.

Responses to Survey Questions on Paid Leave, Cross-Tabs by Respondent Type

Table B19: Support for paid leave and importance of access

		Individual		Organization		Total	
		Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent
Should there be new rules put in place that mean employees would continue to be paid their regular wages by employers for part of the domestic or sexual violence leave?	Yes	5486 _a	93.3%	159 _b	83.2%	5645	93.0%
	No	227 _a	3.9%	20 _b	10.5%	247	4.1%
	Unsure	168 _a	2.9%	12 _b	6.3%	180	3.0%
	Total	5881	100.0%	191	100.0%	6072	100.0%
How important do you think having a certain amount of paid leave is for British Columbians experiencing domestic or sexual violence?	Not at all important	85 _a	1.4%	6 _a	3.1%	91	1.5%
	Slightly unimportant	30 _a	0.5%	3 _a	1.5%	33	0.5%
	Neither important nor unimportant	100 _a	1.7%	5 _a	2.6%	105	1.7%
	Moderately important	615 _a	10.4%	23 _a	11.8%	638	10.4%
	Very important	5082 _a	86.0%	158 _a	81.0%	5240	85.8%
	Total	5912	100.0%	195	100.0%	6107	100.0%

Note: Values in the same row and subtable not sharing the same subscript are significantly different at $p < 0.05$ in the two-sided test of equality for column proportions. Cells with no subscript are not included in the test. Tests assume equal variances.¹

1. Tests are adjusted for all pairwise comparisons within a row of each innermost subtable using the Bonferroni correction.

Percentages may not add up to 100% as presented, due to rounding.

Table B20: Length of time for paid leave

		Individual		Organization		Total	
		Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent
What do you feel would be an appropriate number of paid days for this leave?	Two days (the same as Quebec)	88 _a	1.5%	10 _b	5.2%	98	1.6%
	Three days (the same as Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland and Labrador)	110 _a	1.9%	10 _b	5.2%	120	2.0%
	Five days (the same as Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, New Brunswick, and the Federal Jurisdiction)	3542 _a	60.4%	104 _a	54.5%	3646	60.2%
	Unsure	189 _a	3.2%	7 _a	3.7%	196	3.2%
	Zero	54 _a	0.9%	2 _a	1.0%	56	0.9%
	Six to ten days	983 _a	16.8%	33 _a	17.3%	1016	16.8%
	11 to 20 days	324 _a	5.5%	8 _a	4.2%	332	5.5%
	One to three months	45 _a	0.8%	2 _a	1.0%	47	0.8%
	Three to six months	11 _a	0.2%	0 ¹	0.0%	11	0.2%
	More than six months	4 _a	0.1%	0 ¹	0.0%	4	0.1%
	Undefined - more	256 _a	4.4%	9 _a	4.7%	265	4.4%
	Undefined - as much as needed	257 _a	4.4%	6 _a	3.1%	263	4.3%
Total		5863	100.0%	191	100.0%	6054	100.0%

Note: Values in the same row and subtable not sharing the same subscript are significantly different at $p < 0.05$ in the two-sided test of equality for column proportions. Cells with no subscript are not included in the test. Tests assume equal variances.¹

1. Tests are adjusted for all pairwise comparisons within a row of each innermost subtable using the Bonferroni correction.

Percentages may not add up to 100% as presented, due to rounding.

Table B21: Evidence requirements for paid leave

		Individual		Organization		Total	
		Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent
Do you feel that the evidence requirement for employer paid leave should be the same as for unpaid leave for domestic or sexual violence?	Unsure	1335 _a	22.7%	31 _b	15.9%	1366	22.4%
	No	1860 _a	31.6%	44 _b	22.6%	1904	31.3%
	Yes	2698 _a	45.8%	120 _b	61.5%	2818	46.3%
	Total	5893	100.0%	195	100.0%	6088	100.0%
What should the requirement for proof for paid leave be?	Employee should provide proof without the employer having to ask for it	62 _a	3.3%	3 _a	6.8%	65	3.4%
	The Act should be more specific on what counts as proof.	1153 _a	62.0%	28 _a	63.6%	1181	62.1%
	Unsure	177 _a	9.5%	4 _a	9.1%	181	9.5%
	Getting proof may be too large a burden	142 _a	7.6%	4 _a	28.6%	146	7.7%
	Proof required - victim's services' note or documentation	24 _a	1.3%	0 ¹	0.0%	24	1.3%
	Proof required - health practitioner's note	84 _a	4.5%	3 _a	6.8%	87	4.6%
	Proof provided after the fact	15 _a	0.8%	1 _a	2.3%	16	0.8%
	Proof not needed	309 _a	16.6%	6 _a	13.6%	315	16.6%
	Total respondents	1860	100.0%	44	100.0%	1904	100.0%

Note: Values in the same row and subtable not sharing the same subscript are significantly different at $p < 0.05$ in the two-sided test of equality for column proportions. Cells with no subscript are not included in the test. Tests assume equal variances.¹

1. Tests are adjusted for all pairwise comparisons within a row of each innermost subtable using the Bonferroni correction.

Percentages may not add up to 100% as presented, due to rounding.

Table B22: Concerns around implementing paid leave

		Individual		Organization		Total	
		Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent
What would be your areas of concern around implementing a paid leave for sexual and domestic violence?	Victim / survivor privacy	4768 _a	80.5%	139 _b	71.3%	4907	80.2%
	Safety of impacted employees	2478 _a	41.8%	81 _a	41.5%	2559	41.8%
	Safety of workplace	909 _a	15.3%	41 _b	21.0%	950	15.5%
	Cost to business or employer	806 _a	13.6%	51 _b	26.2%	857	14.0%
	Misuse of paid leave	1684 _a	28.4%	57 _a	29.2%	1741	28.5%
	Portion of leave that is employer-paid would be too short	2441 _a	41.2%	64 _b	32.8%	2505	41.0%
	I have no concerns	369 _a	6.2%	6 _a	3.1%	375	6.1%
	Employer abuse in granting / refusing paid leave	15 _a	0.3%	0 ¹	0.0%	15	0.2%
	Employer discrimination	43 _a	0.7%	0 ¹	0.0%	43	0.7%
	Evidence requirement may be too big a burden	40 _a	0.7%	1 _a	0.5%	41	0.7%
	Sensitivity / training for employers	24 _a	0.4%	2 _b	1.0%	26	0.4%
	Stigma-related barriers to access	16 _a	0.3%	0 ¹	0.0%	16	0.3%
	Other	39 _a	0.7%	0 ¹	0.0%	39	0.6%
	Total respondents	5922	100.0%	195	100.0%	6117	100.0%

Note: Values in the same row and subtable not sharing the same subscript are significantly different at $p < 0.05$ in the two-sided test of equality for column proportions. Cells with no subscript are not included in the test. Tests assume equal variances.²

1. This category is not used in comparisons because its column proportion is equal to zero or one.

2. Tests are adjusted for all pairwise comparisons within a row of each innermost subtable using the Bonferroni correction.

Percentages may not add up to 100% as presented, due to rounding.

Responses to Survey Questions on Paid Leave, Cross-Tabs by Employee / Employer Status

Table B23: Support for paid leave and importance of access

		Employer		Employee		Total	
		Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent
Should there be new rules put in place that mean employees would continue to be paid their regular wages by employers for part of the domestic or sexual violence leave?	Yes	187 _a	83.1%	4517 _b	93.8%	4704	93.3%
	No	29 _a	12.9%	167 _b	3.5%	196	3.9%
	Unsure	9 _a	4.0%	131 _a	2.7%	140	2.8%
	Total	225	100.0%	4815	100.0%	5040	100.0%
How important do you think having a certain amount of paid leave is for British Columbians experiencing domestic or sexual violence?	Not at all important	10 _a	4.4%	64 _b	1.3%	74	1.5%
	Slightly unimportant	1 _a	0.4%	28 _a	0.6%	29	0.6%
	Neither important nor unimportant	7 _a	3.1%	78 _a	1.6%	85	1.7%
	Moderately important	17 _a	7.6%	499 _a	10.3%	516	10.2%
	Very important	190 _a	84.4%	4169 _a	86.2%	4359	86.1%
	Total	225	100.0%	4838	100.0%	5063	100.0%

Note: Values in the same row and subtable not sharing the same subscript are significantly different at $p < 0.05$ in the two-sided test of equality for column proportions. Cells with no subscript are not included in the test. Tests assume equal variances.¹

1. Tests are adjusted for all pairwise comparisons within a row of each innermost subtable using the Bonferroni correction.

Percentages may not add up to 100% as presented, due to rounding.

Table B24: Length of time for paid leave

		Employer		Employee		Total	
		Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent
What do you feel would be an appropriate number of paid days for this leave?	Two days (the same as Quebec)	5 _a	2.3%	68 _a	1.4%	73	1.5%
	Three days (the same as Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland and Labrador)	2 _a	0.9%	91 _a	1.9%	93	1.9%
	Five days (the same as Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, New Brunswick, and the Federal Jurisdiction)	132 _a	60.8%	2931 _a	61.0%	3063	61.0%
	Unsure	6 _a	2.8%	139 _a	2.9%	145	2.9%
	Zero	10 _a	4.6%	39 _b	0.8%	49	1.0%
	Six to ten days	28 _a	12.9%	830 _a	17.3%	858	17.1%
	11 to 20 days	15 _a	6.9%	252 _a	5.2%	267	5.3%
	One to three months	4 _a	1.8%	33 _a	0.7%	37	0.7%
	Three to six months	0 ¹	0.0%	10 _a	0.2%	10	0.2%
	More than six months	0 ¹	0.0%	3 _a	0.1%	3	0.1%
	Undefined - more	6 _a	2.8%	216 _a	4.5%	222	4.4%
	Undefined - as much as needed	9 _a	4.1%	193 _a	4.0%	202	4.0%
Total		217	100.0%	4805	100.0%	5022	100.0%

Note: Values in the same row and subtable not sharing the same subscript are significantly different at $p < 0.05$ in the two-sided test of equality for column proportions. Cells with no subscript are not included in the test. Tests assume equal variances.²

1. This category is not used in comparisons because its column proportion is equal to zero or one.

2. Tests are adjusted for all pairwise comparisons within a row of each innermost subtable using the Bonferroni correction.

Percentages may not add up to 100% as presented, due to rounding.

Table B25: Evidence requirements for paid leave

		Employer		Employee		Total	
		Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent
Do you feel that the evidence requirement for employer paid leave should be the same as for unpaid leave for domestic or sexual violence?	Unsure	40 _a	17.9%	1088 _a	22.5%	1128	22.3%
	No	68 _a	30.5%	1548 _a	32.1%	1616	32.0%
	Yes	115 _a	51.6%	2189 _a	45.4%	2304	45.6%
	Total	223	100.0%	4825	100.0%	5048	100.0%
What should the requirement for proof for paid leave be?	Employee should provide proof without the employer having to ask for it	5 _a	7.4%	49 _a	3.2%	54	3.3%
	The Act should be more specific on what counts as proof.	44 _a	64.7%	958 _a	61.9%	1002	62.0%
	Unsure	6 _a	8.8%	144 _a	9.3%	150	9.3%
	Getting proof may be too large a burden	4 _a	5.9%	121 _a	7.8%	125	7.7%
	Proof required - victim's services' note or documentation	2 _a	2.9%	19 _a	1.2%	21	1.3%
	Proof required - health practitioner's note	3 _a	4.4%	69 _a	4.5%	72	4.5%
	Proof provided after the fact	1 _a	1.5%	12 _a	0.8%	13	0.8%
	Proof not needed	11 _a	16.2%	259 _a	16.7%	270	16.7%
	Total respondents	68	100.0%	1548	100.0%	1616	100.0%

Note: Values in the same row and subtable not sharing the same subscript are significantly different at $p < 0.05$ in the two-sided test of equality for column proportions. Cells with no subscript are not included in the test. Tests assume equal variances.¹

1. Tests are adjusted for all pairwise comparisons within a row of each innermost subtable using the Bonferroni correction.

Percentages may not add up to 100% as presented, due to rounding.

Table B26: Concerns around implementing paid leave

		Employer		Employee		Total	
		Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent
What would be your areas of concern around implementing a paid leave for sexual and domestic violence?	Victim / survivor privacy	174 _a	77.3%	3924 _a	81.0%	4098	80.8%
	Safety of impacted employees	79 _a	35.1%	2033 _b	42.0%	2112	41.6%
	Safety of workplace	26 _a	11.6%	727 _a	15.0%	753	14.8%
	Cost to business or employer	66 _a	29.3%	610 _b	12.6%	676	13.3%
	Misuse of paid leave	71 _a	31.6%	1389 _a	28.7%	1460	28.8%
	Portion of leave that is employer-paid would be too short	80 _a	35.6%	1999 _a	41.3%	2079	41.0%
	I have no concerns	16 _a	7.1%	302 _a	6.2%	318	6.3%
	Employer abuse in granting / refusing paid leave	0 ¹	0.0%	14 _a	0.3%	14	0.3%
	Employer discrimination	4 _a	1.8%	33 _a	0.7%	37	0.7%
	Evidence requirement may be too big a burden	2 _a	0.9%	33 _a	0.7%	35	0.7%
	Sensitivity / training for employers	1 _a	0.4%	22 _a	0.5%	23	0.5%
	Stigma-related barriers to access	0 ¹	0.0%	13 _a	0.3%	13	0.3%
	Other	2 _a	0.9%	29 _a	0.6%	31	0.6%
	Total respondents	225	100.0%	4846	100.0%	5071	100.0%

Note: Values in the same row and subtable not sharing the same subscript are significantly different at $p < 0.05$ in the two-sided test of equality for column proportions. Cells with no subscript are not included in the test. Tests assume equal variances.²

1. This category is not used in comparisons because its column proportion is equal to zero or one.

2. Tests are adjusted for all pairwise comparisons within a row of each innermost subtable using the Bonferroni correction.

Percentages may not add up to 100% as presented, due to rounding.

Responses to Survey Questions on Paid Leave, Cross-Tabs by Gender

Table B27: Support for paid leave and importance of access

		Woman		Man		Gender diverse		Total	
		Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent
Should there be new rules put in place that mean employees would continue to be paid their regular wages by employers for part of the domestic or sexual violence leave?	Yes	4506 _a	94.2%	731 _b	88.0%	254 _a	94.4%	5491	93.3%
	No	140 _a	2.9%	73 _b	8.8%	13 _{a,b}	4.8%	226	3.8%
	Unsure	138 _a	2.9%	27 _a	3.2%	2 _a	0.7%	167	2.8%
	Total	4784	100.0%	831	100.0%	269	100.0%	5884	100.0%
How important do you think having a certain amount of paid leave is for British Columbians experiencing domestic or sexual violence?	Not at all important	48 _a	1.0%	29 _b	3.5%	7 _b	2.6%	84	1.4%
	Slightly unimportant	16 _a	0.3%	12 _b	1.4%	2 _{a,b}	0.7%	30	0.5%
	Neither important nor unimportant	69 _a	1.4%	28 _b	3.3%	3 _{a,b}	1.1%	100	1.7%
	Moderately important	463 _a	9.6%	136 _b	16.2%	14 _c	5.2%	613	10.4%
	Very important	4209 _a	87.6%	635 _b	75.6%	243 _a	90.3%	5087	86.0%
	Total	4805	100.0%	840	100.0%	269	100.0%	5914	100.0%

Note: Values in the same row and subtable not sharing the same subscript are significantly different at $p < 0.05$ in the two-sided test of equality for column proportions. Cells with no subscript are not included in the test. Tests assume equal variances.¹

1. Tests are adjusted for all pairwise comparisons within a row of each innermost subtable using the Bonferroni correction.

Percentages may not add up to 100% as presented, due to rounding.

Table B28: Length of time for paid leave

		Woman		Man		Gender diverse		Total	
		Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent
What do you feel would be an appropriate number of paid days for this leave?	Two days (the same as Quebec)	51 _a	1.1%	28 _b	3.4%	8 _b	3.0%	87	1.5%
	Three days (the same as Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland and Labrador)	81 _a	1.7%	27 _b	3.3%	1 _a	0.4%	109	1.9%
	Five days (the same as Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, New Brunswick, and the Federal Jurisdiction)	2935 _a	61.6%	468 _b	56.5%	144 _b	53.7%	3547	60.5%
	Unsure	140 _a	2.9%	42 _b	5.1%	6 _{a,b}	2.2%	188	3.2%
	Zero	34 _a	0.7%	16 _b	1.9%	3 _{a,b}	1.1%	53	0.9%
	Six to ten days	796 _a	16.7%	144 _a	17.4%	44 _a	16.4%	984	16.8%
	11 to 20 days	263 _{a,b}	5.5%	36 _a	4.3%	24 _b	9.0%	323	5.5%
	One to three months	38 _a	0.8%	5 _a	0.6%	2 _a	0.7%	45	0.8%
	Three to six months	10 _a	0.2%	1 _a	0.1%	0 ¹	0.0%	11	0.2%
	More than six months	3 _a	0.1%	0 ¹	0.0%	1 _a	0.4%	4	0.1%
	Undefined - more	212 _a	4.4%	23 _a	2.8%	21 _b	7.8%	256	4.4%
	Undefined - as much as needed	204 _a	4.3%	39 _a	4.7%	14 _a	5.2%	257	4.4%
	Total	4767	100.0%	829	100.0%	268	100.0%	5864	100.0%

Note: Values in the same row and subtable not sharing the same subscript are significantly different at $p < 0.05$ in the two-sided test of equality for column proportions. Cells with no subscript are not included in the test. Tests assume equal variances.²

1. This category is not used in comparisons because its column proportion is equal to zero or one.

2. Tests are adjusted for all pairwise comparisons within a row of each innermost subtable using the Bonferroni correction.

Percentages may not add up to 100% as presented, due to rounding.

Table B29: Evidence requirements for paid leave

		Woman		Man		Gender diverse		Total	
		Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent
Do you feel that the evidence requirement for employer paid leave should be the same as for unpaid leave for domestic or sexual violence?	Unsure	1107 _a	23.1%	182 _a	21.7%	49 _a	18.2%	1338	22.7%
	No	1509 _a	31.5%	218 _b	26.0%	134 _c	49.8%	1861	31.6%
	Yes	2172 _a	45.4%	439 _b	52.3%	86 _c	32.0%	2697	45.7%
	Total	4788	100.0%	839	100.0%	269	100.0%	5896	100.0%
What should the requirement for proof for paid leave be?	Employee should provide proof without the employer having to ask for it	47 _a	3.1%	12 _a	5.5%	3 _a	2.2%	62	3.3%
	The Act should be more specific on what counts as proof.	959 _a	63.6%	126 _{a,b}	58.1%	68 _b	50.7%	1153	62.0%
	Unsure	135 _a	8.9%	28 _a	12.9%	14 _a	10.4%	177	9.5%
	Getting proof may be too large a burden	109 _a	7.2%	15 _a	6.9%	17 _a	12.7%	141	7.6%
	Proof required - victim's services' note or documentation	22 _a	1.5%	0 ¹	0.0%	2 _a	1.5%	24	1.3%
	Proof required - health practitioner's note	73 _a	4.8%	5 _a	2.3%	6 _a	4.5%	84	4.5%
	Proof provided after the fact	12 _a	79.5%	2 _a	0.9%	1 _a	0.7%	15	0.8%
	Proof not needed	233 _a	15.4%	42 _a	19.4%	35 _a	26.1%	310	16.7%
	Total respondents	1509	100.0%	218	100.0%	134	100.0%	1861	100.0%

Note: Values in the same row and subtable not sharing the same subscript are significantly different at $p < 0.05$ in the two-sided test of equality for column proportions. Cells with no subscript are not included in the test. Tests assume equal variances.²

1. This category is not used in comparisons because its column proportion is equal to zero or one.

2. Tests are adjusted for all pairwise comparisons within a row of each innermost subtable using the Bonferroni correction.

Percentages may not add up to 100% as presented, due to rounding.

Table C30: Concerns around implementing paid leave

		Woman		Man		Gender diverse		Total	
		Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent
What would be your areas of concern around implementing a paid leave for sexual and domestic violence?	Victim / survivor privacy	3862 _a	80.2%	678 _a	80.6%	231 _a	85.9%	4771	80.5%
	Safety of impacted employees	1903 _a	39.5%	425 _b	50.5%	151 _b	56.1%	2479	41.8%
	Safety of workplace	738 _a	15.3%	130 _a	15.5%	44 _a	16.4%	912	15.4%
	Cost to business or employer	634 _a	13.2%	151 _b	18.0%	20 _c	7.4%	805	13.6%
	Misuse of paid leave	1364 _a	28.3%	289 _b	34.4%	30 _c	11.2%	1683	28.4%
	Portion of leave that is employer-paid would be too short	1953 _a	40.6%	337 _a	40.1%	151 _b	56.1%	2441	41.2%
	I have no concerns	328 _a	6.8%	32 _b	3.8%	11 _{a,b}	4.1%	371	6.3%
	Employer abuse in granting / refusing paid leave	10 _a	0.2%	4 _a	0.5%	1 _a	0.4%	15	0.3%
	Employer discrimination	34 _a	0.7%	6 _a	0.7%	3 _a	1.1%	43	0.7%
	Evidence requirement may be too big a burden	27 _a	0.6%	8 _a	1.0%	5 _a	1.9%	40	0.7%
	Sensitivity / training for employers	20 _a	0.4%	4 _a	0.5%	0 ¹	0.0%	24	0.4%
	Stigma-related barriers to access	14 _a	0.3%	1 _a	0.1%	1 _a	0.4%	16	0.3%
	Other	34 _a	0.7%	4 _a	0.5%	0 ¹	0.0%	38	0.6%
	Total respondents	4814	100.0%	841	100.0%	269	100.0%	5924	100.0%

Note: Values in the same row and subtable not sharing the same subscript are significantly different at $p < 0.05$ in the two-sided test of equality for column proportions. Cells with no subscript are not included in the test. Tests assume equal variances.²

1. This category is not used in comparisons because its column proportion is equal to zero or one.

2. Tests are adjusted for all pairwise comparisons within a row of each innermost subtable using the Bonferroni correction.

Percentages may not add up to 100% as presented, due to rounding.

Responses to Survey Questions on Paid Leave, Cross-Tabs by LGBTQ2S+ Identity

Table B31: Support for paid leave and importance of access

		Does not identify as LGBTQ2S+		Identifies as LGBTQ2S+		Total	
		Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent
Should there be new rules put in place that mean employees would continue to be paid their regular wages by employers for part of the domestic or sexual violence leave?	Yes	4305 _a	92.3%	1197 _b	96.8%	5502	93.3%
	No	209 _a	4.5%	20 _b	1.6%	229	3.9%
	Unsure	148 _a	3.2%	20 _b	1.6%	168	2.8%
	Total	4662	100.0%	1237	100.0%	5899	100.0%
How important do you think having a certain amount of paid leave is for British Columbians experiencing domestic or sexual violence?	Not at all important	75 _a	1.6%	12 _a	1.0%	87	1.5%
	Slightly unimportant	29 _a	0.6%	1 _b	0.1%	30	0.5%
	Neither important nor unimportant	95 _a	2.0%	5 _b	0.4%	100	1.7%
	Moderately important	533 _a	11.4%	84 _b	6.8%	617	10.4%
	Very important	3955 _a	84.4%	1140 _b	91.8%	5095	85.9%
	Total	4687	100.0%	1242	100.0%	5929	100.0%

Note: Values in the same row and subtable not sharing the same subscript are significantly different at $p < 0.05$ in the two-sided test of equality for column proportions. Cells with no subscript are not included in the test. Tests assume equal variances.¹

1. Tests are adjusted for all pairwise comparisons within a row of each innermost subtable using the Bonferroni correction.

Percentages may not add up to 100% as presented, due to rounding.

Table B32: Length of time for paid leave

		Does not identify as LGBTQ2S+		Identifies as LGBTQ2S+		Total	
		Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent
What do you feel would be an appropriate number of paid days for this leave?	Two days (the same as Quebec)	79 _a	1.7%	9 _b	0.7%	88	1.5%
	Three days (the same as Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland and Labrador)	95 _a	2.0%	15 _a	1.2%	110	1.9%
	Five days (the same as Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, New Brunswick, and the Federal Jurisdiction)	2814 _a	60.6%	739 _a	59.7%	3553	60.4%
	Unsure	161 _a	3.5%	28 _b	2.3%	189	3.2%
	Zero	50 _a	1.1%	5 _b	0.4%	55	0.9%
	Six to ten days	778 _a	16.8%	207 _a	16.7%	985	16.8%
	11 to 20 days	238 _a	5.1%	86 _b	7.0%	324	5.5%
	One to three months	37 _a	0.8%	9 _a	0.7%	46	0.8%
	Three to six months	10 _a	0.2%	1 _a	0.1%	11	0.2%
	More than six months	1 _a	0.0%	3 _b	0.2%	4	0.1%
	Undefined - more	195 _a	4.2%	62 _a	5.0%	257	4.4%
	Undefined - as much as needed	184 _a	4.0%	73 _b	5.9%	257	4.4%
	Total	4642	100.0%	1237	100.0%	5879	100.0%

Note: Values in the same row and subtable not sharing the same subscript are significantly different at $p < 0.05$ in the two-sided test of equality for column proportions. Cells with no subscript are not included in the test. Tests assume equal variances.¹

1. Tests are adjusted for all pairwise comparisons within a row of each innermost subtable using the Bonferroni correction.

Percentages may not add up to 100% as presented, due to rounding.

Table B33: Evidence requirements for paid leave

		Does not identify as LGBTQ2S+		Identifies as LGBTQ2S+		Total	
		Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent
Do you feel that the evidence requirement for employer paid leave should be the same as for unpaid leave for domestic or sexual violence?	Unsure	1047 _a	22.4%	294 _a	23.7%	1341	22.7%
	No	1340 _a	28.7%	522 _b	42.1%	1862	31.5%
	Yes	2284 _a	48.9%	424 _b	34.2%	2708	45.8%
	Total	4671	100.0%	1240	100.0%	5911	100.0%
What should the requirement for proof for paid leave be?	Employee should provide proof without the employer having to ask for it	47 _a	3.5%	15 _a	2.9%	62	3.3%
	The Act should be more specific on what counts as proof.	865 _a	64.6%	288 _b	55.3%	1153	62.0%
	Unsure	130 _a	9.7%	47 _a	9.0%	177	9.5%
	Getting proof may be too large a burden	87 _a	6.5%	55 _a	10.6%	142	7.6%
	Proof required - victim's services' note or documentation	16 _a	1.2%	8 _a	1.5%	24	1.3%
	Proof required - health practitioner's note	65 _a	4.9%	19 _b	3.6%	84	4.5%
	Proof provided after the fact	11 _a	0.8%	4 _a	0.8%	15	0.8%
	Proof not needed	193 _a	14.4%	117 _a	22.5%	310	16.7%
	Total respondents	1340	100.0%	522	100.0%	1862	100.0%

Note: Values in the same row and subtable not sharing the same subscript are significantly different at $p < 0.05$ in the two-sided test of equality for column proportions. Cells with no subscript are not included in the test. Tests assume equal variances.¹

1. Tests are adjusted for all pairwise comparisons within a row of each innermost subtable using the Bonferroni correction.

Percentages may not add up to 100% as presented, due to rounding.

Table B34: Concerns around implementing paid leave

		Does not identify as LGBTQ2S+		Identifies as LGBTQ2S+		Total	
		Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent	Frequency	Valid Percent
What would be your areas of concern around implementing a paid leave for sexual and domestic violence?	Victim / survivor privacy	3708 _a	78.7%	1072 _b	86.3%	4780	80.3%
	Safety of impacted employees	1860 _a	39.5%	623 _b	50.2%	2483	41.7%
	Safety of workplace	740 _a	15.7%	173 _a	13.9%	913	15.3%
	Cost to business or employer	726 _a	15.4%	83 _b	6.7%	809	13.6%
	Misuse of paid leave	1501 _a	31.9%	189 _b	15.2%	1690	28.4%
	Portion of leave that is employer-paid would be too short	1772 _a	37.6%	673 _b	54.2%	2445	41.1%
	I have no concerns	299 _a	6.3%	72 _a	5.8%	371	6.2%
	Employer abuse in granting / refusing paid leave	11 _a	0.2%	4 _a	0.3%	15	0.3%
	Employer discrimination	32 _a	0.7%	11 _a	0.9%	43	0.7%
	Evidence requirement may be too big a burden	22 _a	0.5%	18 _b	1.4%	40	0.7%
	Sensitivity / training for employers	20 _a	0.4%	4 _a	0.3%	24	0.4%
	Stigma-related barriers to access	10 _a	0.2%	6 _a	0.5%	16	0.3%
	Other	32 _a	0.7%	7 _a	0.6%	39	0.7%
	Total respondents	4709	100.0%	1242	100.0%	5951	100.0%

Note: Values in the same row and subtable not sharing the same subscript are significantly different at $p < 0.05$ in the two-sided test of equality for column proportions. Cells with no subscript are not included in the test. Tests assume equal variances.¹

1. Tests are adjusted for all pairwise comparisons within a row of each innermost subtable using the Bonferroni correction.

Percentages may not add up to 100% as presented, due to rounding.