



2023-2024 Public Policy Agenda

The Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault (WCASA) is a hybrid organization: functioning both to support member Sexual Assault Service Providers (SASPs), while advancing the sexual assault movement in the state and nationally. We developed this Public Policy Agenda consistent with our vision, mission, and foundation. However, this is a living document. We encourage legislators, survivors, SASPs, and others to contact us with other public policy ideas throughout the 2023-2024 legislative session in Wisconsin.

Vision: A world without violence, oppression, and racism where all people honor bodily autonomy and social justice.

Mission: Creating social change to end sexual violence.

Foundation: To end sexual violence, we must also end all forms of oppression.

Anti-Racism Framework: WCASA believes that to achieve our mission of ending sexual violence, we must end all forms of racism and other forms of oppression; anti-racism work is sexual violence prevention work. WCASA recognizes that we have caused harm to Black and Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC). As we strive to become an anti-racist organization, WCASA commits to purposefully identify, discuss, and challenge racism and the impact it has in our state, systems, and people. It is an expectation that WCASA staff and board of directors take action against racism; in doing so, they will be supported by the organization. It is no longer acceptable to sit in silence. We stand in solidarity with individuals and organizations working towards racial justice led by BIPOC.

For more information about WCASA: <https://www.wcasa.org/about/framework/>

Sexual Violence Specific Issues:

These policy priorities are specific to sexual assault. As the statewide sexual assault coalition, WCASA often assumes leadership responsibility on these topics. We also seek out support from our membership, other stakeholders, and survivors to support these policy initiatives.

Sexual Assault Services and Prevention Funding

WCASA supports increasing Sexual Assault Victim Services (SAVS) funding to \$9 million annually as outlined in the Wisconsin Department of Justice's (DOJ) agency [budget request](#). This includes prioritizing funding for culturally specific programs that provide services and prevention in historically marginalized communities disproportionately impacted by sexual violence. We also support appropriating an additional \$450,000 annually to WCASA to meet the need for increased training and technical assistance to SAVS grantees.

Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Education

WCASA supports requiring schools to implement child sexual abuse prevention instruction to students in grades K-6 which incorporates elements of the [10 Core Concepts of Child Sexual Abuse Prevention](#).

HIV Prophylaxis for Survivors

WCASA supports ensuring free and timely access to HIV prophylaxis medications for survivors.

Statute of Limitations for Child Victims (civil suit)

WCASA supports expanding or abolishing the time limits (i.e., statutes of limitations) within which a victim of child sexual assault can bring a civil suit against the perpetrator.

Sexual Harassment

WCASA supports strengthening workplace sexual harassment protections, including expanding protections to more workers, increasing accountability for employers and individual harassers, enhancing transparency while preserving victim autonomy, and requiring sexual harassment prevention. We also support eliminating the tipped minimum wage, as ensuring tipped workers receive the same minimum wage as other workers is critical to preventing workplace harassment.

Housing

WCASA supports policies that promote access to safe and affordable housing for survivors. This is critical as sexual violence is a risk factor for homelessness, and homelessness is a risk factor for experiencing sexual violence. We also support increased flexibility for survivors to terminate their rental agreement, including lessening the proof requirements in housing law.

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women/Relatives (MMIW/R)

WCASA supports policies addressing the disproportionate rates of violence towards Indigenous women and girls, including implementing the recommendations of the state Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women Task Force. We also support allocating state funding for an Office on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women/Relatives.

Sex Trafficking

WCASA supports prohibiting charging a minor with the crime of prostitution. This is a critical component to dismantling racial disparities in the juvenile justice system, as youth who are Black and Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC) experience a higher burden of sexual violence and are more likely to be incarcerated for their responses to trauma.

Stealthling

WCASA supports creating a civil cause of action for the non-consensual removal or tampering with a sexually protective/contraceptive device.

Allied Issues:

These policy initiatives are not specific to sexual assault, yet they are core to our organizational foundation and are integral to our work. As the statewide sexual assault coalition, WCASA will follow the lead of allied organizations as they identify policy priorities.

Racial Justice

WCASA supports protecting the rights, freedoms, and well-being of BIPOC, including policies that transform existing systems to eliminate their negative and disproportionate impact on BIPOC. We also oppose policies that censor curricula in anti-racism instruction for schools. These policies lead to incomplete, non-inclusive curricula which not only undermines a school's ability to provide quality education, but also significantly weakens sexual violence prevention efforts.

LGBTQ+ Rights

WCASA supports protecting the rights, freedoms, and well-being of members of LGBTQ+ communities. This includes supporting a conversion therapy ban, the creation of a Transgender Equality Task Force, and policies that prohibit discrimination based on a person's gender identity or expression. We also oppose policies that specifically target transgender youth, including prohibiting health care providers from providing gender affirming procedures and preventing transgender girls from participating in sports.

Reproductive Health and Access

WCASA [believes](#) that all people are entitled to bodily autonomy and decision-making power regarding their reproductive health, including the right to access birth control and abortion services. We support policies that specify that every person has the fundamental right to choose to obtain a safe and legal abortion, including repealing Wisconsin's criminal abortion statute. We oppose policies that jeopardize access to birth control and abortion services, including abortion bans with exceptions for rape-related pregnancy.

Transformative Justice

WCASA supports policies that divest from criminal legal system responses, and which return control back to communities to invest in safety and support systems. This includes supporting policies that center survivor-defined justice and safety outside the criminal legal system, including de-criminalizing sex work that is adult, voluntary, and consensual (this does not include actions involving children or human trafficking). We also oppose policies that criminalize survivors who defend themselves.

Immigration

WCASA supports protecting the rights, freedoms, and well-being of immigrant communities. This includes supporting policies that prohibit discrimination based on citizenship or immigration status. We also oppose policies that prohibit cities/towns from enacting ordinances barring local law enforcement agencies from cooperating with Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents (i.e., Anti-Sanctuary City policies).

Economic Justice

WCASA supports addressing systemic, economic inequities that disproportionately impact BIPOC and other historically marginalized communities, including increasing the minimum wage, prohibiting employment discrimination based upon a conviction record, and improving access to high quality childcare services for working families.

Voting Rights

WCASA supports policies that protect and expand voting rights to ensure everyone's voice is heard during the electoral process. Voting is an important way for survivors to exercise their political power and helps shape public policy. We support protecting and expanding voting rights as essential to ensuring elected officials are accountable to survivors.

Violence Prevention

WCASA supports providing effective prevention in and outside of schools on several topics, including teen dating violence, gun violence, and other violence impacting communities.

Health Care

WCASA supports policies that expand access to access to affordable health care, including Medicaid and Medicare. We also support providing workers with access to paid family and medical leave.

If you have questions or feedback, please contact:

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