



WISCONSIN COALITION AGAINST SEXUAL ASSAULT

## 2025-2026 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. Wcasa also seeks support from our membership, other stakeholders, and survivors to support these policy initiatives. However, this is a living document. We encourage legislators, survivors, SASPs, and others to contact us with other public policy ideas throughout the 2025-2026 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:** Our work is grounded in racial and reproductive justice. For more information, please see our [Anti-Racism](#) and [Reproductive Health](#) Position Statements.

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### 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 partner with organizations leading initiatives impacting survivors.*

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#### **Victim Services Funding**

WCASA supports increasing victim services funding by \$33 million per year as outlined in the Wisconsin Department of Justice's (DOJ) agency [budget request](#). This increase establishes a new General Purpose Revenue (GPR) appropriation to offset cuts in federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) funding and is critical for essential sexual assault services statewide. As part of the \$33 million increase, at least \$8 million per year would be allocated for sexual assault services. We also support changing the Sexual Assault Victim Services (SAVS) eligibility requirements to allow DOJ to appropriate funding to WCASA to meet the need for training and technical assistance to SAVS grantees.

#### **Child Sexual Abuse Prevention Education/Healthy Youth Act**

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](#). We also support reinstating the Healthy Youth Act, which requires school boards to provide instruction in human growth and development in grades K-12. This includes instruction on a variety of topics, including information on contraception, gender stereotypes, and skills needed to make responsible decisions about sexuality/sexual behavior.

## **HIV Prophylaxis for Survivors/HIV Decriminalization**

WCASA supports ensuring free and timely access to HIV prophylaxis medications for survivors as well as eliminating barriers to Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP). We also support policies that decriminalize HIV transmission or exposure, including provisions in current law that increase the sentence of an individual convicted of certain sex crimes based upon their HIV status. These laws not only unfairly stigmatize people living with HIV but also do not reflect current scientific and medical evidence on HIV transmission.

## **Statute of Limitations for Child Victims (civil suit)**

WCASA supports extending the time limits (i.e., statutes of limitations) within which a victim of child sexual assault can bring a civil suit against the perpetrator. Most child sexual assault survivors are victimized by family members or authority figures who often pressure them to remain silent. Extending the statute of limitations provides survivors additional time to seek justice and shift the cost of the abuse to those responsible for causing harm.

## **Sexual Harassment**

WCASA supports strengthening workplace sexual harassment protections: 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 existing law.

## **Sexual Assault by a Health Care Provider**

WCASA supports creating a new crime that would prohibit a health care provider from engaging in sexual intercourse/contact with their patient. Consent would not be an issue in this new crime due to the power disparity inherent in the health care provider/patient relationship.

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

WCASA supports policies addressing the disproportionate rates of violence towards Indigenous women and girls, including appropriating funding for a Tribal liaison coordinator program to help implement the policy recommendations of the [MMIW/R Task Force](#). This program would provide funding for each of Wisconsin's federally recognized Tribes to provide direct victim services to families of MMIW/R. We also support allocating state funding for an Office on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women/Relatives.

## **Task force on Missing and Murdered African American Women and Girls**

WCASA supports allocating state funding to create a Task Force on Missing and Murdered African American Women and Girls. This task force will examine topics including the systemic causes behind violence that African American women and girls experience and will implement policy recommendations to eliminate violence against African American women and girls.

## **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, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) experience a higher burden of sexual violence and are more likely to be incarcerated for their responses to trauma. We also support extending the civil statute of limitations for victims of child sex trafficking.

## **Civil Justice Options for Sexual Violence Survivors**

WCASA supports policies expanding civil justice options for survivors, including creating civil causes of action for the non-consensual removal or tampering with a sexually protective/contraceptive device and for sending unsolicited obscene/sexually explicit images by electronic means.

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### **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.*

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### **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. This includes policies that prohibit law enforcement from participating in training that encourages aggressive conduct by law enforcement officers and eliminating public official immunity for law enforcement officers as a means of avoiding civil liability for causing harm while on the job. We also oppose policies that censor curricula in anti-racism instruction for schools. Censoring anti-racism instruction leads to incomplete, non-inclusive curricula which undermines a school's ability to provide quality education and 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 prohibiting 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 ensure 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). With respect to policies that expand the criminal legal system – such as penalty enhancers and mandatory minimum sentences – WCASA will not support legislation that is likely to worsen the racial disparities embedded within the system. 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) and which require law enforcement to determine whether a person who is arrested/charged with a crime is lawfully present in the state.

## **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 advocates for policies that protect and expand voting rights, ensuring everyone has a voice 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. WCASA also opposes policies that require verifying citizenship status of individuals on the voter registration list.

## **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. We also support allocating state funding to sustain the recently created Office of Violence Prevention, which provides funding for violence prevention efforts, including gun violence, across Wisconsin.

## **Paid Family Leave**

WCASA supports providing workers with access to paid family and medical leave. Paid family and medical leave allows workers to be able to take time to care for themselves or their loved ones, without having to worry about their next paycheck. This can also benefit sexual violence survivors, who would be able to take paid time off to address their needs.

## **Health Care**

WCASA supports policies that expand access to affordable health care, including Medicaid and Medicare. This helps ensure survivors can receive timely and comprehensive health care, including counseling and mental health services.

*If you have questions or feedback, please contact:*

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