

Parliament review into sexual assault complaints process

After much urging by the PSA, the Premier is finally taking action to support women employees in the NSW Parliament. The solution for these employees should be a guide for the whole Public Sector.

As far back as June 2018, PSA General Secretary Stewart Little wrote to Premier Berejiklian regarding Parliamentary Members' staff and the need for an independent process to ensure allegations of discrimination, harassment and victimisation are investigated and taken seriously. In discussing the need for an independent arbitrator of such complaints, Mr Little stated:

Without appeal rights, or access to a transparent, independent assessment of complaints, staff are left only with public avenues to attempt to resolve grievances.

The PSA offered to host and participate in talks between the office of the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition. However, the silence from the Government was deafening.

The PSA welcomes the news that the Premier is finally taking some action to review how allegations of bullying, harassment and sexual assault involving Members' staff are handled. The action from the Premier is well overdue, but it should not have taken victims going to the media to force a Government into action. The PSA will be writing to the Premier again demanding our members and their delegates have input in to the review.

The guiding principles endorsed at the Members of Parliament Staff PSA Members Meeting on 18 March 2021 will be the foundation for this consultation.

As stated [HERE](#) in our bulletin on 23 February, the PSA has always supported members experiencing sexual harassment and assault. Your union has introduced our Legal Services Unit and restored the role of Women's Industrial Officer. Additionally, the PSA continues to advance the rights of women by:

- winning a pay equity case that saw members in schools receive pay rises of at least 19 per cent
- inserting domestic violence leave provisions into new workplace agreements
- conducting the [WHAT WOMEN WANT](#) survey to improve the working lives of all women, including better workplace flexibility.

Your union will continue to work to reduce the incidence of sexual harassment and assault and for employers to better support workers when it occurs.

The safest workplace is a unionised workplace.

