



**WOMEN'S
SHELTERS
CANADA**

Shelters and
Transition Houses
United to End Violence
Against Women

Ending Violence Against Women Federal Election 2021: Questions for Candidates

Violence against women (VAW) is at epidemic proportions in Canada and around the world and has only increased during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Canadian Femicide Observatory has reported that close to 100 women and girls were killed in the first half of 2021, the vast majority by men. Every 6 days, a woman in Canada is killed by a current or former intimate partner. Indigenous women continue to be six times more likely to be killed than non-Indigenous women. On any given day, there are over 3,000 women and 3,000 children who have found safety in one of Canada's shelters. Shelters work tirelessly to ensure that women and children do not become statistics on femicide lists, but **their work has been greatly affected by the pandemic**.

The affordable housing crisis across the country has exacerbated the situation for women and children fleeing violence. More and more women and children are turned away from shelters that are already operating at – and sometimes over – capacity. This has only worsened during the pandemic due to distancing measures. **We need to ensure that safe, accessible, and affordable housing is available for women fleeing violence.**

Through our work on [*Breaking the Cycle of Abuse and Closing the Housing Gap*](#), we recommended **consistent and sustainable funding** for organizations providing the continuum of housing supports for survivors of gender-based violence so that all survivors, regardless of their postal code, can access safe, affordable housing and supports.

On April 30, 2021, we delivered [*A Report to Guide the Implementation of a National Action Plan on Violence Against Women and Gender-Based Violence*](#) to the federal government. With this report, governments at all levels now have the definitive answer to the question: *What will it take to achieve a Canada free of gender-based violence?* **Canada needs a NAP on VAW to ensure that women in all areas of the country have access to comparable levels of services and protection.** The NAP will ensure a shared understanding of the root causes of VAW as well as coordinated and effective efforts across the federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal levels.

Violence against women is an equity issue. It is both a cause and consequence of women's inequality. To effectively address the issue, long-term systems change accompanied by a shift in attitudinal norms is needed. The 2021 Canadian federal election is the time for your voice to be heard.

Questions for Candidates in Your Riding:

1. What will you do to help end violence against women? Do you know how often a woman is killed by a current or former intimate partner in Canada?
2. Do you support the National Action Plan on Violence Against Women and Gender-Based Violence? Why or why not?
3. How will you ensure that more safe, accessible, and affordable housing is available for women fleeing violence?
4. Do you support the addition of coercive control to the Criminal Code of Canada?
5. Will you commit to increased, long-term funding for women's rights and gender justice organizations, including grassroots advocates, to carry out their critical work?

* If speaking to the incumbent, consider asking how their voting record while an MP has supported women's rights, gender justice, and ending VAW and GBV.