



Stronger Workers
Stronger Survivors

SECTION C

Findings from ESVA Canada's Job Posting Analysis

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Summary of Key Findings

This analysis draws on **58** job postings from gender-based violence (GBV) organizations across Canada, including **21** postings from sexual violence organizations (SVOs) and **37** postings from shelters. The postings represent multiple provinces and territories, with the largest share coming from British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario, and Quebec.

While the sample is limited, it provides a snapshot of workforce expectations and employment conditions across different GBV service models.



Several high-level patterns emerge from the analysis:

Over half of job postings required post-secondary education. Across the postings analyzed, **50%** required an undergraduate degree, **51.72%** required a college diploma, and **13.79%** required graduate education. Job descriptions frequently emphasized specialized knowledge in trauma-informed practice, crisis intervention, and sexual violence response, highlighting the professional expertise required for frontline GBV work.

Nearly half of positions were part-time or casual. While **53.45%** of postings were full-time, a significant proportion were part-time (**18.96%**) or casual/relief roles (**25.86%**). Casual roles were particularly common among shelter postings, indicating varying levels of employment stability across organizations in the sector.

The average salary across postings was approximately

\$53,024
per year

Among postings that included salary information, compensation ranged from \$30,870 to \$77,706, with an average salary of approximately \$53,024. Although **43 out of 58** postings disclosed salary information, compensation levels remain relatively modest given the expertise and responsibilities required for GBV work.

Unionization levels varied across the sector. Unionization appeared relatively limited in the postings analyzed. Only **4.76%** of sexual violence organization postings were unionized, compared with **27.03%** of shelter postings. This suggests

that collective bargaining protections may be more common in shelter settings than in sexual violence organizations.

Less than half of postings clearly indicated employee benefits. Overall, **48.28%** of postings indicated that benefits were offered, while **41.37%** did not clearly specify whether benefits were available. Among postings that included benefits, the most commonly mentioned were dental coverage, vision care, pharmacare, and wellness services. Benefits were more frequently listed in sexual violence organization postings than in shelter postings.

Job descriptions consistently emphasized crisis response and trauma-exposed work. Many postings referenced responsibilities such as **crisis intervention, safety planning, and responding to emergencies**. These expectations highlight the emotionally demanding nature of frontline GBV work and the need for workers to operate in **high-pressure environments**.



These findings, together, illustrate a workforce that requires high levels of education, specialized skills, and emotional resilience, while key indicators of job quality, including modest salary levels, uneven access to benefits, and relatively low rates of unionization in some parts of the sector, suggest variability in employment protections and working conditions across GBV organizations. An infographic summarizing some of these key findings can be found in Appendix A.

Methodology

As part of the Ending Sexual Violence Association of Canada's (ESVA Canada's) national Labour Force Strategy, a job posting analysis was conducted to examine workforce expectations, employment conditions, and hiring practices across the gender-based violence (GBV) sector in Canada.

To ensure valid comparisons across service models, data collection was limited to job postings from women's shelters and sexual violence organizations (SVOs), including sexual assault centres. Organizations were identified and cross-referenced against existing sector lists of shelters and SVOs to ensure consistency in classification and avoid miscategorization.

Job postings were collected over the period of July to September 2025 from publicly available sources, including organizational websites and job boards. An initial pilot phase (n = 30 postings) was conducted to refine the data collection process. This phase helped to minimize misinterpretation, improve the clarity of data collection fields, and ensure the overall validity and consistency of the dataset.

Using Microsoft Forms, all postings were entered into a standardized data entry form developed for this project, which ensured consistency in data collection across multiple researchers. The form captured detailed information on organizational characteristics, job requirements, compensation, employment conditions, values frameworks, accessibility practices, and other workplace factors. It also included space for qualitative notes and researcher reflections to support interpretive analysis.

To ensure accuracy and reliability, each job posting was entered twice. The data from both rounds were exported into Excel, combined into a master dataset, and systematically cleaned.

This process involved removing duplicate entries, standardizing variables, and resolving inconsistencies in formatting and terminology.



In total, 115 job postings were collected (85 from the main data collection phase and 30 from the pilot phase). After applying inclusion and exclusion criteria, 58 postings were retained for final analysis. These postings represent a range of roles across the sector, including frontline support workers, counsellors, management positions, and specialized roles such as Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANEs).

The final dataset included both quantitative and qualitative data across 29 variables, capturing multiple dimensions of workforce and organizational characteristics. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages), while qualitative data were examined through thematic analysis (Clarke & Braun, 2017) to identify recurring patterns in job expectations, required skills, values frameworks, and working conditions. Cross-tabulations were also used to explore relationships between key variables, including differences between shelter and SVO postings. A full list of variables used in the analysis is provided in Appendix B.

This research was supported by a Research Advisory Committee, which provided ongoing feedback and guidance throughout the project. The committee contributed to shaping the data collection approach, refining analytical priorities, and ensuring that the findings reflect sector realities and practitioner perspectives. Research Advisory Committee members included:

- Anna-Lee Straatman and Dr. Katreena Scott - Centre for Research and Education on Violence Against Women and Children, Western University
- Dr. Robyn Hoogendam – Women's Shelters Canada
- Dr. Krys Maki – Élisabeth-Bruyère School of Social Innovation, Saint-Paul University

As with all job posting analyses, this dataset represents a snapshot of hiring practices during the data collection period rather than a comprehensive representation of the entire GBV workforce. Job postings varied in the level of detail provided, and some did not include information on salary, benefits, or organizational practices. These limitations were considered when interpreting patterns and drawing conclusions.

While findings from the whole sample are presented within, green boxes indicate areas where nuanced differences were found between postings in Sexual Violence Organizations (SVOs) and shelters, highlighting differences in practice within the sector.

Descriptive findings from the job posting analysis

i. Regional Distribution

The job postings included in this analysis were drawn from organizations across several provinces and territories in Canada. While the sample does not represent all GBV organizations nationally, it provides insight into the geographic distribution of publicly advertised positions during the data collection period.

The largest number of job postings in the sample came from British Columbia (**25.86%**), followed by Alberta (**22.40%**), Ontario (**17.24%**), and Quebec (**15.52%**). These four provinces accounted for the majority of postings in the dataset.

The relatively high number of postings in British Columbia and Alberta may reflect the structure and coordination of the GBV sector in those provinces. For example, British Columbia has more than 200 gender-based violence programs and a well-established provincial coordinating body, the Ending Violence Association of BC, which supports standardized services and sector coordination. This level of coordination may contribute to stronger sector infrastructure and more visible hiring activity.

By contrast, Ontario, despite having a population several times larger than British Columbia, accounted for a smaller share of postings in the sample. Ontario lacks the same level of centralized provincial coordination or comprehensive data on the number and scope of GBV services across the province. These differences may reflect broader variations in provincial funding structures and sector organization, which can influence hiring practices and workforce stability.

Smaller numbers of postings were identified in Nova Scotia, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Prince Edward Island, and the Northwest Territories, likely reflecting both the smaller population sizes of these regions and the limited number of GBV service providers operating within them.

No job postings were identified from Newfoundland and Labrador, New Brunswick, Yukon, or Nunavut during the data collection period. This absence does not necessarily indicate a lack of GBV services in these regions but may reflect differences in hiring cycles, recruitment practices, or the use of internal or regional hiring processes that are not publicly advertised.

Province / Territory	# of Postings	Percentage
British Columbia	15	25.86%
Alberta	13	22.40%
Ontario	10	17.24%
Quebec	9	15.52%
Nova Scotia	5	8.62%
Manitoba	3	5.17%
Saskatchewan	1	1.72%
Northwest Territories	1	1.72%
Prince Edward Island	1	1.72%
Total:	58	100%

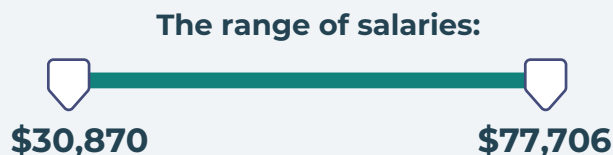
Table (I) shows the number and percentage of postings procured from each province and territory.



ii. Salaries

Salary information was included in 43 of the 58 job postings analyzed (74% of the sample).

Among postings that disclosed compensation, annual salaries ranged from **\$30,870 to \$77,706.65**, with an average salary of **\$53,024.80**.



Salary levels varied across provinces and territories. The lowest average salaries were observed in Ontario and Manitoba, while higher averages appeared in postings from Nova Scotia and British Columbia. These differences may reflect variations in provincial funding structures, organizational budgets, and local labour market conditions.

Entry-level salaries in the dataset were sometimes close to minimum wage thresholds or local living wage estimates. For example, the lowest salary identified (**\$30,870**) falls near or below estimated living wage benchmarks in several Canadian cities, while postings in higher-cost regions such as the Northwest Territories tended to offer higher salaries.



Salary levels also differed across organization types. The average salary for sexual violence organization (SVO) postings was **\$55,712**, compared with **\$51,761** for shelter postings.

Overall, these findings suggest that while GBV roles require specialized skills and training, compensation levels vary considerably across regions and service models.

iii. Employment Conditions

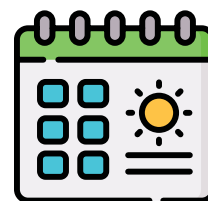
The job posting analysis highlights several patterns in employment arrangements within the gender-based violence (GBV) sector. Across the sample, **53.45%** of postings offered full-time employment, while **18.96%** were part-time positions and **25.86%** were casual or relief roles.

A small number of postings were categorized under other employment types, such as contract or unspecified arrangements. These figures indicate that just over half of the advertised positions provide full-time employment, while a significant share of roles involve part-time or casual work arrangements.

Employment patterns differed across organization types. Sexual violence organizations (SVOs) were more likely to offer full-time positions, with **66.67%** of SVO postings advertising full-time employment, compared with **45.95%** of shelter postings.

This difference likely reflects the operational structure of shelters, which typically provide 24-hour services and rely on shift-based staffing.

Scheduling expectations also varied. Overall, **58.62%** of postings required evening or weekend work, while **27.59%** did not specify or were unclear about these requirements. Differences were also observed across organization types: **47.62%** of SVO postings required evening or weekend work, compared with **59.46%** of shelter postings, reflecting the continuous support needed in residential shelter settings.



Overall, these findings suggest that many roles in the GBV sector involve non-standard schedules and varying levels of employment stability, particularly within shelter-based services.

iv. Benefits

Less than half of the job postings analyzed (48.28%) specified that benefits were offered, while more than half did not clearly indicate whether benefits were available.

For job seekers, the absence of this information may make it difficult to assess the full compensation and support associated with a position.

There were notable differences across organization types: **71.43%** of sexual violence organization (SVO) postings specified that benefits were offered, compared with **35.13%** of shelter postings.

This difference may reflect the greater reliance of shelters on shift-based, part-time, or casual roles, which do not always include benefits.

Among postings that listed benefits, the most included were dental coverage (**32.75%**), vision care (**21.14%**), pharmacare (**15.52%**), and wellness services (**17.24%**). However, fewer than **2%** of postings mentioned Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

benefits, despite the emotional demands associated with frontline GBV work.

In addition to health benefits, training and professional development opportunities were the most frequently mentioned additional benefit. One posting also listed “motivated working conditions” as a benefit, illustrating how some organizations try to frame general workplace qualities as benefits. This may reflect efforts to attract applicants by highlighting positive aspects of the work environment, even when these do not constitute formal employment benefits.



v. Job Titles & Role Responsibilities

The job posting analysis revealed a wide variety of job titles used across the GBV sector. Across the 58 postings analyzed, 54 distinct job titles were identified despite many roles involving similar types of work.

Titles such as Support Worker, Women's Support Worker, Case Worker, and Counsellor appeared more than once, but most titles were unique. This diversity in titles suggests a lack of standardization in how positions are named and categorized across organizations.

Posting titles were classified into various categories that included therapist, intake worker, educator, advocate, and others. In many cases, job titles also reflected multiple responsibilities within a single role.

Approximately **18.96%** of postings included titles that fell under more than one category, indicating that workers are often expected to perform several functions within a single position.

This may reflect the resource constraints faced by many organizations, where staff are required to balance a range of responsibilities, including direct support to survivors, administrative tasks, advocacy, and program coordination.

Overall, the variation in job titles and the presence of multi-category roles suggest that workers in the GBV sector frequently “wear many hats,” performing a broad range of duties that may not be fully captured by a single job title. At the same time, thematic analysis showed a high degree of similarity in job functions across postings, indicating that workers are often carrying out similar roles despite differences in how positions are titled. This lack of consistency in role naming may also make it more difficult to compare positions across organizations and regions, or to develop standardized career pathways within the sector.



vi. Required Education and Experience

Most job postings in the sample required post-secondary education.

Over half of postings specified education at the college or university level, including 13.79% that required graduate-level education, while only 3.45% accepted a high school diploma. In 12.07% of postings, the level of education required was not clearly specified.

Educational expectations differed across organization types. Sexual violence organizations (SVOs) most often required an undergraduate degree, while shelter postings most often required a college diploma. Certificates were accepted in some shelter postings but were not mentioned in SVO listings.



In addition, **33.33%** of SVO postings required professional registration, compared with **5.4%** of shelter postings, suggesting higher credential requirements in SVO roles.

Experience requirements were also common. **57%** of postings specified a minimum number of years of experience, with an average of **2.3 years** and a typical range of one to five years. Across the sample, **55%** of postings accepted relevant experience in lieu of formal education. In many cases, this included both professional work experience and lived experience related to GBV, which was sometimes identified as either a requirement or an asset in postings.

Some postings also referenced specialized credentials, such as the Assaulted Women's and Children's Counsellor/Advocate (AWCCA) Diploma, which is only offered at George Brown College in Toronto. This reflects the value placed by employers on specialized training in supporting survivors of violence.

However, despite being a significant asset to sector employers, the AWCCA program has been suspended indefinitely after 40 years of operation.

vii. Unionization

Unionization was relatively uncommon in the job postings analyzed.

Approximately 4.76% of sexual violence organization (SVO) postings indicated that the position was unionized, compared with 27.03% of shelter postings.

This pattern suggests notable differences in workplace structures across the sector. Shelter-based positions appear more likely to fall within unionized environments, while union representation is far less common in SVO postings. At the same time, earlier findings show that SVO postings more frequently indicated the availability of employee benefits. This contrast suggests that although some SVO roles may offer stronger benefit packages, collective bargaining protections are less common in these organizations compared with shelters.

These differences may reflect variations in organizational history, funding models, and employment structures across the GBV sector.



viii. DEI Requirements

A notable share of job postings included requirements or preferences related to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in hiring.

32.76% of postings indicated that belonging to a particular cultural, linguistic, or gender group was required, while **18.97%** stated that such characteristics were preferred but not required. These requirements were most pronounced in Quebec, where several postings specified linguistic or cultural competencies.

These hiring criteria reflect the sector's effort to ensure that staff can respond effectively to the needs of diverse client populations. In many cases, organizations sought applicants whose backgrounds or language skills would allow them to provide culturally appropriate services and improve access to support for specific communities.

The most frequently requested qualifications included bilingualism (i.e., English and French) or multilingualism, Indigenous language and cultural knowledge, and identification as a woman or femme-identified person.

Other examples mentioned in postings included experience supporting 2SLGBTQIA+ survivors, knowledge of specific cultural communities, or lived experience relevant to the populations served.



Overall, these findings suggest that GBV organizations are actively seeking to build a workforce that reflects the diversity of the communities they serve, particularly in regions with strong linguistic or cultural needs.

ix. Additional Job Requirements and Workplace Conditions

Several additional job requirements appeared frequently across postings and provide further insight into working conditions in the GBV sector. Transportation and background checks were common requirements. In many cases, vehicle access may be necessary for roles that involve meeting clients in community settings, transporting clients to appointments, or supporting outreach activities. Flexibility for virtual work differed across service models. Postings also referenced accessibility accommodations for employees, although not consistently across organizations.



61.90% of sexual violence organization (SVO) postings required access to a vehicle, while 43.24% of shelter postings included this requirement. In addition, 66.70% of SVO postings and 83.80% of shelter postings required a criminal records check.

None of the shelter postings indicated flexibility for remote work, while **42.86%** of SVO postings allowed for some level of virtual work.

This likely reflects the nature of service delivery in each setting. Shelter roles typically require staff to be present on site to support residents and respond to crises, while counselling and support services offered by SVOs may sometimes be delivered remotely.

42.86% of SVO postings stated that accessibility needs would be accommodated, compared with **32.43%** of shelter postings.

Finally, several postings highlighted broader organizational expectations and working conditions that may influence worker wellbeing. Some roles were in organizations whose services intersect with other sectors, such as housing, addiction support, and homelessness services, meaning that workers may need to navigate complex and overlapping client needs.

Example of a Worker Wellbeing Approach

One posting provided a clear statement about its commitment to staff wellbeing, noting that "justice work cannot come at the cost of the people doing it" and emphasizing that "burnout is not a badge of honour." The organization outlined expectations around maintaining healthy work practices and offered a compensation package that reflected the importance placed on supporting worker wellbeing.

Example of High-Demand Role Expectations

One posting illustrated how multiple job requirements can create demanding working conditions. The role supported women experiencing sexual exploitation and trafficking and required post-secondary education, at least three years of counselling and crisis-support experience, evening and weekend work, and access to a vehicle. Despite these specialized requirements, the position offered a maximum salary of \$53,776 in a high cost-of-living urban centre, highlighting how layered expectations and modest compensation can place significant pressure on GBV workers.

Findings from the thematic analysis

Three main themes emerged from thematic analysis of the postings:

a Stressful Work

The thematic analysis of job postings identified stressful work as a central and recurring feature of roles across the GBV sector.

Indicators of stress clustered around three intersecting domains:

1. Emotional Exposure
2. Operational Pressure
3. Structural Precarity

Within these domains, several subthemes emerged, reflecting the complex and demanding nature of frontline GBV work.

1. Emotional Exposure

Evident across postings was the high level of emotional and psychological demand associated with working with survivors of violence. Job descriptions frequently referenced exposure to trauma, including “support those impacted by trauma,” “providing trauma therapy to survivors of sexual violence,” and “caseload of women dealing with historic and recent violence.”

These expectations indicate that workers are regularly exposed to trauma narratives, crisis situations, and client distress, creating risks of vicarious trauma, compassion fatigue, and emotional exhaustion. Postings also emphasized the need for emotional resilience, strong interpersonal skills, and the ability to maintain boundaries, highlighting the emotional labour inherent in these roles.



2. Operational Pressure

A second repeated theme related to the high-pressure and fast-paced nature of the work environment. Many postings required the ability to “intervene in crisis situations,” “respond to emergencies,” and “work under high pressure.” These expectations reflect roles that require rapid decision-making, constant readiness, and the ability to manage complex and unpredictable situations.

In addition, postings frequently referenced heavy caseloads and workload demands, including “caseload of 25-35 clients” and “ability to adapt to a fast-paced work environment.” These conditions suggest limited recovery time and ongoing multitasking, both of which are associated with chronic occupational stress.

Work schedules further contributed to operational pressure. Requirements for shift work, on-call availability, and overnight coverage indicate irregular and demanding schedules that can disrupt work-life balance and contribute to fatigue.



3. Structural Precarity

Thirdly, analysis revealed employment conditions that contribute to instability and stress. Many postings referenced casual, part-time, or on-call roles, including phrases such as “casual position,” “on-call / relief work,” and “only 8 hours a week guaranteed.”

These conditions point to employment insecurity and unpredictable income, which can compound the emotional and operational demands of the work. Structural precarity, combined with exposure to trauma and high workloads, creates layered pressures that may affect worker wellbeing and retention.



b Knowledge, Skills and Expertise

The thematic analysis of job postings also identified knowledge, skills, and expertise as central requirements across roles in the GBV sector. While most postings specified required competencies, the analysis revealed a consistent set of core skill domains, reflecting both the complexity of the work and the breadth of expectations placed on workers.

Seven domains emerged:

1. Crisis Intervention
2. Emotional Labour and Regulation
3. Knowledge of GBV Causes and Impacts
4. Safety Planning and Risk Assessment
5. Systems Navigation
6. General Client Support Skills
7. Anti-oppressive and Trauma-informed Approaches

1. Crisis Intervention

The most prominent domain of relevant knowledge, skills, and expertise across postings was crisis intervention, which appeared as a core competency in many roles. Postings frequently required skills such as “crisis line training,” “ability to handle a crisis,” and “responding to emergencies during shift.”

This includes crisis management, crisis counselling, and in some cases specialized training such as Non-Violent Crisis Intervention (NVCi) or experience with physical interventions. The prominence of this domain reflects the reality that many GBV roles involve supporting individuals in acute distress and require rapid assessment, decision-making, and immediate response.



2. Emotional Labour and Regulation

Closely related to crisis intervention, many postings emphasized skills in de-escalation, conflict resolution, and managing challenging behaviours. Examples included “intervene appropriately to manage conflict, emotional distress, or disruptive behaviour” and “facilitates resolution of conflicts between residents.”

These skills point to the importance of emotional regulation and preventative approaches, where workers are expected not only to respond to crises but also to anticipate and mitigate escalation. This reinforces the emotionally demanding nature of the work and the need for strong interpersonal and problem-solving skills.

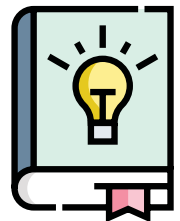


3. Knowledge of GBV Causes, Issues, and Impacts

Postings frequently required knowledge of GBV as a complex social issue, including its causes, impacts, and intersections with other systems.

This ranged from general awareness to more specialized knowledge, such as:

- ✓ understanding trauma and its effects
- ✓ knowledge of legal and justice systems
- ✓ awareness of systemic barriers and intersectionality



For example, postings referenced the need for “understanding GBV as a complex social problem” and “knowledge of systemic barriers and discrimination.” This suggests that workers are expected to engage with GBV not only as an individual experience, but as a structural and systemic issue.

4. Safety Planning and Risk Assessment

Another essential domain of skills, knowledge, and expertise was safety planning and risk assessment, which are critical components of both crisis response and ongoing support. Postings referenced skills such as “develop and implement individualized safety plans” and “suicide assessment and assistance training.”

These responsibilities require workers to assess risk, support client safety, and maintain secure environments, highlighting the high level of responsibility and decision-making required in these roles.



5. Systems Navigation

Many postings emphasized the importance of systems navigation, including the ability to connect clients with services and navigate complex institutional systems. Examples included “helping clients navigate the complex process of obtaining protection” and “service coordination with justice, social, and health partners.”

This reflects the role of GBV workers as intermediaries between clients and multiple systems, requiring both knowledge of available resources and the ability to coordinate across sectors.



6. General Client Support Skills

A broad range of postings also required general client support skills, including case management, advocacy, facilitation, and interpersonal communication. These ranged from frontline tasks such as “facilitating sensitive conversations” to organizational responsibilities such as developing protocols and maintaining documentation.

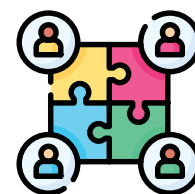
This skill domain highlights the multi-functional nature of GBV roles, where workers are expected to combine direct service provision with administrative, coordination, and advocacy responsibilities.



7. Anti-Oppressive, Trauma-Informed, and Intersectional Approaches

Finally, some postings explicitly referenced anti-oppressive, trauma-informed, and intersectional approaches to service delivery. These included commitments to anti-racism, harm reduction, and culturally responsive practices, as well as awareness of co-occurring issues such as mental health and addiction.

Although this domain appeared less frequently than others, it reflects the foundational frameworks underpinning the GBV sector. Notably, only a small number of postings explicitly referenced feminist or Indigenous-specific approaches, despite their importance in the field.



C Values Framework

The thematic analysis of job postings showed that the GBV sector is strongly values-driven. Across the sample, **87.93%** of postings specified a values framework used by the organization, suggesting that organizations are intentional in how they describe their approach to service delivery, workplace culture, and relationships with clients and communities. These values were not presented as abstract statements; rather, they appeared as practical frameworks guiding hiring expectations, service models, and organizational identity.

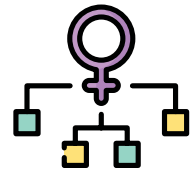
Nine main values-based themes emerged from the analysis:

1. Anti-Oppressive Approaches
2. Feminist Frameworks
3. Intersectionality
4. Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility (EDIA)
5. Indigenous-Specific Frameworks
6. Trauma- and Violence-Informed Care
7. Harm Reduction
8. Client- or Person-Centred Approaches
9. Ethical Frameworks

While the language varied across postings, these themes point to a high degree of overlap in how organizations understand justice, care, and accountability in the context of GBV work.

1-2. Anti-Oppressive and Feminist Frameworks

The most prominent values framework across the postings was anti-oppressive practice, often expressed through feminist, anti-racist, holistic, and socially responsive approaches. Postings referenced frameworks such as “intersectional feminist practices and ideologies,” “supportive, feminist workplace deeply rooted in the social justice movement,” and “demonstrated understanding of the social and systemic root causes of sexual violence.” Other postings emphasized commitments to anti-racism, reconciliation, and social justice more broadly.



These findings suggest that many organizations understand GBV not simply as an interpersonal issue, but as one rooted in broader systems of power, inequality, and structural violence. In this sense, anti-oppressive and feminist frameworks appear to function as core organizing principles across the sector.

3-4. Intersectionality and EDIA

A second major theme was intersectionality, including references to gender diversity, social difference, and the need to support communities facing multiple forms of marginalization. For example, postings described the need for a “strong understanding of the needs and issues of different social groups” and, in one case, explicitly stated that the definition of women included “trans, two-spirit, intersex, transfeminine individuals.”



Related to this, many postings emphasized equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility (EDIA) in hiring and workplace culture. Examples included commitments to “remove barriers to inclusion,” “equal opportunity,” and building teams that reflect the communities served. These postings suggest a strong sector-wide commitment to representation, inclusion, and culturally responsive practice, although the language used was not always consistent.

5. Indigenous-Specific Frameworks

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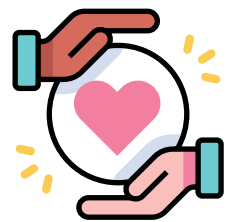


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6-9. Trauma-Informed, Harm Reduction, Client-Centred, and Ethical Frameworks

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Conclusion

ESVA Canada’s descriptive and thematic analysis of 58 job postings from the GBV sector in Canada revealed that GBV work requires high levels of education, a broad range of specialized knowledge and skills, and a high degree of emotional resilience in the context of crisis and emergency response as well as trauma-exposed work.

However, despite the operational and emotional demands of work in sexual violence organizations and shelters, positions frequently offer only modest salary levels, uneven access to benefits, and relatively low rates of unionization. These forms of precarity, particularly when combined with high workloads, trauma, and the need to “wear many hats”, create layered pressures that may affect worker wellbeing and retention in Canada’s GBV sector.

Our analyses also revealed that Canada’s GBV sector is strongly values-driven, and it is these values frameworks that provide the path forward to addressing issues of worker wellbeing and retention. Extending the philosophies and applications of, for example, feminist, EDIA, and person-centred approaches inward will enhance the organizational accountability, funding reform advocacy, and dedication to collective care necessary to protect workers’ health and well-being and address structural precarity. Building on these findings, Section D: Strategic Areas for Action, outlines practical steps organizations can take to respond to these challenges and support a more sustainable workforce.

High Demand, Heavy Burden: Insights from Front-Line GBV Worker Job Postings



Stronger Workers
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58 job postings for front-line roles delivering direct gender-based violence (GBV) support were analyzed.

The majority of postings were from BC, Alberta, Ontario and Quebec.

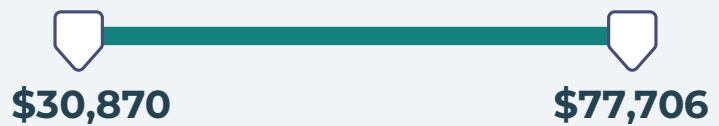


36% were from sexual violence organizations
64% were from domestic violence shelters

\$53,024

The average annual salary for front-line workers

The range of salaries:



OVER HALF



of postings required post-secondary education

with **14% of roles** requiring a Masters degree



53%

of postings offered full-time employment



LESS THAN HALF

of postings offered benefits

UP TO 5 YEARS



of experience required for Front-line roles

(average **2.5 years**)



58%

of postings required evening/weekend work

ONLY 5%

of postings from sexual violence organizations were **unionized**

27%

of shelter postings were **unionized**



Thematic analyses showed that workers are expected to meet:

- high emotional and psychological demands
- respond to crises
- work in fast-paced environments
- address safety concerns
- manage difficult behaviour

all while navigating structural job insecurity and maintaining their own wellbeing.

Variables Used in the Job Posting Analysis

VARIABLE	DESCRIPTION	TYPE
Job Number	Unique identifier for each posting	Numerical
Organization Type	Categorization of the hiring organization	Categorical (SVO, Shelter)
Province/Territory	Location of the position	Categorical
Salary Included	Whether a salary range is provided	Binary (Yes/No)
Salary Type	Format of salary	Categorical (Hourly/Annual)
Salary Amount	Reported salary or range	Numerical/Text
Employment Type	Nature of employment	Categorical (Full-time, Part-time, Casual/Relief, Other)
Benefits Included	Whether benefits are mentioned	Binary
Types of Benefits	Specific benefits listed	Text
Time Off Benefits	Mention of vacation, leave, or similar	Text
Job Title	Title of the position	Text
Job Title Category	Grouped category of role	Categorical
Education Required	Minimum level of education specified	Categorical (e.g., Diploma, Bachelor's, Master's)
Professional Registration Required	Whether registration is required	Binary
Years of Experience	Required years of experience	Numerical/Text
Experience in Lieu of Education	Whether accepted	Binary
Unionization	Whether position is unionized	Binary
Worker Trait Requirements	Personal/relational traits specified	Text
Scheduling Requirements	Work hours expectations	Categorical (Evenings, weekends, holidays, shift)
Stress/Trauma Indicators	Indications of high-stress or trauma-exposed work	Text
Risk/Safety Skills	Required skills in safety, conflict, or crisis management	Text

Variables Used in the Job Posting Analysis, Continued

VARIABLE	DESCRIPTION	TYPE
Values Framework	Presence of values-based language	Binary
Values Language	Specific phrases reflecting values (e.g., feminist, EDIA)	Text
Driver's License Required	Whether driving is required	Binary
Background Check Required	Whether records check is required	Binary
Virtual Work	Whether remote/virtual work is mentioned	Binary
Accessibility Accommodation	Mention of accessibility or accommodations	Binary
Language Requirements	Required or preferred languages	Text
Observational Notes	Additional patterns (e.g., lack of standardization, posting length)	Text