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## **First of its kind provincial Bad Date Reporting system for sex workers to be created in B.C.**

**Xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Sḵw̓xwú7mesh (Squamish) and səliłwətaʔt/seilwitulh (Tsleil-Waututh)/Vancouver, B.C.** — A provincial Bad Date Reporting system for sex workers in B.C. is now one step closer to becoming a reality.

Sex workers in British Columbia experience substantially higher rates of violence than the general population, and this vulnerability is often higher for Indigenous, homeless, im/migrant, and trans sex workers.

Due to stigma, criminalization, and other legal barriers, the vast majority of the violence toward sex workers is not reported to authorities—forcing sex workers to take safety into their own hands.

Bad Date and Aggressor Reporting (BDAR)—commonly called Bad Date Reporting—refers to systems where sex workers report violent incidents or safety concerns to peers or outreach workers, or track them in online databases. BDAR was born out of the necessity for sex workers to help keep each other safe. However, **existing BDAR systems are not available in most of the province, with a notable gap in rural and remote areas. The reports also have very limited distribution and aren't connected with each other.**

Creating a sex worker-informed, sex worker-designed, searchable database of bad date reports would **create a reliable province-wide tool to allow sex workers to quickly look for keywords, license plates, and other descriptions so they can take informed steps to protect themselves.**

**The provincial BDAR system will be the first of its kind in Canada, and one of a select few geographically-linked reporting systems that exist internationally.** The project will also include province-wide community consultations with a diverse range of sex workers and sex work support organizations. In particular, the BC Sex Work Support Service Network—a group of over 20 sex work service and support organizations from all regions of B.C.—will be a key hub for consultation, input, and design, to ensure this system will meet the needs of the diversity of sex workers across rural and urban areas of the province.

*“As a current sex worker, I am very excited by the idea of a provincial Bad Date Reporting system. When I have experienced bad dates in the past, I have never gone to police,”* shared a current sex worker and current member of the Peers Victoria Resources Society. ***“Sex workers and our allies know that police are most often not a safe option to turn to. It is our community and other sex workers who keep us safe and support us in the aftermath of violence.”***

A province-wide reporting system will help address a critical gap in gender-based violence prevention and response work. The project, which has for years been identified as a need, has only now become possible thanks to the financial support of the Law Foundation of British Columbia and an anonymous BC-based family foundation. The working group supporting this project to get underway are Peers Victoria, PACE Society, WISH Drop In Centre Society, SWAN Vancouver, and Living in Community, along with support from Dr. Cecilia Benoit, at the University of Victoria.

The Law Foundation will provide funding for the first three years of the project. Afterwards, it is our hope that the provincial government will see the need to address the disproportionate rates of violence that sex workers experience and offer its support.

#### **QUOTES:**

*“A province-wide Bad Date reporting tool has been a critical need for quite some time. All of us that work with and alongside sex workers have long been distressed by targeted violence that largely goes unreported, unseen and that allow predators to operate with impunity. We’re extremely grateful to the Law Foundation for this tremendous support. We look forward to learning what kind of needs will be identified and what kind of reporting tool the community of sex workers and allies across BC will co-create.”* — **Mebrat Beyene, Executive Director at [WISH Drop-In Centre Society](#)**

*“A provincial Bad Date Reporting system that is designed and led by sex workers is an alternative to relying on colonial and oppressive structures such as policing for safety. Further, it contributes to the broader movement to defund the police and shift away from carceral feminism within the sex worker rights movement. This is necessary if we aim to be engaged in the work of anti-colonialism and decolonization in our activism and support work.”*— **Marina Bochar, Program Coordinator at [Peers Victoria Resource Society](#)**

*“As a trans woman sex worker, I can speak personally to the isolation and precarious working conditions many sex workers face. I am happy to say that a central focus of this project has been making sure that it is led and implemented by sex workers and reflects the needs and experiences of our diverse communities.”* — **Lyra McKee, Co-Executive Director at [PACE Society](#)**

*“Predators target migrant and immigrant sex workers calculating that they will not report violence to police. The BDAR system will provide racialized sex workers a protection mechanism in lieu of reporting to police, which has shown time and time again is woefully inadequate in addressing their safety needs.”* — **Alison Clancey, Executive Director at [SWAN Vancouver Society](#)**

*“At Living in Community, we have heard loud and clear from BC Sex Work Support Service Network members that a provincial BDAR system is essential to improving sex workers’ safety. One such member is Positive Living North in Fort St. John, an organization offering programs and services designed to raise awareness of HIV/AIDS/HCV, reduce stigma and discrimination, and improve sexual health and safety across Northeast BC.”* — **Halena Seiferling, Director of Community Engagement at [Living in Community](#)**

*“Northeast BC has the highest levels of resource extraction in the country and, therefore, is flooded with transient, temporary workers. The power imbalance and transitory nature of resource based economies put women who sell or trade sex at increased risk, while providing nothing to keep them safe. A BDAR system will allow women to track predators within and between communities and alert one another to otherwise unavoidable danger.”* — **Heather Paddison, Community Health Educator at [Positive Living North](#)**

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