

City Council

MM13.34	ACTION			Ward: All
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Taking Action on the Declaration of Intimate Partner Violence as an Epidemic - by Councillor Lily Cheng, seconded by Mayor Olivia Chow

** This Motion has been deemed urgent by the Chair.*
** This Motion is not subject to a vote to waive referral. This Motion has been added to the agenda and is before Council for debate.*

Recommendations

Councillor Lily Cheng, seconded by Mayor Olivia Chow, recommends that:

1. City Council request the Chief People Officer to assist Councillor Lily Cheng in the development of a working group which could include the Director, Indigenous Affairs Office, the Executive Director, Social Development Finance and Administration, gender-based violence and intimate partner violence community organizations, and relevant divisions and agencies and report back in the fourth quarter of 2024 as part of the Gender Equity Strategy report.
2. City Council request Chief People Officer to work with the working group to:
 1. advise on developing key actions to align Intimate Partner Violence-related priorities across city divisions including but not limited to Social Development, Finance and Administration, People and Equity, Toronto Public Health, Toronto Police Service and 311 to ensure gaps identified by community organizations are addressed,
 2. advise on measurable outcomes focused on collaborative synchronicity across divisions, and
 3. advise on engaging the provincial and federal governments to support any key actions in need of their support.

Summary

At its meeting on July 19 and 20, 2023 City Council declared gender-based violence and intimate partner violence an epidemic in Toronto.

The Government of Canada highlights the scale of this problem with 44 percent of women or 6.2 million women aged 15 and older have reported some kind of abuse in their intimate partner relationship.

Almost six in ten (56 percent) Indigenous women have experienced physical assault while almost half (46 percent) of Indigenous women have experienced sexual assault.

Every six days, a woman in Canada is murdered by her intimate partner. There are elevated risks of violence for women who may identify as Indigenous, with disabilities, visible minority, and 2SLGBTQ+.

To build on the work underway, staff from People and Equity, Indigenous Affairs Office, and Social Development, Finance Administration will engage gender-based violence and intimate partner violence community organizations in developing a terms of reference and quarterly meeting schedule for the working group. The group will be tasked with identifying key actions the City can take and engage other orders of government on.

The actions will be incorporated into the City's Gender Equity Strategy, currently under development. Actions identified will also be incorporated into the work with Indigenous communities to implement Action 12 of City's Reconciliation Action Plan - Implement the Calls for Justice from the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWGT2S+).

This motion is urgent as City Council voted unanimously on July 19, 2023 to declare Intimate Partner Violence to be an epidemic and 62 victims have died by femicide in Ontario to date in 2023. Last year 6,752 calls were made to the Assaulted Women's Helpline from women seeking safety in violence against women shelters in Toronto but only 10 percent of them secured a violence against women bed due to capacity.

Background Information

Member Motion 13.34