

Open Letter from CPSU members in Parliament House

We're CPSU members and workers in Parliamentary Offices.

We deserve to be safe and respected in our workplace.

The revelations of widespread gendered violence of the last month have been deeply disturbing and have impacted many of our colleagues.

The work we do for our democracy is incredibly important, but our workplaces have significant power imbalances, which at times allows bullying, sexual harassment, and sexual assault to fester and go unpunished.

There is an intense national public debate about issues of sexual assault and sexual harassment in our workplace. We are workers, and like all workers, we deserve to be safe at work. As unionists we will work together through our union to make sure our voices are heard.

We want:

1. An independent and confidential complaints process, which is victim-centric, that staff can have confidence in, and that ensures there are consequences for poor behaviour;
2. A safe workplace that guarantees workers' workplace health and safety rights, that includes mandatory training for parliamentarians and staff, safe reporting mechanisms, and data reporting to workplace health and safety committees or equivalent;
3. Provisions to mitigate gendered violence and sexual harassment agreed to in the MOPS Enterprise Agreement currently under negotiation, and in the current workplace health and safety policies for the Department of House of Representatives, Department of the Senate, Department of Parliamentary Services, Department of Finance and Parliamentary Budget Office and other APS agencies, until they can be inserted into relevant industrial agreements;
4. Appropriate, specialised, and ongoing support services for all workers in Parliamentary workplaces; and
5. The immediate implementation of the 55 recommendations of the Respect@Work report.

There are now multiple reviews and processes underway examining workplace culture in Parliament House and associated workplaces.

It is incumbent on the Government, all political parties, parliamentarians, parliamentary departments, and APS agencies to act now in the interests of workers in Parliament House.

We want action.

Endorsed by Meeting 5.30pm.