

PREVENTION OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN SPORTS AND RECREATION

Glossary of the main types of sexual violence

Sexual assault

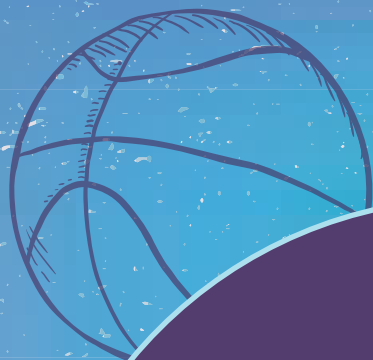
“Sexual assault is a sexual act, with or without physical contact, committed by an individual without the consent of the victim or, in some cases, especially when children are involved, through emotional manipulation or blackmail. It is an act that subjects another person to one’s desires through an abuse of power, the use of force or coercion, or implicit or explicit threats. Sexual assault violates the victim’s fundamental rights, including the right to physical and psychological integrity and security of the person. This definition applies regardless of the age, sex, culture, religion or sexual orientation of the victim or of the perpetrator of the assault, regardless of the type of sexual act committed or the place or living environment in which it is committed, and regardless of the relation between the victim and the perpetrator.”¹

Sexual exploitation

“Sexual exploitation is a complex problem, namely because of the different contexts in which it can occur—prostitution, erotic massage parlours, strip clubs, etc.—and the attendant criminal activities, such as procuring, human trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation, the purchase of sexual services, and so on. Through its numerous forms, sexual exploitation usually involves a situation, context or relationship in which one individual takes advantage of the vulnerability or the dependency of another individual, or an unequal power relationship, in order to use the person’s body for sexual purposes for their personal benefit. The benefit can be pecuniary, social or personal, such as sexual gratification, or any other form of advantage.”¹

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1. Québec. Secrétariat à la condition féminine. *Balises gouvernementales – Formations sur la violence sexuelle et la violence conjugale et familiale*. Gouvernement du Québec, 2025. [Translation]



Sexual violence

“Any form of violence committed by means of sexual activity or by targeting sexuality, including sexual assault. It also refers to any other form of misconduct, particularly relating to sexual and gender diversity, through unwanted direct or indirect gestures, comments, behaviours or attitudes with sexual connotations, including by technological means.”²



Cyberviolence

“Behaviour that consists in forcing a partner or ex-partner to receive or send written, audio, photo or video content of a sexual nature using technology, or pressuring them to do so.”³

Sexual harassment

“Any vexatious behaviour in the form of repeated and hostile or unwanted conduct, verbal comments, actions or gestures of a sexual nature, that affects a person’s dignity or integrity and that creates a harmful environment for the person. A single instance of serious misconduct can also be considered harassment if it has lasting negative consequences for the person.”

Many verbal comments, gestures or actions can constitute sexual harassment. It can be non-verbal behaviour, such as insistent staring or whistling, or even verbal comments, such as sexist or lewd jokes, questions about a person’s private life, unwanted advances, threats, etc. Sexual harassment can also be physical, manifesting itself in brushing against or touching a person, or other acts of a sexual nature.

Sexual harassment can be perpetrated by a person who is known or unknown to the victim and occur in any setting: at work, at a sports practice, at school, in public spaces (e.g. street, park, public transportation), online, etc.

By its very nature and its consequences for the persons who are victims, sexual harassment constitutes an abuse of power. It is an assault on equality and an obstacle to the full social participation of women and girls as it excludes them from shared spaces. It is important to know that the perpetrator’s intention needs not be taken into account; the experience of and consequences for the person who is a victim are the decisive elements in identifying a situation of harassment.”²

2. Québec. Secrétariat à la condition féminine. *Balises gouvernementales – Formations sur la violence sexuelle et la violence conjugale et familiale*. Gouvernement du Québec, 2025. <http://cdn-contenu.quebec.ca/cdn-contenu/adm/org/SCF/publications/documentation/brochures/GM-guide-balises-formation-violences-fev2025-SCF.pdf>. [Translation]

3. <https://www.inspq.qc.ca/violence-conjugale/comprendre/cyberviolences-dans-les-relations-intimes>. [Translation]

