



Only Rights Can Stop the Wrongs

NSWP STATEMENT

CONSULTATIONS IN THE TIME OF COVID-19

3 September 2020 – COVID-19 has dramatically changed the world in which we live, creating a healthcare emergency with cascading effects on the economy, labour, the distribution of funding, and the provision of essential services. For sex workers, the pandemic has exacerbated existing social and economic inequalities, resulting in a total loss of income for many community members, who are also excluded from government support schemes. Many sex workers have lost their homes, face an increased risk of violence, and are without essential supplies.

As the world continues to adapt and cope with the immediate pressures of the pandemic, many national and international organisations, governmental and non-governmental, are shifting their priorities. This change of focus has resulted in an influx of consultations surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic that seek to include sex worker voices from around the world.

While NSWP commends the push for greater inclusion of sex worker voices in global consultations, the number of surveys that are circulating has become unmanageable, and does not take into account the extreme circumstances in which many sex workers now find themselves.

In April 2020, NSWP launched a global survey to understand the impact of COVID-19 on sex workers. The results of our COVID-19 Impact Survey, available on the [NSWP COVID-19 page](#), highlight a lack of inclusion in government social protection schemes, reduced access to essential healthcare, and increased stigma and violence. A collated list of sex worker community responses – including details of emergency funds, mutual aid, and sex worker-specific COVID-19 resources – is also available.

As a membership organisation, NSWP is committed to amplifying the voices and perspectives of diverse sex workers in response to the current crisis. However, we recognize that excessive consultations on the same issue puts further pressure on an already overburdened, criminalised, and marginalised community.



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Many sex workers are struggling to survive during this crisis, and sex worker organisations must continue to support community members in need, while also campaigning for long-term policy changes. For this reason, we ask that those seeking to consult with sex workers first take a moment to review the numerous consultations that have already been shared surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as sex workers demands for protections and support that have already been published by sex worker organisations. This will reduce burdens placed on sex workers and enable organisations to better focus on the most urgent issues faced by their communities.