

Women's Bureau

IMPACT OF TRAUMA

Violence and trauma can have a profound impact on women in the workplace. Some women workers may have histories of trauma and abuse, and in addition, they may be subjected to workplace bullying, domestic violence within the work setting, or sexual harassment which impacts them as workers. Women in traditionally male jobs such as the construction trades may experience different forms of gender-based harassment. Research has shown that these are common occurrences and that they not only affect women's job experience, but also her job performance and possible career advancement. Statistics on women, information about the impact of trauma on women in the workplace, and sources for further information can be found in the first Federal Partners Report on Women and Trauma <http://nicic.gov/Library/025082>.

How a Trauma-Informed Approach Can Make a Difference

The Women's Bureau was created by law in 1920 to formulate standards and policies to promote the welfare of wage-earning women, improve their working conditions, increase their efficiency, and advance their opportunities for profitable employment. Trauma-informed approaches help the Women's Bureau to meet its mission: to develop policies and standards and conduct inquiries to safeguard the interests of working women; to advocate for their equality and economic security for themselves and their families; and to promote quality work environments. The Women's Bureau places particular focus upon vulnerable women workers, including women veterans who have experienced trauma.



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR (DOL)

Major Accomplishments 2010-2013

In 2010, the Women's Bureau held the first-ever Stand Down events for homeless women veterans to address the unique needs of homeless women veterans and their families. Women-to-women Stand Down events help women veterans who are homeless and those at risk for homelessness to regain stability and sustainability for themselves and their families. The focus is on providing women veterans services and engaging community-based resources that integrate housing, employment support and reintegration services.

In 2011, the Women's Bureau released the publication Trauma-Informed Care for Women Veterans Experiencing Homelessness: A Guide for Service Providers, which underscores the need to recognize how trauma from military experiences impacts the reintegration process for women veterans and offers a comprehensive approach for creating effective trauma-informed care environments. The guide includes information on the experiences of women veterans, a step-by-step process for organizational self-assessment, and resource lists.

The Women's Bureau also developed a web-based training curriculum designed to help community-based service providers use the Guide to meet the unique needs of the populations they serve, and assesses how service providers use this information to change policies and/or practices to better serve women veterans.

New Directions and Collaborations

The Women's Bureau is partnering with the Veterans Employment and Training Service (VETS) to establish a formal women veterans program. The first of its kind, this program will identify distinct women veteran economic and employment needs, and determine how to maximize DOL resources to meet these needs. This initiative will engage experts in workforce development and on women employment issues to develop a strategic plan focused on improving employment and training services for women veterans.

In the future, the Women's Bureau will expand outreach to the broader woman veterans' population. The Bureau will conduct outreach to raise awareness of the challenges women veterans face in finding good jobs, including trauma-related challenges. The Bureau will also provide technical assistance to organizations to facilitate better recruitment and retention of women veterans in employment or in job training programs.

The Women's Bureau will also continue to serve on the White House Council on Women and Girls.

Additional Resources

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<http://www.dol.gov/wb/>

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