

Responding to sexual assault within the premises

As a **guideline** of what to do when an **event of sexual harassment or violence** in the premises has occurred, you should:

- ! Offer support and protection to the victim
- ! Collect information about what has happened
- ! Document the event and the answers
- ! Preserve medical and legal evidence
- ! Provide immediate medical assistance to the victim
- ! Offer police assistance

The stop ! sv partnership



IREFREA Spain
and Portugal

IREFREA is probably the oldest European drug prevention network. The areas covered by the Spanish and Portuguese teams include alcohol and drug prevention (research, evaluation, and programme implementation) and its members are very active in professional and scientific arenas such as the EMCDDA and NIDA. These teams have also organised many European conferences and have lead or participated in over 30 research projects at European and national level. Both teams excel in research achievements having had a social impact on risk factors including youth and gender violence. The teams have extensive experience in training and empowerment of civil society organizations both at national and international level and IREFREA is represented in the Civil Society Forum on Drugs since its initial stages.



The Public Health Institute
(PHI) at Liverpool John
Moores University (LJMU)

The PHI is a vibrant research community working to inform public health policy and practice, at local, national and international level. It specialises in applied research, systematic literature review, evaluation of prevention programmes and the development of public health intelligence on alcohol and drug use, violence, sexual behaviour, and exploration of the effectiveness of interventions to prevent harm in drinking environments. The PHI is a WHO Collaborating Centre for Violence Prevention, including gender violence and youth violence, with a particular interest in violence occurring in nightlife environments and a broader research expertise, focusing on alcohol and drug use, risky sexual behaviours and safer nightlife environments. The PHI co-hosts the UK focal point to the EMCDDA.



The Department of
Addictology at Charles
University (CUNI)

The DA has wide experience with quantitative and qualitative research in the field of substance abuse. The DA is experienced in leading projects including implementation, evaluation and dissemination activities. It actively collaborates with the Czech National Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addictions and participates in national and international research projects. The DA has a specialized section for law and criminology with extensive experience on surveys for criminal victimization and crime measurements.

For more information on the stop ! sv project, please contact the partnership or visit our websites:

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Guideline to address sexual violence in nightlife

stop ! sv

Staff training
on prevention of
sexual violence

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In relation to sexual harassment and violence within nightlife environments, some actions can be implemented to prevent this issue. However, when an incident occurs, there are some **strategies that may help you stop such event or help you respond after it has occurred.**

Basic principles

Before responding, you should consider the following:

You need to be aware of problem to intervene:

Activities within the premises identify situations of sexual harassment or violence, **or behaviours** that may promote harm or increase the risks of harm occurring.

In mind that sexual harassment and violence incorporate **a wide range of aggressive and non-consensual acts** that, in nightlife, can include:

- Verbal comments and sexual gestures;
- Unwanted sexual contact, such as groping, kissing and touching;
- Sexual activity with someone who is unable to give consent due to intoxication through alcohol or drug use;
- Coerced sexual activity, such as through threats, verbal pressure or the surreptitious provision of alcohol and drugs;
- Sexual exploitation;
- Rape or attempted rape.

! The problems and their effects may not be immediately clear: people may act as if they were okay or may be in a state of shock. People can take a long time to reveal what has happened to them and some never will. Physical injuries may not be immediately apparent.

You have the ability to help, prevent and respond to it:

It cannot be assumed that every eyewitness will try to prevent or address sexual harassment and violence. Some people may ignore, promote or perpetrate and there may be many reasons why others **do not intervene:**

- Lack of support or the necessary skills to intervene;
- Certain social norms may prevent them from intervening;
- They may not feel responsible or unwilling to take responsibility;
- They may fear the possible consequences of intervening; it may not be safe to intervene.

! As long as it is safe to do so, you should behave like an active bystander, meaning that you should try to prevent, stop or address sexual harassment and violence before, and if not, during or after it has occurred. As members of the community and as part of your professional role as employees in a nightlife venue, you can play a huge role in preventing and responding to sexual harassment and violence.

You need the skills to respond appropriately and safely:

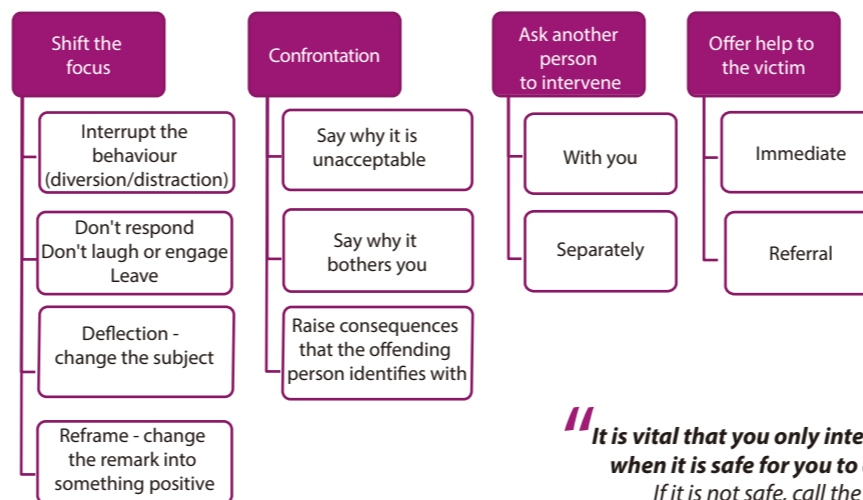
Be aware that **each incident is unique and that we should respond needs of the victim.** All people should **be treated with respect and dignity**, including respect for **individual life histories, cultural context and diversity.** People have the right to be treated with dignity, **without value judgments or stereotypes.**

The **confidentiality and privacy of the individual must be maintained** as appropriate: people may not want anyone else to know about the incident, including the **informed consent of the victims** in order to provide relevant information for legal reasons or other services (**such as police or health professionals**) and **ensure that these services that receive the information respect the principle of confidentiality.**

It is important to remember that any attempt to prevent or respond to an event, should not put others at risk of harm.

Depending on different aspects, such as each situation, the persons involved in and the needs of the victim, there are several ways to respond to a sexual harassment or violence incident:

Ways to respond



“ It is vital that you only intervene when it is safe for you to do so. If it is not safe, call the police.

! The varying roles of nightlife workers and their location within the venue offers each staff member a different opportunity to observe incidents of sexual violence, and intervene accordingly. For example:

- **Bar staff:** have good oversight of the bar area and the level of intoxication of those requesting alcoholic drinks, or having drinks bought for them. They have the potential to explore if these people may be vulnerable, to sexual violence or others harms.
- **Glass collectors:** often move around the venue and have the opportunity to observe client behaviours, and if safe can prevent and challenge behaviours that may promote sexual harassment and violence.
- **DJs:** often have good oversight of a venue and thus client behaviours, and can discourage those behaviours directly, and/or alter other staff to issues.
- **Door staff:** also have good oversight of the venue and monitor client behaviours, including outdoor areas such as entrance queues. All staff can intervene during or following the incident. Effective communication between staff members can facilitate this.

Shift the focus

- Let them understand why they behave as they do and why their behaviour is problematic so that they change their attitude.
- Start a conversation showing respect for everyone: listening is important.
- Identify what underlies the behaviour.
- Engage in an 'open talk': showing interest in understanding the person and why they behave as they do.

Confrontation

- Express interest in the offending person.
- Give reasons why you are concerned.
- Share how you/others feel.
- Ask if the offending person understands your point of view.
- Look at alternative behaviour/support them in the change.

Ask someone else to intervene

- Consider your location and position / role in the premises to evaluate if you are in a better position to intervene.
- Consider if you have the right skills to intervene.
- Ask somebody to help you in the intervention.
- Good communication between the staff of the premises is vital.

Offer help to the victim and ensure their safety

- Immediately, in a non-judgemental and supportive way. First responder's (including nightlife workers) actions and attitudes may be critical to the way in which the victim copes with the trauma and to the length of time it may take to recover. To gain the victim's trust and cooperation and to enable the victim to provide accurate, complete information about the crime.
- Get the victim to a safe, secure place. Make sure the victim is not left alone.
- Be aware that the victim may not be ready or willing to take formal action at that time, or accept support. The response should be tailored to the individual's needs and the situation.
- Ensure you have appropriate information available to you to enable you to sign post the victim to local support services and/or authorities.