

# Cosatu welcomes in signing of 3 GBV bills into law

The Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu) welcomes President Cyril Ramaphosa's signing of the three Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Bills into law.



Source: [Pexels](#)

These three progressive Amendment Acts (Sexual Offences; Domestic Violence; and Criminal and Related Matters Amendment Acts) are part of a package of interventions committed to by the President in 2019.

"They are a welcome step in the right direction to capacitate the state to tackle the scourge of violence affecting women, children, the elderly and persons with disabilities, in particular sexual offences," Cosatu said.

Key provisions proposed in the Bills include the:

- Tightening of incest prohibitions;
- Extensive definitions of sexual intimidation;
- Inclusion of all convicted sex offenders in the National Register of Sex Offenders;
- Providing for the Register to be publicly accessible;
- Prohibiting the employment of sex offenders in professions where vulnerable persons may be at risk;
- Requiring persons aware of offences being committed against children to report them to the police;
- Providing for intermediaries and audiovisual court processes for vulnerable complainants;
- Tightening protection orders, bail, sentencing and parole provisions for sex offenders;
- Removing dangerous weapons from the possession of the accused; and
- Empowering the police to arrest and enter premises without warrants if needed.



New anti-GBV legislation to provide victims more protection

31 Jan 2022



"However, these important amendments to our laws will remain meaningless if government continues to reduce budgetary allocations to Legal Aid for victims, the courts and the South African Police Service," Cosatu reiterated.

"Government must ensure that all law enforcement, judicial, health, social development and education officials are properly trained to enforce these laws. Mass public education programmes are critical if we are to stem the shameful onslaught against women, children, the elderly and persons with disabilities.

"Society must play its part. We cannot afford to turn our eye when we see such crimes being committed in our families, communities, schools, workplaces and in public."

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