

Some of our successes include:

► **Sex workers entitled to victim compensation.** We led efforts to repeal CA Victim Compensation Program regulation denying victims of rape & other violence who were sex workers the right to compensation. Women previously refused got cases reopened. With prisoner rights groups, we also won **compensation for formerly incarcerated people.**



► **Amnesty from arrest for sex workers reporting violence.** Working with others, we got the SFPD and DA's office to adopt policies giving amnesty from arrest and prosecution to sex workers reporting violence.

► **Public opinion agrees sex workers' safety a priority.**

Our California-wide campaigns have garnered support from many different groups with most people agreeing that safety of sex workers must be the priority.

But more work is needed to bring to light the daily violence, discrimination, stigma and inequalities which sex workers face.

IDPWS is a collaboration between the US PROStitutes Collective, Legal Action for Women, and Women in Dialogue.

IDPWS is partially funded by
the SF Department on the Status of Women

Justice is a vital healer!



IDPWS holds legal and health workshops, public meetings and other events to highlight the high level of rape and other violence against sex workers; provide support and resources for sex workers; build public backing for city and state policies which prioritize protection over the criminalization of sex workers; ensure that violent attackers are brought to justice.

What can supporters do?

- Invite us to speak at your college, community or women's group, labor union, church...
- Volunteer to help with outreach, web work, research, and more
- Publicize our project by taking this brochure to your local health center, community group, drop-in center . . .
- Join our ongoing efforts pressing for sex workers' safety and protection which bring together people from all walks of life.
- Make an urgently needed donation for In Defense of Prostitute Women's Safety via [Women in Dialogue](#) or mail to the address below.

For more information: tel 415-626-4114
email: info@idpws.net
PO Box 14512, San Francisco, CA 94114
<http://uspros.net/in-defense-of-pros-safety-project/>

The In Defense of Prostitute Women's Safety Project

A community resource since 1998

Public awareness & education on violence against sex workers

Self-help support for sex workers suffering violence or discrimination, to get protection, justice & compensation, incl. legal advice & help when reporting to police.

Campaigning for all women's safety - when sex workers aren't safe, no woman is safe.

For women who work the streets, massage parlors, clubs, in a house, as dancers, escorts, as webcammers, in jail, on parole...it's ok to use your working name or any other name - we respect your privacy.



As long as sex workers are defined as criminals, we are more vulnerable to rape and violence

• Sex workers face daily attacks including rape.

Women working the streets, women of color, immigrant and trans women are often particularly targeted and denied justice and protection from police and courts.

Attackers are emboldened as long as police crack-downs continue. Fear of arrest means that women are less likely to come forward and report violence.

• Serial murderers often start with prostitute women and go on to attack other women.

Over 200 Black women - some but not all of whom were sex workers - have been killed or are missing in Los Angeles. Many are victims of serial murderers.

The police did little to stop the murders, labeling them as No Human Involved.

We support the work of the Black Coalition Fighting Back Serial Murders which has campaigning for police accountability and justice for the victims and their families for decades.

• Victims of trafficking

Despite much discussion about trafficking, in practice victims are frequently denied support and protection. Anti-trafficking laws, like the FOSTA/SESTA laws which criminalized online advertising, claim to protect women and children. But sex workers particularly immigrants, are pushed further underground which makes them more vulnerable to arrest and deportation.

• Who are sex workers?

About 70% of sex workers are mothers, mostly single mothers. Sex workers are immigrants working to support families back home, young people escaping violence in the home or institutions, students funding their studies . . . Low wages, debt, rising unemployment, rents and homelessness, and punitive policies which have cut people off welfare, have left many of us with few alternatives to prostitution and other underground ways of surviving.

If sex workers get a criminal record for prostitution, they are blocked from getting other jobs. Their children can be taken from them and put into foster care. Many sex workers are formerly

incarcerated people – those with felony convictions are denied the right to welfare and subsidized housing, leaving many destitute.

• Welfare, a living wage for caregivers.

Sex workers like others need affordable housing, living wages including for mothers and other caregivers, and support to leave prostitution if they choose.

• In New Zealand, prostitution has been decriminalized

More women have been able to move off the street and work with others indoors. Criminal records have been expunged making it easier for women to leave prostitution and get other jobs. Crucially, women who report rape and other violence know they can now insist on being treated like any other victim of crime, and not ignored or dismissed because they are sex workers.

