

80279678

## Proposed Protection of Workers (Retail and Age-Restricted Sales etc.) (Scotland) Bill

### Page 2: About you

Are you responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation?

on behalf of an organisation

Which of the following best describes you? (If you are a professional or academic, but not in a subject relevant to the consultation, please choose "Member of the public".)

*No Response*

Please select the category which best describes your organisation

Representative organisation (trade union, professional association)

Please choose one of the following:

I am content for this response to be attributed to me or my organisation

Please insert your name or the name of your organisation. If you choose the first option above, this should be the name as you wish it to be published. If you choose the second or third option, a name is still required, but it will not be published.

Community Union

### Page 7: Your views on the proposal - Aim and approach

Q1. Which of the following expresses your view of creating a new offence of assault against a worker in the retail sector?

Fully supportive

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

The introduction of a new statutory offence would have positive implications for workers across the retail sector in Scotland. We believe that with the introduction of a new offence, retail workers would be better protected whilst at work. This would mean these workers would; feel safe and protected at work, be more

Q1. Which of the following expresses your view of creating a new offence of assault against a worker in the retail sector?

likely to carry out their responsibilities of upholding the law, and be more likely to remain in their jobs if they are less worried about abuse or violence.

Q2. Which of the following would you support as a way to respond to assaults on workers upholding statutory age-restrictions?

A new statutory offence

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

We believe that the introduction of a statutory offence as opposed to a statutory aggravation would have the benefits of being more wide reaching. While a statutory aggravation would only result in longer custodial sentences or higher penalty fines on those who were abusive or violent to those workers upholding the law by checking the age of someone buying goods or services, a statutory offence would protect any worker who experienced abuse or violence in the work place, not limited to their duties of upholding the law. A statutory offence would also have the added impact of being much clearer, alongside a public information campaign, a statutory offence would be easily understandable by victims and perpetrators and could act in a deterrent and result in a reduction in the amount of abuse and violence being perpetrated against retail workers.

Q3. Which of the following would you support as a way to respond to abuse, harassment, threatening or obstruction of workers upholding statutory age-restrictions?

A new statutory offence (for all these types of behaviour)

**Please explain the reasons for your response**

We believe that the creation of one new statutory offence that covered all the abuse and harassment faced by workers would be a better course of action. This is in order to save on resources and the overall cost of the introduction of a statutory law, particularly when looking at any public information campaigns and the costs more than one would incur. We also believe running a public information campaign, to alert people to the rights of retail workers would be clearer and as such more beneficial.

Q4. Do you think that there are other steps which could be taken (either instead of, or in addition to, legislation) to achieve the aims of the proposal?

Yes

**Please explain the reasons for your response.**

We believe it is necessary to introduce the legislation alongside other measures to ensure the public are aware of the change, and therefore have an impact on the amount of abuse retail workers are facing. This would best be done in the form of a public information campaign.

Q5. Taking account of both costs and potential savings, what financial impact would you expect the proposed Bill to have on:

	Significant increase in cost	Some increase in cost	Broadly cost neutral	Some reduction in cost	Significant reduction in cost	Unsure
(a) Government and the public sector		X				
(b) Businesses			X			
(c) Individuals			X			

**Please explain the reasons for your responses.**

The government would need to incur the cost of a public information campaign to ensure the legislation had a positive impact regarding the abuse and violence towards retail staff. Businesses would likely see no impact, financially. Although with staff taking less time off to deal with emotional and physical abuse, they may make a saving in that regard. Similarly for individual workers, they are less likely to see an impact on their pay from taking time off. On an individual level, with the implementation of the legislation we would hope to see an increase in reporting and retail workers more likely to ask for age identification, which would mean less individuals facing the up to £5,000 fine.

Q6. Are there ways in which the Bill could achieve its aim more cost-effectively (e.g. by reducing costs or increasing savings)?

No

**Please explain the reasons for your response.**

The safety of workers should be the priority with the implementation of this legislation.

## Page 13: Equalities

Q7. What overall impact is the proposed Bill likely to have on equality, taking account of the following protected groups (under the Equality Act 2010): race, disability, sex, gender re-assignment, age, religion and belief, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity?

Positive

**Please explain the reasons for your response.**

As all minority groups are more likely to face violence and abuse, we believe this legislation would have a positive impact on equality if it had the desired impact of reducing the abuse and violence against retail staff.

Q8. In what ways could any negative impact of the proposed Bill on equality be minimised or avoided?

N/A

## Page 15: Sustainability

Q9. Do you consider that the proposed Bill can be delivered sustainably i.e. without having likely future disproportionate economic, social and/or environmental impacts?

Yes

**Please explain the reasons for your response.**

Yes, the proposed legislation would have a positive impact in ensuring the sustainability of the workforce, including retention. We would also hope to see the legislation have an impact on the culture of violence towards any retail and service industry staff, meaning a happier workforce.

## Page 16: General

Q10. Do you have any other comments or suggestions on the proposal, for example, other trigger points for violence and abuse, and other workers who should be covered?

Other trigger points and other workers that could benefit from inclusion are: delivery drivers around age restrictions in the instances of if they are late delivering the order or there a missing products they may face abuse and violence. Security guards in the retail industry could also benefit from inclusion as they are most likely to come into contact with violent and abusive individuals.

## Page 17: Personal Experience - Optional questions

Q11. Which of the following describes your retail-sector experience (please tick all that apply)?

*No Response*

Q12. Which of the following describes your experience of violence or verbal abuse in the retail sector (please tick all that apply)?

*No Response*

Q13. Please give details of any personal experience that you would wish to share. (Please avoid naming any other person or giving information that would allow another person to be identified)

*No Response*