

WRITTEN SUBMISSION FOR THE PRE-BUDGET
CONSULTATIONS IN ADVANCE OF THE UPCOMING FEDERAL
BUDGET



BOUCLIER D'ATHÉNA
SHIELD OF ATHENA
SERVICES FAMILIAUX | FAMILY SERVICES

Presented : August 7, 2020

FINANCIAL REPERCUSSIONS OF COVID FOR VICTIMS OF CONJUGAL AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS

- THIS BUDGET SHOULD BE A PRO WOMEN ONE THAT OVERSEES HOW WOMEN CAN GET BACK INTO THE WORKFORCE
- CREATION OF NEW JOBS FOR WOMEN WHO LOST THEIRS DURING THE PANDEMIC ;
- FUND EXISTING COMPANIES TO HIRE MORE WOMEN & STIMULATION PACKAGES THAT LOOK SPECIFICALLY INTO CREATING NEW JOBS FOR WOMEN
- OPTIONS FOR INCREASING DAYCARE SO THAT WOMEN CAN GO BACK TO WORK
- OPTIONS FOR TAKING CHILDREN TO WORK ; ADAPTATION OF WORK SPACES
- IN THE EVENTUALITY THAT DAYCARES AND SCHOOLS STILL REMAIN INACCESSIBLE DUE TO THE PANDEMIC, SPECIAL PROGRAMS FOR CARETAKERS, NANNIES, THAT WOULD BE EDUCATED TO TAKE CARE OF CHILDREN AND LIBERATE THE MOMS TO GO BACK TO WORK; THIS OPTION IS BEING DEVELOPED BY SOME COUNTRIES IN EUROPE
- TAX CREDITS
- PROMOTE THE DEVELOPMENT OF <<COTTAGE INDUSTRY>>EMPLOYMENT FOR WOMEN THAT CAN BE DONE IN THE HOME
- INCREASE OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN WHO HAVE SPECIFIC VULNERABILITIES, IE VICTIMS OF CONJUGAL VIOLENCE WHO ENCOUNTER BARRIERS FOR THEM TO GO BACK TO WORK
- PROVIDE WOMEN WITH A PENSION WHO ARE SINGLE MOTHERS UNTIL THEY GO BACK TO WORK

FINANCIAL REPERCUSSIONS OF COVID FOR VICTIMS OF CONJUGAL AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

The Shield of Athena Family Services is an organization that provides a network of services to women who are victims of conjugal and family violence, in Montreal. From our inception in 1991 we have provided services to women who have found themselves in positions of danger, many times involving their children and who very often have been financially dependent on their abusive partners. They are doubly impacted when they try to find a job as, in addition to the difficulty presented when living in violence, they are limited in terms of child care and finances. As such, their situation makes them particularly vulnerable during this Covid period.

The Pandemic has wreaked financial havoc on the world wide economy. Everybody has been affected. If we look at the situation of women however, they have lost more jobs than men, (1.5 million between this March and April according to statistics Canada, representing a 17% decrease from February). From this category, it is the most vulnerable women that have been affected the most. The homeless, those with physical or mental weaknesses and those who are limited with severe linguistic and other barriers or who are socially isolated have been put in dangerous situations.

Women, already at the lowest salary level have been severely impacted particularly if they have children. In addition to the fact that many jobs were put on hold, women's capacity to work was affected due to the limitation in daycare facilities and the fears of contamination if they did send their children to daycare. Forcing Moms to evaluate what the greatest risk could be; either getting back to the workforce or protecting their children's and others health. Forcing them to make a "Sophie's" choice in this instance.

Many women, as did most of the world, resorted to working from home, if possible; or had adapted conditions at work. This situation resulted in the cutting of many jobs that were traditionally held by women and also affected the number of women who could work. As such any stimulus package for businesses has to be geared towards hiring more women, protecting existing jobs and allowing them the possibility of working in more innovative situations and settings. An RBC study has recently shown an alarming trend, that only 35% of the women who lost their jobs are being rehired, whereas men are being rehired more often.

The government should look towards helping companies and businesses who promote a pro-woman hiring policy, who create more opportunities for women and who provide adapted settings for this type of work. It should also look into helping women make their own businesses at home as in a "cottage industry" type of setting. It should also promote innovative approaches to what will happen to the children; perhaps not only daycare is a solution. Emphasis should also be put on educating women and creating positions for more nannies and individuals who can take care of children as well, or be employed in more non traditional jobs.

When women are also single moms, with many responsibilities and who may also be victims of situations that put them more at risk, ie victims of violence , they are doubly impacted with this situation. As such we have asked in the past, that some sort of stipend or pension be provided to them when in this precarious situation, at least temporarily.

How can we expect women to become autonomous, financially and otherwise if the options are not there?

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Melpa Kamateros', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Melpa Kamateros, Executive Director

Shield of Athena Family Services

August 7, 2020