



Messaging Resource: Decriminalizing Sex Work

Make a copy by selecting “File” → “Make a Copy”. Keep the LCRF logo, replace it with your own, or use both. Contact us at info@lacr.org with any questions and don’t forget to delete this blurb on your copy!

While this is an area that has extensive resources with the leadership of WWAV and other groups, it may be good to have a few frames that you can use to have your own voice on this important issue.

- Too often laws around sex work have been based on personal beliefs and politicians’ discomfort with the idea of people paying for or providing sexual services. This is not in the best interest of individuals. We need an approach that is about public health, bodily autonomy and human rights.
- What people need is for lawmakers to take a measured and thoughtful look at how to develop and implement laws, policies and programs that center the needs of individual sex workers and balance that with any questions around the interests of the community as a whole.
- It is not about making laws against commercial sexual activity less punitive or mitigating harm. It should be about truly improving the system and addressing the ways in which sex workers are denied rights in the current structures.
- Criminalization makes sex workers less safe by preventing them from securing police protection and by providing impunity to abusers. It does not make anyone safer, fuels mass incarceration and negative outcomes for sex workers and their families.
- As our country has a reckoning around police brutality and the way in which Black, Indigenous and other people of color are disparately interrogated, arrested

and abused within our criminal justice system it must be noted that is especially true when it comes to transgender women who are sex workers.

- Transgender women of color are being killed. Transgender and gender nonconforming people are far more likely to be living in abject poverty. They are going without any access to basic medical care. We simply must do more to stand up for and stand with transgender women of color in every sector and that includes sex work. Sex work is work.
- We need a process focused on protecting and respecting the rights of sex workers including protecting them from harm, exploitation and coercion; ensuring they can participate in the development of laws and policies that affect their lives and safety; and guaranteeing access to health, education and employment options. Not more of the same judgments or patronizing.