



MANITOBA ASSOCIATION
OF WOMEN'S SHELTERS



Cultural Dimensions of Gender-Based Violence & The Role of Red Flag Laws

A Cultural-Lens Approach to
Prevention and Legal Intervention

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Introduction

- Why a cultural lens?
- **Why link GBV and red-flag laws?**
- Overview of presentation: definitions
→ culture → law → recommendations



Defining Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

It is violence directed at a person **because of their gender** identity, gender expression, or perceived gender.

Includes physical, sexual, emotional, psychological, digital and economic abuse.

Scope & Forms of Gender-Based Violence (GBV)

Physical Violence

Verbal Abuse

Sexual Violence

Human Trafficking

Psychological &
Emotional Violence

Tech-related
Violence

Economic Violence

Spiritual Violence

Cultural Lens: What does it mean?

- Culture = norms, values, beliefs, traditions.
- **Culture shapes** perceptions of gender, power, and acceptable behaviours.
- **Ongoing evaluation** will refine the balance between rights and safety.



Intersectionality & Vulnerability

2SLGBTQI+ individuals

Indigenous women

Persons with disabilities

Refugee/migrant women

Elderly people

Black and racialized women



Cultural Norms & Gender Roles



- How gender norms (e.g., masculinity, female passivity) **influence GBV**.
- Culture **reinforces or challenges** power structures.

Culture & Response to GBV



- Culture **affects help-seeking, reporting, and access to justice**.
- **Barriers:** shame, mistrust, language, stigma.

The Legal Dimension: Why Laws Matter?

- Laws protect survivors, deter perpetrators, and shape societal norms.
- But legal tools must align with cultural realities.



Red Flag Laws & GBV/IPV

- **Definition:** emergency prohibition or limitation on firearm access when an individual poses a risk of harm.
- **Firearms in domestic settings increase lethality.**
- **Red-flag laws allow early intervention before violence escalates.**



Canadian Context: Legal Framework

- Anyone can apply for an emergency prohibition order (EPO).
- Judge can issue order ex parte to remove firearms temporarily.

- Key legislation: Bill C-21, Firearms Act Section 70.1
- Aims to prevent firearm-related domestic violence.

How Red Flag Laws work (Canada)

Yellow Flag Laws

Temporary Suspension

Yellow Flag Laws |

Temporary suspension or review of a firearm license by Chief Firearms Officer (CFO) while investigation occurs.

The licence holder's use, acquisition and import privileges will be reinstated once the suspension period has elapsed or earlier if the Chief Firearms Officer is satisfied that the reasons for suspension no longer exist.

<https://www.publicsafety.gc.ca/cnt/cntrng-crm/frrms/c21-en.aspx#s7>

Cultural Lens on Red Flag Laws

- Culture shapes access and willingness to use red-flag tools.
- Silence, stigma, mistrust may inhibit applications.



Barriers & Challenges

- Stigma, fear, immigration concerns.
- Mistrust of authorities.
- Community pressure or cultural silence.

Cultural Enablers & Protective Factors

- **Community support networks.**
- **Culturally-safe services.**
- **Gender equality education.**
- **Empowerment traditions.**





Case Study

Canada

- Example: Refugee woman experiencing Intimate Partner Violence and firearm threat.
- Friend applies for red-flag order → intervention successful.

Challenges in Implementation

**Awareness
and access**

**Court capacity
and data gaps**

**Cultural competency
training**

**Coordination
across services**

Recommendations: Policy & Practice

- Culturally-safe awareness campaigns.
- Justice and police training.
- Cross-sector collaboration
- Community partnerships.



Concluding Remarks

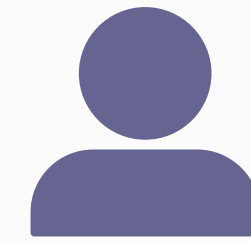
Gender-Based Violence (GBV) can be **culturally embedded.**

Red Flag Laws protect lives.

Culture affects access and effectiveness.

Integration is key.

Thank YOU!



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