

THE SECRET GUIDE TO

THE BUSINESS OF SEX

AND THE IN'S AND OUT'S OF
WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

PLAYING IT SAFE:
A HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDE FOR CLIENTS OF SEX WORKERS

THIS HANDBOOK IS MAINLY FOR **CLIENTS** OF SEX WORKERS.

The purpose of the handbook is to create a safe space for sex workers and their clients to discuss and agree on their business.

Its content is shaped by the knowledge and experience of sex workers, sex worker clients and others in and around the sex industry in South Africa and beyond. Information came from research done with female, male, and transgender sex workers, as well as clients in South Africa and beyond.

‘Sex work’ in this booklet refers to adult, consensual sex for a pre-agreed payment or reward. It does not include trafficking or child sex work, which are human rights abuses.

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Sonke Gender Justice, 2017 (www.genderjustice.org.za)

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- Clients of Sex Workers Allied for Change (CoSWAC) <https://sexworkclients.org>

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MOST ESSENTIAL LESSONS

Respect sex workers

Negotiate payment and service
up front, before your session

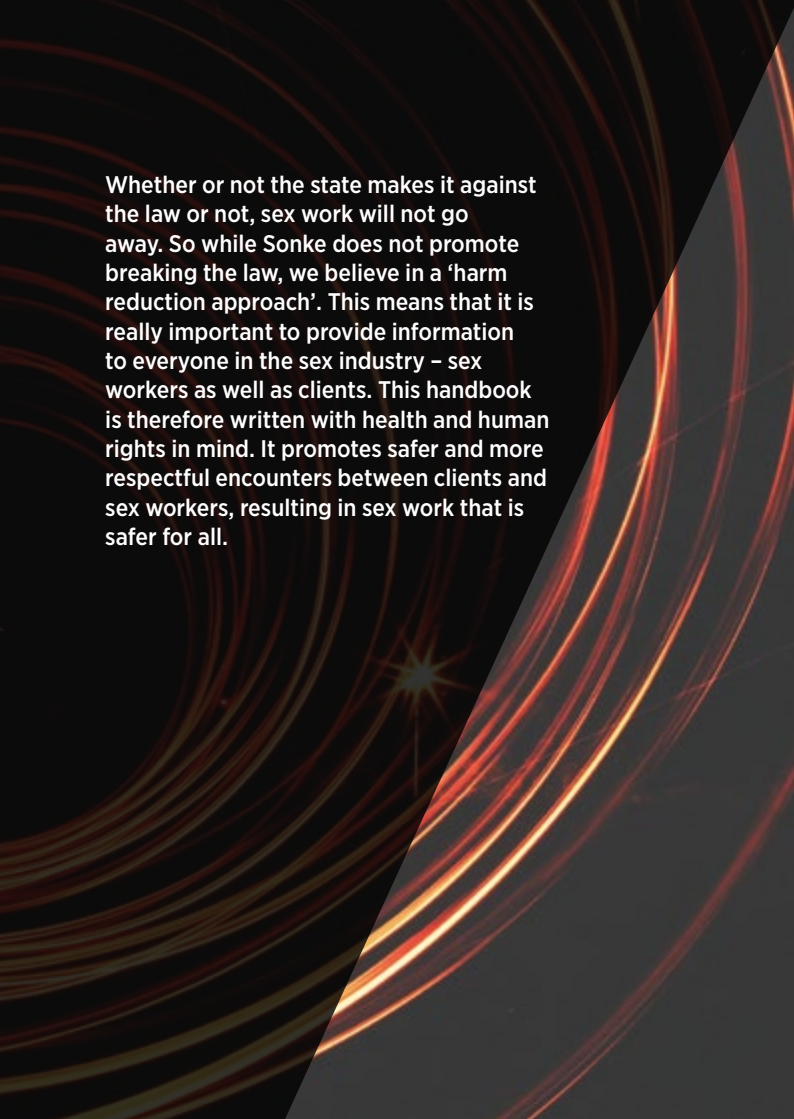
Practice safer sex



WHY ARE GUIDELINES FOR CLIENTS OF SEX WORKERS IMPORTANT?

All aspects of sex work are currently criminalised in South Africa, in terms of the Sexual Offences Act 23 of 1957, the Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Amendment Act 32 of 2007, and various municipal bylaws. It is illegal for sex workers to sell sex and for clients to buy sex. In effect, criminalisation makes sex work unsafe: sex workers are publicly and personally stigmatised and discriminated against. They are also regularly abused by some police and often not given access to legal services and health care. In addition, clients fear arrest by the police. People in the sex work industry are therefore forced to act in secret, which makes it unsafe for everyone.

Sonke Gender Justice ('Sonke') is a South African human rights non-governmental organisation that promotes the decriminalisation of sex work. Decriminalisation is the removal of all criminal laws relating to the sex industry. When sex work is decriminalised, it is not a crime to sell or buy sex, to keep a brothel or live off the earnings of sex work in any way. Taking the crime out of selling and buying sex will certainly make sex work much safer, because sex workers and clients would not always be avoiding the law. Research also shows that decriminalising sex work improves public health because sex workers and clients can then use health services and get condoms easily.



Whether or not the state makes it against the law or not, sex work will not go away. So while Sonke does not promote breaking the law, we believe in a 'harm reduction approach'. This means that it is really important to provide information to everyone in the sex industry – sex workers as well as clients. This handbook is therefore written with health and human rights in mind. It promotes safer and more respectful encounters between clients and sex workers, resulting in sex work that is safer for all.

UNDERSTAND THE LINGO

SEX WORK

Sex for reward.

A service provided to a client where the exchange of sex, sexual acts and/or intimacy are negotiated for payment. The term 'sex work' is preferred to the term 'prostitution', a word that is often used to hurt and insult.

SEX WORKER

Female, male and transgender adults over the age of 18 years who sell sex in return for payment or reward.

CLIENT

A person who pays for sex. A client can be female, male, LGBTI (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex), a single person or a couple. Basically, anyone can be a client.

TRANSGENDER/TRANS

A transgender man is a person who sees himself as male, but was born female. Similarly, a transgender woman is a person who sees herself as female, but was born male.

ING

“QUICKIE”

+/- 10-20 minutes of service from the sex worker (the service given is generally measured by the amount of time spent with the client)

“SHORT TIME”

+/- 30 minutes of service from the sex worker (the service given is generally measured by the amount of time spent with the client)

“ALL NIGHT”

The sex worker stays with the client until the next morning (the service given is generally measured by the amount of time spent with the client)

“FULL HOUSE”

All sexual services are offered, including penetrative sex (the emphasis is generally on the service rather than on the time spent)

UNDERSTAND THE LINGO

“TOP” OR “BOTTOM”

Male clients of male sex workers will often ask whether the sex worker is a ‘top’ or a ‘bottom’:

‘TOP’ = gives penetration and takes the active role

‘BOTTOM’ = receives penetration and takes the passive role

‘VERSATILE’= either top or bottom

“BDSM”

Bondage, Discipline, Sadism and Masochism (i.e. Masters and Slave) – sometimes known simply as S&M (Sadism and Masochism)

“BAREBACK”

Sex without a condom

*Note: these are general terms. Some sex workers may use different words or give different meanings to these terms. So it is always important to ask and fully understand the terms before agreeing to have sex.



ING

“BLOW JOB”

Oral sex

SAFER SEX

Sex using a condom and/or without penetration

SEX WORKERS

ANSWER

SOME OF YOUR BURNING

QUESTIONS

Perhaps you have asked some of the questions below, yourself. This section aims to answer some of these questions!

You know that sex work is work. Like any other type of work it is a job that provides an income. It is also work done by people of all different ages, races, cultures, and personalities. Sex workers also differ in the type of sex work that they do. Each sex worker has a distinctive style and way of working.

Here are some typical questions with answers provided by sex workers:

WHAT WILL SEX WORKERS DO AND WHAT ARE THEIR LIMITS; ALSO, WHAT WILL THEY REFUSE TO DO?

No two sex workers are alike. The sex industry is made up of individuals. Each sex worker establishes her/his own rules and limits and some will do some things while

others may not. As a client, you need to ask clearly in advance what type of services you would like to receive. Afterwards, the sex worker you are doing business with will tell you what s/he will do to meet your needs. S/he will also clearly tell you what her/his limits are. Our limits are what the word says: the limits. And you must respect them.

If the sex worker you are with will not provide the services you would like: (a) you should accept the services s/he is willing to offer; (b) you must respect her/his limits and (c) you must not insist. You can always contact another sex worker.

IS IT POSSIBLE TO HAVE SEX WITHOUT A CONDOM?

We are always very surprised by this request. A lot of clients seem to forget that it is in their own interest to use a condom, not only to protect themselves but also to protect their partners against sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV. STIs are common and it is impossible to know if a person is infected by simply looking at her/him. Using a condom is a part of our work. They protect us and protect you as well. We insist on their use. It is also in your best interest.

DO SEX WORKERS HAVE HIV/AIDS AND STIs (SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS)?

Our bodies are our main working tools and we try to take the best care of them. Just like other sexually active people who have more than one partner, we care about having safer sex to protect ourselves and our partners. It's important to know that sex without a condom puts people

SEX WORKERS

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at risk of being infected. However, there is little risk of getting an STI or HIV/AIDS while using a condom during sex. Whether or not the sex is paid for has no effect on this. We are safer sex professionals. If you don't know how to use a condom correctly, ask one of us and we will show you how. It would be our pleasure.

WHAT HAPPENS IF I HAPPEN TO SEE A SEX WORKER THAT I KNOW OUTSIDE OF HER/HIS WORKING HOURS?

What will happen depends on you and the sex worker in question. If you are worried about this, speak with her/him in advance. In general, if s/he does not approach you, it is best to be discreet and not approach her/him. Some sex workers prefer you not to approach them at all outside their working hours.

DO SEX WORKERS TELL THEIR FRIENDS, FAMILY AND PARTNERS THAT THEY DO SEX WORK?

Some of us talk openly about our work while others choose to talk about it with only a few people. Others do not talk about it at all. The discrimination and stigma that society puts on us about our work can affect our decision whether or not to talk about it. Each sex worker will decide whether or not to make their work known, depending on her/his needs and the context within which s/he works and lives.

DO SEX WORKERS HAVE PARTNERS, LOVERS, OR FRIENDS?

Unlike what some people think, we have busy personal lives outside of our working lives, just like other people. Our personal choices can be very varied. Some of us do not have partners, some have many and others have one. Some of us are single; others of us are married. Similar to the rest of society, there are those amongst us who are heterosexual, bisexual or gay.

DO SEX WORKERS HATE MEN?

Our work involves contact with many men. Some of them are respectful while others are less so. An ideal client is one who is respectful. Our feelings about men are affected by our work and our lives. We do not hate men, although sometimes we may hate certain words and actions.

GUIDELINES FOR SAFER SEX

Here we have given some practical tips and advice on how to behave with respect with a sex worker.

INITIAL AGREEMENTS

Sex workers are individuals, who may each have different ways of asking clients what they want. As a client, you must say clearly in advance (i.e. before having sex) what type of sex and/or time limits you are interested in paying for. The sex worker will either agree to your request, make another plan with you, or she/he may refuse your request. You must respect the sex worker's decision.

Once you have agreed on the sex you want, the sex worker will give you a price. At this point, you can politely discuss the offer without pushing anyone to do anything they do not want to, or for a price they are unhappy with. Remember that it is generally best to accept the prices offered by the sex worker.

SOME BASIC RULES:

- ✓ **Pay up front, before you start to have sex.**
- ✓ **Have the *exact amount* of money ready.**
- ✓ **Payment must be in cash (i.e. not drugs, alcohol or gifts), unless you have made another plan that you have both agreed to.**
- ✓ **Do not make the sex worker ask for the money. Be discreet when handing over the payment.**

If you are negotiating with an outdoors (i.e. street) sex worker, talking to a sex worker over the phone or using the Internet to contact sex workers, the next step is to discuss the place where the sex will happen. If you are in a car, do not just drive off with the sex worker without saying where you are planning on taking them, as this is often scary for them. Ideally you should ask the sex worker to suggest a preferred place that is private and safe. Give her/him time to tell a friend where you are going. As a sign of respect, drop off the sex worker at an agreed place when you have finished.

CHECKLIST:

What to discuss and agree upon during the initial discussion:

- Exact type of sex (e.g. quickie, full house, all night etc.) and time to be taken**
- Exact price**
- What each of you is expecting to happen (e.g. will it include kissing, touching, nudity, blow job, affection, role play, etc.)**
- The place you are going to have sex**

By sticking to the aspects in this list, you can avoid any mix-ups during the sex and after it. This reduces possible confusion on the part of both sex workers and clients.

THE SEX ITSELF

CONDOMS

The most important thing sex workers want to do is make sure the sex they have is as safe as possible for both of you. This means always using condoms with clients, for both penetrative sex as well as oral sex (e.g. blow jobs). If you are male, the sex worker will almost always provide a condom for you to use. However, you should bring your preferred brand of condom just in case. Sometimes sex workers do not trust clients' own condoms, in case they are bad quality, so it is best to accept the condom offered by the sex worker. Clients should expect the sex worker to put the condom on them. The sex worker will usually use lubricant, which should prevent tearing in case of dryness and should also make the sex better for both of you.

NB: *Never offer sex workers more money to have sex without a condom. Some clients complain about condom use, claiming that sex with a condom is not 'real sex', or they worry about lack of feeling when the sex is not flesh on flesh. However, asking for sex without a condom may not only disrespect the sex worker, but it also puts both of you at risk for contracting HIV and other STIs. See below for more information.*

KEEPING CLEAN

Sex with a sex worker means you will show parts of your body to her/him. Please try to make sure you are clean before you have sex with a sex worker; it will make the sex better for both of you. The sex worker may suggest you take a short shower at the beginning of your session – this can also be relaxing and sexy.

DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

Clients sometimes use drugs or drink a lot of alcohol before seeing a sex worker, but this can lead to poor decisions and unsafe sex. Drugs and alcohol can also reduce men's capacity to get and keep an erection, which can be disappointing to both the client and the sex worker. Alcohol and drugs can also affect your judgment and make you violent. This is not acceptable.

IN SUMMARY: if you choose to use alcohol or drugs, please do not use too much before you have sex. If you are drunk or high, the sex may take longer than expected and you should talk about this at the beginning.

VALUABLES AND PRIVACY

As a general rule, it is safer not to bring valuables like wallets and watches with you when meeting a sex worker – just the cash that you will need to pay her/him.

Do not use your phone or camera to take videos or photos without permission. It is also good manners to keep your phone switched off during the session.

EXTRAS

If you want to add time or other activities to the sex you have already agreed (for example, if you want to spend more time with the sex worker or want an extra service), discuss it with respect. Accept the decision of the sex worker – they have a right to say yes or no.

THINGS THAT NEED SAYING

It is important to talk about any sexual or physical discomforts or difficulties you might have that may affect your pleasure or safety during sex. An example may be a disability, or difficulty with keeping an erection if you are a man.

RESPECT

You should know all of this already, but here's a reminder:

- Be polite and respectful at all times.
- Do not act violently towards a sex worker.
- Sex work is work. Like any other form of labour, it is the sale of a service. Do not try to 'save' or 'rescue' the sex worker. And do not assume that sex workers will see you in their own free time.
- Sex workers have a right to say no! If a client pushes a sex worker's limits or does not stick to what has been previously agreed, a sex worker may end the session at any point. Never ask of force a sex worker to do something that she/he does not want to do. This could end in a charge of assault or even rape.



SAFER SEX: PROTECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS

1. CONDOM USE

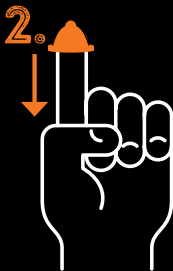
Condoms help stop you getting STIs, including HIV/AIDS. It is very important to use a condom every time you visit a sex worker and to use a new condom each time you have sex.

It is important to talk about condom use before having sex! Female sex workers may use female condoms, in which case a male condom is not needed. It can also be dangerous to use both at once. In the same way, using two male condoms, one on top of the other, can lead to them breaking – as can using one condom more than once.

If a condom breaks during sex, go to a clinic or health care provider as soon as possible. If they need to, they will start you on a course of PEP (Post-Exposure Prophylaxis). PEP is when you take anti-retroviral medicine which can stop you from getting HIV after having sex.



1. Open packet without tearing it - don't use your teeth.



2. With your finger, test gently that condom unrolls away from tip.



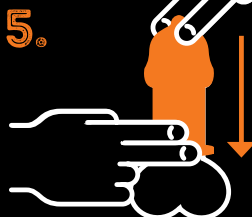
3. Add one or two drops of lube to tip, to make it feel better on the penis during sex.



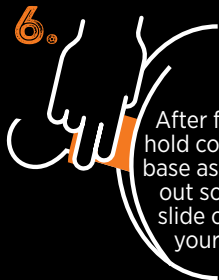
4. Roll down shaft.



Only use one condom at a time, never double bag it!



5. Pinch tip to block air pocket and leave space for cum.



6. After finishing, hold condom at base as you pull out so it won't slide off inside your partner.



7. Tie the condom up to avoid spilling.

Use a new condom for each round of sex.

2. SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS (STIs)

STIs are common and anyone can get them. According to the World Health Organisation, more than 1 million STIs are picked up every day worldwide. STIs are spread mostly by sex without a condom, including vaginal, anal and oral sex.

The most common STIs include: HIV/AIDS; herpes; gonorrhoea; chlamydia; syphilis; hepatitis B; scabies; and pubic lice (crabs).

COMMON SIGNS OF STIs INCLUDE:

- Pus coming from the vagina or penis
- Burning urine
- Sore or ulcer on or around the vagina or penis
- Painful sex
- Stomach pain
- Swelling of the testicles

NOTE: a person can have an STI without showing it. So whilst checking yourself is important, you should also get yourself checked regularly (i.e. every 3-6 months) by a doctor or nurse. STI testing is painless – usually a blood test – and most STIs can be treated. You can get tested at any of your local clinics.

WHAT TO EXPECT AT THE CLINIC

1. A private discussion with someone you can trust and who will keep your information confidential
2. Someone who will listen to your whole story - including your sexual history
3. A complete examination and discussion of any STIs you might have
4. STI treatment with drugs where necessary
5. HIV testing if necessary
6. Condoms, including how to use them
7. Partner notification slip(s) will be offered, if wanted

SOURCE: Department of Health, Republic of South Africa.

Your level of risk for contracting an STI depends on several things, including: the number of partners you have; the type of sex you have; and the methods you use to avoid getting STIs. Condoms are one of the best ways to protect yourself against STIs.

As a client, not only do you need to protect yourself from getting STIs, you also want to ensure that you do not spread the infection to others.

SUMMARY

Having safe and considerate fun with a sex worker can be a pleasure for both parties. Understanding the rules of sex work should help you, the client, to respect sex workers in a stress-free and trusting way. The key things to remember are:

1

BE SAFE - YOUR SEXUAL HEALTH IS IMPORTANT TO YOU, YOUR PARTNER AND TO SEX WORKERS.

2

TREAT SEX WORKERS WITH KINDNESS AND RESPECT.

3

SEX WORK IS WORK.

As clients of sex workers, you should consider supporting changing the law in South Africa to make sex work safer. If sex work was decriminalised, sex workers would have better access to healthcare and other rights and services. In addition, clients would not be at risk of prosecution, discrimination or stigma.

By supporting decriminalisation, you the client will be promoting better health and support service for sex workers. Both you and the sex worker will have rights and be protected by law. This could impact positively on service delivery, safer brothels and healthier relationships within the sex work industry.

Contact the Asijiki Coalition for the Decriminalisation of Sex Work for more information and join the voices of activists and sex workers who want the sex work industry to be decriminalised.

**YOUR VOICE
COULD MAKE
A DIFFERENCE.**

RELEVANT GROUPS TO CONTACT

**Sex Workers Education and
Advocacy Taskforce (SWEAT)**

Tel: +27(0) 21 448 7875

Sex worker Helpline:
0800 60 60 60

Website: www.sweat.org.za

**Asijiki Coalition for the
Decriminalisation of Sex Work**

Website: www.asijiki.org.za

Email: coordinator@asijiki.org.za

LET'S MAKE SEX
WORK SAFER,
TOGETHER!