

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IS A WORKPLACE ISSUE

Building a Comprehensive Violence Protection Plan

Your company should have a comprehensive violence protection plan designed to protect employees from violence against women in the workplace and to assist them in dealing with its effects. A thoughtful and well-publicized policy will encourage employees to disclose to their employers threats and potential incidents of violence and will encourage employees experiencing trauma to seek medical and professional counseling services. Employers should encourage, but not mandate disclosure, so that they can take appropriate preventive steps. An excellent example for reference is the [“Attorney General’s Domestic Violence in the Workplace Guidelines for Managing Domestic Violence in the Workplace.”](#)

Establish Clear, Fair, and Sensitive Human Resource Policies

Your human resource policies should be based on several premises: all employees deserve fair and equitable treatment regardless of whether they are currently, or have in the past, been exposed to violence; flexible policies that assist all employees tending to medical, legal and psychological needs in the wake of the violence serve sound business practices; and failing to take violence against women seriously and to treat women with respect and confidentiality compounds the harm to survivors of rape, sexual assault and domestic violence who already have suffered grave injury.

You can help put an end to violence against women in your workplace!

Preventative Measures

Companies also can take steps to prevent and ameliorate the effect of violence in the workplace. Clear, comprehensive and fair human resource policies addressing violence should be established and made available to all employees.

- • Make Anti-Violence and Sexual Harassment Policies Clear and Conspicuous
- • Follow Common-Sense Security Procedures
- • Educate Your Employees About the Problem
- • Place Signs In Women's Bathrooms With The Name and Telephone Number of the Local Shelters and Hotlines
- • Provide Mandatory Training for Security Personnel and Supervisors
- • Designate "Anti-Violence" Contact People for Employees Who Feel Threatened
- • Support Domestic Violence Local Initiatives

Responding to Domestic Violence

An employee who is assaulted usually does not report the incident either to her employer or to the police. Women have many reasons for not reporting violent incidents; prominent among them is the widespread and often valid belief that employers "don't want to know about the violence." However, a clear commitment from management that the company will support the woman and take steps to respond, while maintaining as much confidentiality as possible, will make victims more likely to report violence. This creates an opportunity for the employer to discuss with the woman which remedial measures will constitute the best course of action. Remember that the woman is the best judge of how to safeguard herself and her

family. Her decisions about what steps to take are right for her and should be respected.

- • Help Employees Develop a Safety Plan
- • Provide Help in Obtaining Protection Orders
- • Document Abuse
- • Provide An Up-To-Date Resource List
- • Develop a Consistent and Fair Response

Policy Recommendations

- Confidentiality
- Absences
- Relocation
- Security
- Recruiting and Hiring
- Investigation of Complaints of Sexual and Physical Violence By Employees