

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE

WHY IT MATTERS

With more than one million people reporting a violent assault by an intimate partner every year in the United States, domestic violence should be a concern for every employer.¹ Domestic violence endangers companies' most important asset: their employees. Intimate partner violence affects employee health and safety, decreases productivity, and increases employer health care costs. Employers may be hesitant to address domestic violence in the workplace because of uncertainty about preventive roles, a desire to respect employee privacy and the need for guidance.² However, employers who do address this issue can provide real help to victims and prevent associated risks.³

DID YOU KNOW?

- A 2005 national survey found that 21% of full-time employed adults were victims of domestic violence.⁴
- 44% of respondents to a recent survey have personally experienced domestic violence's impact on the workplace, most frequently because a co-worker was a victim.⁵
- One study found that over 75% of domestic violence perpetrators used workplace resources to express remorse or anger towards, check up on, pressure, or threaten their victim.⁶
- One study of female domestic violence victims found that 44% were left without transportation when the abuser disabled their car or hid their car keys, inhibiting their ability to attend work.⁷

COSTS

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimate that the annual cost of lost productivity due to domestic violence equals \$727.8 million.⁸
- The national health care costs of domestic violence (often absorbed by employers) are high, with direct medical and mental health care services for victims amounting to \$4.1 billion.⁹
- Employers who fail to protect their employees may be liable. Jury awards for inadequate security suits average \$1.2 million nationwide and settlements average \$600,000.¹⁰

STATE LAWS

- 21 states have enacted mandatory or suggested workplace policies that require employers to assist victims of domestic violence by granting leave to victims who need to address their situation, the use of prevention programs, and the prohibition of discrimination against an employee for being a victim of domestic violence.
- Similar laws are pending in several other states
- For more information on laws regarding domestic violence in the workplace in your state, visit www.legalmomentum.org or contact your state legislature.

JOB PERFORMANCE AND PRODUCTIVITY

- In a survey of 7,000 women, 37% said domestic violence had a negative impact on their job performance.¹¹
- Domestic violence victims lose nearly 8 million days of paid work—the equivalent of more than 32,000 full-time jobs—and nearly 5.6 million days of household productivity as a result of violence.¹²
- Women who have been raped or sexually assaulted report diminished work functioning.¹³
- Researchers from the University of Arkansas found that women who were victims of recent domestic violence had 26% more time lost to absenteeism and tardiness than non-victims.¹⁴
- Approximately 1/4 of the 1 million women stalked each year report missing work as a result of the stalking, missing an average of 11 days.¹⁵

HOW EMPLOYERS RESPOND

- In one study, 66% of corporate leaders identified domestic violence as a major social issue.¹⁶
- Over 70% of workplaces in the U.S. have no formal program or policy that addresses workplace violence.¹⁷
- Only 4% of all workplaces train employees on domestic violence and its impact on the workplace.¹⁸
- A 2007 national study found that 61% of American men think employers should be doing more to address domestic violence.¹⁹
- In one survey of senior corporate executives, 91% said that domestic violence affects both the private and working lives of their employees.²⁰
- 50% of all employers with 1,000 or more employees had an incident of workplace violence within the 12 months prior to completing a 2006 survey on workplace violence prevention.²¹
- Only 12% of corporate leaders surveyed in 2002 think that corporations should play a major role in addressing domestic violence. Most believe domestic violence prevention is the responsibility of the family, social service organizations, and the police.²²

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND THE WORKPLACE RESOURCES

Corporate Alliance to End Partner Violence
Phone: 309-664-0667
Website: www.caepv.org

Family Violence Prevention Fund
San Francisco, CA and Washington, DC
Website: www.endabuse.org/workplace

Safe@Work Coalition
Website: www.safeatworkcoalition.org

Coalition of Labor Union Women Center for
Education and Research
Washington, DC
Phone: 202-466-4615
Website: www.cluw.org

National Work-Life Alliance
Rockville, MD
Website: www.worklifealliance.org

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP

- Urge your employer and companies in your community to establish employee assistance programs for victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault and stalking.
- Companies can seek assistance from national groups, such as CAEPV (see above) to receive assistance on how to address intimate partner violence in the workplace.
- Urge your state legislators and Member of Congress to pass laws that protect domestic violence and sexual assault victims from discrimination in the workplace.

IF YOU NEED HELP

For more info or to get help, please call the
National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-SAFE
National Sexual Assault Hotline at 1-800-656-HOPE

SOURCES

¹ Costs of Intimate Partner Violence Against Women in the United States. 2003. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Centers for Injury Prevention and Control. Atlanta, GA.

² *Domestic Violence and the Workplace*. 2002. Partnership for Prevention.

³ *Strategic Employer Responses to Domestic Violence*. 2007. Family Violence Prevention Fund. <http://endabuse.org/workplace/>.

⁴ *The Survey of Workplace Violence Prevention*. October, 2006. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

^{5,6} Corporate Alliance to End Partner Violence. 2007. "Workplace Statistics." http://www.caepv.org/getinfo/facts_stats.php?factsec=3

⁷ *The Facts on the Workplace and Domestic Violence Against Women*. 2007. Family Violence Prevention Fund.

^{8,9,10} Family Violence Prevention Fund. *Seven Reasons Employers Should Address Domestic Violence*.

¹¹ Employment Discrimination Against Victims of Domestic and Sexual Violence. 2007. Legal Momentum.

¹² *The Survey of Workplace Violence Prevention*. October, 2006. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

¹³ Family Violence Prevention Fund. *The Facts on the Workplace and Domestic Violence Against Women*.

¹⁴ *Costs of Intimate Partner Violence Against Women in the United States*. 2003. US Centers for Disease Control.

¹⁵ *Seven Reasons Employers Should Address Domestic Violence*. 2007. Family Violence Prevention Fund.

¹⁶ Anne O'Leary Kelly and Carol Reeves. 2007. "The Effects and Costs of Intimate Partner Violence for Work Organizations." *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, Vol. 22, No. 3, 327-344.

¹⁷ Family Violence Prevention Fund. *The Facts on the Workplace and Domestic Violence Against Women*.

^{18,19} *The Survey of Workplace Violence Prevention*. October, 2006. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

²⁰ Father's Day Survey. 2007. Family Violence Prevention Fund.

^{21,22} Corporate Alliance to End Partner Violence. 2007. "Workplace Statistics." http://www.caepv.org/getinfo/facts_stats.php?factsec=3

For more information please see our website at www.ncadv.org.

NATIONAL COALITION AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



The Public Policy Office of the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV) is a national leader in the effort to create and influence Federal legislation that positively affects the lives of domestic violence victims and children. We work closely with advocates at the local, state and national level to identify the issues facing domestic violence victims, their children and the people who serve them and to develop a legislative agenda to address these issues. NCADV welcomes you to join us in our effort to end domestic violence.