

How Do You Create a Domestic and Sexual Violence Policy That's Right for Your Workplace?

Employers Can Find Answers at www.workplacesrespond.org

Prepared for the 2011 California Working Families Policy Summit – www.ccrwf.org

On average, domestic violence in the United States results in 1,300 attacks and four to five murders of women each day in the United States. And even though violence often follows victims to work, few companies have put in place domestic and sexual violence policies. A 2006 study from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics found that 70 percent of workplaces in the country do not have such policies in place.

A new virtual resource, *Workplaces Respond to Domestic and Sexual Violence: A National Resource Center*, now makes it easier than ever for employers to create these vitally important workplace policies. The resource center was authorized pursuant to Section 41501 of the Violence Against Women Act of 2005 and formed through a partnership of six national organizations, led by the Family Violence Prevention Fund ([FVPPF](http://www.fvppf.org)). On October 27, 2010, the Workplaces Respond project funded by the U.S. Department of Justice's Office on Violence Against Women ([OVW](http://www.ovw.doe.gov)), launched a new website for employers that provides information and interactive tools that have never before been available.

There is a clear need for domestic and sexual violence policies in the workplace. According to a 2006 study from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, nearly one in four large private industry establishments (with more than 1,000 employees) reported at least one incident of domestic violence, including threats and assaults, in the previous year. A 2005 study using data from a national telephone survey of 8,000 women found that women experiencing physical intimate partner violence victimization reported an average of 7.2 days of work-related lost productivity and 33.9 days in productivity losses associated with other activities.

At www.workplacesrespond.org, employers can enter their name, location, and number of employees and then go step-by-step to develop and download a workplace policy to address stalking and domestic, sexual and teen dating violence. The virtual resource center also offers a quiz to test knowledge about domestic and sexual violence, fact sheets, frequently asked questions with answers, a protection order guide, safety and security information, and an interactive training module. Additional online components help employers and unions assess security issues, provide safe and effective responses to violence, make referrals to community-based services when violence is identified, and implement measures to prevent violence.

During the next two years, the multi-disciplinary Workplaces Respond project will pursue a robust outreach program to employers and labor organizations, with a particular focus on employers of employees who are low wage, immigrant, young, older or in other ways vulnerable. The project will also develop additional tools to assist workplaces in effective, safe responses to domestic and sexual violence, including training modules for local domestic and sexual violence services programs to use with local employers in workplace violence response and prevention activities.

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Home Page



Some ways to get started...

By taking the time to use this website, you will be taking your first steps to reduce your health care costs, absenteeism and lost productivity due to stress and injuries from domestic and sexual violence. You can also have a profound impact on the lives and well-being of your employees.

Take a quiz to test your knowledge. Consider a pledge to do something about domestic and sexual violence. Use our policy tool creator to help make the workplace safer. More than 70 percent of United States workplaces do not have a formal program or policy that addresses workplace violence.

Create a policy



Use our tool to create a policy for your organization that follows best practices.

Create a Policy

Take the quiz



How much do you know about violence and its effects on the workplace? Take our quick quiz and find out.

Take the quiz

Make a pledge



We – employers, unions, labor organizations – pledge our commitment to intensify our role in ending domestic and sexual violence in our workplace.

Download the pledge

Information on:

- Workplace Violence
- Guns and the Workplace
- Protection Orders
- Union Responses

I would like to...

- ▶ Interact with a virtual employee
- ▶ Create a workplace policy
- ▶ Learn about the cost of sexual violence
- ▶ Identify security concerns

Create Your Policy Tool



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Google™ Custom Search

SEARCH

Learn

Assess

Implement

Evaluate

Resources

→ Create Your Policy

→ 1. Purpose

→ 2. Definitions

→ 3. Persons Covered By the Policy

→ 4. Statement of Confidentiality

→ 5(a)(i): Responses to Victims: Nondiscrimination and Non-Retaliation

→ 5(a)(ii): Responses to Victims: Leave and Other

→ 5(a)(iii): Responses to Victims: Access to UI

→ 5(a)(iv): Responses to Victims: Work Performance

→ 5(a)(v): Responses to Victims: Protection and Restraining Orders

→ 5(b): Responses to Employees Concerned about Violence

→ 5(c): Responses to Workers Who Commit Violence

→ 6. Reporting and Referrals

→ 7. Other Policies

→ Education and Resources

→ Other Matters to Consider

→ Download Completed Policy

Create Your Policy

Dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking have effects not just in the home, but also in the workplace. Violence affects not only employees who are victims, but also co-workers, managers, and employee perpetrators. It also impacts employees' attendance, productivity, health care costs, morale, and safety.

A policy addressing the workplace effects of domestic and sexual violence is an important step in tackling these issues; it creates a roadmap for employers and managers to respond in supportive, safe and effective ways.

This tool will help you create a workplace policy by guiding you through a series of questions. It will offer you a choice of model language based on a promising practice (which has the most protective language for employees) or, if applicable, language based on the law in your state or locality. With either choice you will be in compliance with the relevant law. In some jurisdictions, specific laws do not exist for each issue this policy covers, then you will only see the "promising practice" as a choice.

It should take you about 15-20 minutes to complete, and you will be able to download the policy and save it on your computer at the end of the process. You will also receive a checklist of additional matters to consider.

First, we'll need some information about your organization.

Organization name: *

Contact Name: *

Contact Location: *

State/Locality where you do business: *

* If your organization operates in more than one state or locality, for now just pick the place where you are headquartered or do the most business.

Information on:

- Workplace Violence
- Guns and the Workplace
- Protection Orders
- Union Responses

I would like to...

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- ▶ Create a workplace policy
- ▶ Learn about the cost of sexual violence
- ▶ Identify security concerns

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Interact with a Virtual Employee Tool



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ESCAPE

Google Custom Search

SEARCH

Learn

Assess

Implement

Evaluate

Resources

Implement

- Workplace Policy Creation Tool
- Programs for Awareness
- Union Responses
- Education and Training
 - Training and Education Methods
 - Tips for Effective Workplace Education
 - Domestic Violence Content
 - Training Exercise: Interact

Training Exercise: Interact with a Virtual Employee

A Supervisor Responds to an Employee's Experiences of Violence

As a result of this exercise, you will be better able to:

- Respond to and assist victims of domestic and sexual violence who work for you;
- Address performance issues that may occur as a byproduct of the violence;
- Create an organizational culture that supports victims of violence in order to promote a safe and productive workplace.

[Begin the training exercise](#)

Implement

- Workplace Policy Creation Tool
- Programs for Awareness
- Union Responses
- Education and Training
 - Training and Education Methods
 - Tips for Effective Workplace Education

To begin this exercise...

Let's Role Play

You are a manager at a mid-size copy/print store with 24 employees. Your company includes a storefront where customers are served at a desk and a large area that is behind the desk where print orders are completed. The work area is visible from the street. You also have a small office in the back of the shop where you work and employees take breaks.

[Meet your virtual employee](#)

Implement

- Workplace Policy Creation Tool
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Your Employee

Linda

Linda has worked for you at the copy/print store for the past three years. She has been a mostly reliable employee who sometimes comes to work late, but gets along well with the other employees and clients. You know that Linda recently had a messy breakup with James, the father of her two year old son.

One day Linda comes to work two hours late, and you notice that she looks like she's been crying. This is the second time in two weeks that Linda has been late. You ask her to step into the back room to talk. You close the door and ask Linda why she keeps coming in late. She apologizes, and says that she had car trouble.

Do You:

[Remind her that she should call you if she's running late, give her a second warning, and tell her to start her work. She says she will and leaves.](#)

[Remind her that she should call you if she's running late, give her a second warning, mention that she seems upset and ask if you can help with anything.](#)

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Take the Pledge



PLEDGE TO ADDRESS DOMESTIC & SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE

Workplaces that Work for Families

Recognizing that domestic and sexual violence is a workplace issue which affects the safety, health, and productivity of America's workers, we are joining employers and unions across the nation to take a stand against domestic and sexual violence by committing to the following **10 principles**.

Creating Safe Workplaces

- 1** We will strive to create a workplace environment that is safe from all forms of violence including domestic and sexual violence and which supports victims of violence to understand and access services, information, and protections available to them.
- 2** We will to the fullest extent possible take active measures to increase the safety of all employees who request assistance because they are victims of domestic or sexual violence. We acknowledge the importance of keeping all requests for assistance in confidence, making information available only on a "need to know" basis.
- 3** We will respect the authority and autonomy of the adult victim to direct her or his own life, in all workplace responses to domestic or sexual violence.

Creating Fair Workplaces

- 4** We acknowledge that employees who are victims of domestic or sexual violence should have the same rights, opportunities, and benefits as all other employees.
- 5** We believe that employees should not be disciplined or terminated simply because they have been victims of violence or because the employer fears the impact of violence on the workplace. Nor should any person be denied opportunities for employment, benefits, or promotion because they are or have been victims of domestic or sexual violence.
- 6** We are committed to nondiscrimination against domestic and sexual violence victims in all aspects of our business and operations, including the delivery of services to customers.
- 7** We believe that employees who commit acts of domestic or sexual violence at or from the workplace must be treated or disciplined in the same manner as employees who commit other acts of violence or harassment at or from the workplace. Where appropriate we will attempt to provide employees with referrals to certified batterers' treatment programs.

Creating Informed and Productive Workplaces

- 8** We will strive to provide education on domestic violence and sexual violence to employees and/or union members. We believe that this education should include information about resources available in the workplace and/or community for victims of domestic and sexual violence and perpetrators of violence.
- 9** We will strive to make all personnel, benefits, security policies, and employee assistance programs responsive to the needs of employees who are victims of violence.

Creating Socially Responsible Workplaces

- 10** As members of local, state, and national communities, we believe in our responsibility to support community efforts to end domestic and sexual violence.

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