

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: MAKE IT YOUR BUSINESS ACTION PLAN

This action plan has been modeled after a policy planner developed by the Family Violence Prevention Fund in its publication entitled *The Workplace Responds to Domestic Violence: A Resource Guide for Employers, Unions and Advocates*.

Name of Company _____

Name of Person Initiating Action Plan _____

Date Plan Initiated _____

Instructions

- Ask yourself the following questions.
 - On the topic of history of workplace violence occurrences, write up what you know.
 - On all other topics, answer questions by documenting current policies and procedures. Those topics include:
 - Security and Safety
 - Communications and Training
 - Job Assignments and Performance
 - Employee Benefits
 - Legal Issues
- On all topics other than the history of workplace violence occurrences, commit to improvement of current policies and procedures wherever needed. Rate your organization's current policies/procedures and actions.
- Pick those most important to address immediately.
- Plan when and how to address others. Use the attached *Template to Improve Policies and Procedures*.

- In consultation with other appropriate colleagues, determine:
 - what
 - what needs revising
 - what needs to be omitted
 - what needs to be developed, or
 - what needs to be implemented
 - when
 - by whom
 - indicate who is accountable for updating policies and enforcing them

The attached *Sample Workplace Violence Assessment* can assist in capturing the history of workplace occurrences and in identifying current policies and procedures.

We also include a *Sample Workplace Violence Policy* for your use.

SAMPLE WORKPLACE VIOLENCE ASSESSMENT

This assessment is designed to provide employers with a quick overview of:

- types of workplace violence that organizations may experience; and
- policies and procedures to minimize the impact and/or deal with workplace violence, including domestic violence in the workplace.

Instructions

Review each category and analyze your own workplace.

	<i>Question</i>	<i>Response</i>
1.	Type of Agency	
2.	Location: office building, courthouse, work outside the office, travel, other	
3.	Number of employees	
4.	Number of clients/day	
5.	Types of violent incidents this year <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stranger• Co-worker• Domestic violence• Client	
6.	Types of violent incidents last year <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stranger• Co-worker• Domestic violence• Client	
7.	Physical injuries, psychological impact, \$\$\$ costs of incidents	

	<i>Question</i>	<i>Response</i>
8.	Workplace response to actual incidents	
9.	Types of potential incidents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stranger • Co-worker • Domestic violence • Client 	
10.	Current workplace violence program Policy Security assessment Security guards Engineering controls <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited access (ID badges) • Lighted, secure parking Work practice controls <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening & closing procedures • Procedures for response to violence (whom to call) • Procedures to de-escalate a violent situation Off-premise work practice controls <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of cell phones Required reporting in to workplace Training Incident Reporting and evaluation Evacuation plan Employee concerns	

	<i>Question</i>	<i>Response</i>
11.	<p>Protecting Victims</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Way to maintain contact <p>Stalking/Assault</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult with law enforcement • Arrange parking close to building • Move victim's work station • Put victim in a secure area <p>Phone Harassment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screen phone calls • Change victim's phone number • Install caller ID on victim's phone • Remove her/his name and phone number from automated services • Provide her/his cell phone and service • Use voice mail to receive messages. (Allow victim to keep voice mail even if she/he needs to take a leave of absence.) 	
12.	<p>Family Friendly Policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible use of leave • Flex time, part-time employment 	

SAMPLE WORKPLACE VIOLENCE POLICY

Because the incursion of domestic violence in the workplace is a form of workplace violence, a general workplace violence policy would be the foundation for the procedures that apply to domestic violence in the workplace.

THIS SAMPLE POLICY HAS BEEN WRITTEN IN GENERAL TERMS AND IS NOT TO BE CONSTRUED AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR LEGAL OR MANAGEMENT ADVICE.

[Even though we are a small office], our goal is to strive to maintain a workplace free from intimidation, threats, or violence. This includes, but is not limited to, intimidating or threatening behaviors, physical or verbal mistreatment, vandalism, sabotage, use of weapons, carrying weapons onto company property, or any other act which, in management's opinion, is inappropriate to the workplace. In addition, we do not tolerate bizarre or offensive comments regarding violent events, even if made in jest, and/or bizarre or offensive behaviors.

We prohibit the use of company property, such as vehicles, telephones, fax machines, or e-mail in threatening or inappropriate ways.

Employees who feel that they have been subjected to any of the behaviors listed above should immediately report the incident to _____ [Designate appropriate person(s). For example, "any partner or the Office Manager."]. Employees and non-employees who observe or have knowledge of any violation of this policy should follow the same reporting procedure. We request the support and cooperation of all employees in this effort.

continued

Complaints will receive prompt attention and the situation will be investigated. Based on the results of the investigation, management will take disciplinary or other actions as appropriate.

Employees should directly contact proper law enforcement authorities if they believe there is an immediate threat to their own health and safety, the health and safety of others, or property. Dial 911.

We do not tolerate retaliation for making a complaint or participating in the investigation of a complaint. If you feel that you have been retaliated against, please follow the reporting procedure described above.

end

HISTORY OF WORKPLACE OCCURRENCES

Do we know of any situation that has arisen when an employee came forward with a domestic violence problem? What happened? What could have been handled better and by whom?

Have we ever had a case where in the normal course of business or in recruiting, hiring, evaluating, or promoting practices we came face to face with a domestic violence situation?

- If yes, What was the outcome? Was the outcome satisfactory? How can each responsible person improve? What policies or programs might have helped in those situations? Can we put those policies and programs in place now?

Has there ever been a violent incident of any kind at this workplace? What was it and how was it handled? What were the long-term effects, if any?

Has there ever been a domestic violence-related incident at this workplace? What happened? How did we support the employee(s) (victim or offender)? How could we have supported the employee better? How did we support other affected employees?

SECURITY AND SAFETY

(1) Does our organization create a safe and supportive environment for victims of domestic violence to come forward? If yes, give examples of how.

<i>RATING (circle one)</i>	<i>needs improvement</i>	<i>adequate</i>	<i>excellent</i>
<i>IF NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, HOW HIGH A PRIORITY? (circle one)</i>	<i>low</i>	<i>moderate</i>	<i>high</i>

(2) Does our organization encourage employees who are abusive to seek help to change their behavior?

<i>RATING (circle one)</i>	<i>needs improvement</i>	<i>adequate</i>	<i>excellent</i>
<i>IF NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, HOW HIGH A PRIORITY? (circle one)</i>	<i>low</i>	<i>moderate</i>	<i>high</i>

(3) What security services do we offer? How do we keep our workplace secure?

RATING (circle one)	needs improvement	adequate	excellent
IF NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, HOW HIGH A PRIORITY? (circle one)	low	moderate	high

(4) Are our security personnel trained to respond to domestic violence situations?

RATING (circle one)	needs improvement	adequate	excellent
IF NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, HOW HIGH A PRIORITY? (circle one)	low	moderate	high

(5) What is our procedure on consulting with an employee at risk of violence (victim) at work?

RATING (circle one)	<i>needs improvement</i>	<i>adequate</i>	<i>excellent</i>
IF NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, HOW HIGH A PRIORITY? (circle one)	<i>low</i>	<i>moderate</i>	<i>high</i>

(6) What is our procedure on consulting with an employee at risk of violence (abuser) at work?

RATING (circle one)	<i>needs improvement</i>	<i>adequate</i>	<i>excellent</i>
IF NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, HOW HIGH A PRIORITY? (circle one)	<i>low</i>	<i>moderate</i>	<i>high</i>

(7) Can we convene a threat management team, if needed? If so, how?

RATING (circle one)	<i>needs improvement</i>	<i>adequate</i>	<i>excellent</i>
IF NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, HOW HIGH A PRIORITY? (circle one)	<i>low</i>	<i>moderate</i>	<i>high</i>

(8) How do we respond to a threat of domestic violence at the workplace? Does our response constitute reasonable corrective action?

RATING (circle one)	needs improvement	adequate	excellent
IF NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, HOW HIGH A PRIORITY? (circle one)	low	moderate	high

(9) Do we have a relationship with local law enforcement?

RATING (circle one)	needs improvement	adequate	excellent
IF NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, HOW HIGH A PRIORITY? (circle one)	low	moderate	high

(10) What is our policy on handling the aftermath of a violent incident at work?

RATING (circle)	needs improvement	adequate	excellent
IF NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, HOW HIGH A PRIORITY? (circle one)	low	moderate	high

COMMUNICATIONS AND TRAINING

Communications and training with employees who are victims

(1) How do employees learn about our policies, programs, and services?

RATING (circle one)	needs improvement	adequate	excellent
IF NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, HOW HIGH A PRIORITY? (circle one)	low	moderate	high

(2) If our employees use a language other than English as their primary language, are materials and training available in languages other than English?

RATING (circle one)	needs improvement	adequate	excellent
IF NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, HOW HIGH A PRIORITY? (circle one)	low	moderate	high

(3) Do we offer training on issues related to domestic violence, including how to talk with a suspected victim?

RATING (circle one)	needs improvement	adequate	excellent
IF NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, HOW HIGH A PRIORITY? (circle one)	low	moderate	high

(4) Have we ever publicized the programs we offer in our organization's newsletter or other publications?

RATING (circle one)	needs improvement	adequate	excellent
IF NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, HOW HIGH A PRIORITY? (circle one)	low	moderate	high

(5) Is there a public area where we can display posters with anti-domestic-violence messages and lists of resources?

RATING (circle one)	<i>needs improvement</i>	<i>adequate</i>	<i>excellent</i>
IF NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, HOW HIGH A PRIORITY? (circle one)	<i>low</i>	<i>moderate</i>	<i>high</i>

(6) What other means do we have to let employees know it is safe to use workplace support services on domestic violence issues?

(e-mail? staff meetings? what else?)

RATING (circle one)	<i>needs improvement</i>	<i>adequate</i>	<i>excellent</i>
IF NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, HOW HIGH A PRIORITY? (circle one)	<i>low</i>	<i>moderate</i>	<i>high</i>

(7) Do employees have any concerns about coming forward and talking to a manager about domestic violence?

RATING (circle one)	needs improvement	adequate	excellent
IF NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, HOW HIGH A PRIORITY? (circle one)	low	moderate	high

(8) Is it our policy to keep information about domestic violence confidential? If so, which information is shared, with whom, and under what circumstances?

RATING (circle one)	needs improvement	adequate	excellent
IF NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, HOW HIGH A PRIORITY? (circle one)	low	moderate	high

(9) How can we let employees know they can turn to their supervisors if they have a problem with domestic violence that may be affecting their work?

RATING (circle one)	needs improvement	adequate	excellent
IF NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, HOW HIGH A PRIORITY? (circle one)	low	moderate	high

Communications and training with counselors/EAP

(10) Are counselors/EAP staff trained to assess and intervene in domestic violence situations?

RATING (circle one)	needs improvement	adequate	excellent
IF NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, HOW HIGH A PRIORITY? (circle one)	low	moderate	high

(11) What avenues do counselors/EAP staff have to advise management about domestic violence concerns?

RATING (circle one)	needs improvement	adequate	excellent
IF NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, HOW HIGH A PRIORITY? (circle one)	low	moderate	high

Communications and training with managers and other staff

(12) What do we tell our managers to say and do when they identify an employee who is involved with domestic violence?

RATING (circle one)	needs improvement	adequate	excellent
IF NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, HOW HIGH A PRIORITY? (circle one)	low	moderate	high

(13) Does the staff have adequate training on domestic violence?

RATING (circle one)	needs improvement	adequate	excellent
IF NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, HOW HIGH A PRIORITY? (circle one)	low	moderate	high

(14) Is domestic violence education part of our training for union stewards?

RATING (circle one)	needs improvement	adequate	excellent
IF NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, HOW HIGH A PRIORITY? (circle one)	low	moderate	high

(15) Do we include issues relating to domestic violence in our discussions when negotiating contracts?

RATING (circle one)	needs improvement	adequate	excellent
IF NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, HOW HIGH A PRIORITY? (circle one)	low	moderate	high

Communications and training with employees who are perpetrators

(16) What are our policies and procedures when an employee is identified as being suspected of being an abuser?

RATING (circle one)	needs improvement	adequate	excellent
IF NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, HOW HIGH A PRIORITY? (circle one)	low	moderate	high

(17) Do we have reference materials for abusers in all appropriate languages?

<i>RATING (circle one)</i>	<i>needs improvement</i>	<i>adequate</i>	<i>excellent</i>
<i>IF NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, HOW HIGH A PRIORITY? (circle one)</i>	<i>low</i>	<i>moderate</i>	<i>high</i>

(18) Do we offer training on how to talk with a suspected abuser?

<i>RATING (circle one)</i>	<i>needs improvement</i>	<i>adequate</i>	<i>excellent</i>
<i>IF NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, HOW HIGH A PRIORITY? (circle one)</i>	<i>low</i>	<i>moderate</i>	<i>high</i>

JOB ASSIGNMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

(1) Do our policies and procedures allow for temporary modifications of job assignments or schedules so that employees can take steps to increase their safety?

RATING (circle one)	<i>needs improvement</i>	<i>adequate</i>	<i>excellent</i>
IF NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, HOW HIGH A PRIORITY? (circle one)	<i>low</i>	<i>moderate</i>	<i>high</i>

(2) How do we take into account the impact of domestic violence on an employee's performance during evaluation?

RATING (circle one)	<i>needs improvement</i>	<i>adequate</i>	<i>excellent</i>
IF NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, HOW HIGH A PRIORITY? (circle one)	<i>low</i>	<i>moderate</i>	<i>high</i>

(3) How do our policies and procedures ensure that an employee’s history of domestic violence will not affect her/his future opportunities for promotion? Does this include abusers? What if she/he poses a threat at work, too?

RATING (circle one)	needs improvement	adequate	excellent
IF NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, HOW HIGH A PRIORITY? (circle one)	low	moderate	high

(4) Do we have a Second Chance Agreement? If so, when is it used? How is it used? Why is it used? With whom is it used?

RATING (circle one)	needs improvement	adequate	excellent
IF NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, HOW HIGH A PRIORITY? (circle one)	low	moderate	high

(5) How do our policies and programs ensure that victims of domestic violence are not discriminated against in recruiting and hiring?

RATING (circle one)	needs improvement	adequate	excellent
IF NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, HOW HIGH A PRIORITY? (circle one)	low	moderate	high

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

(1) Do we offer an EAP or any other counseling services to employees?

RATING (circle one)	needs improvement	adequate	excellent
IF NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, HOW HIGH A PRIORITY? (circle one)	low	moderate	high

(2) Do employees know about this benefit we offer? How do they know?

RATING (circle one)	needs improvement	adequate	excellent
IF NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, HOW HIGH A PRIORITY? (circle one)	low	moderate	high

(3) Are services confidential within the guidelines of safety and legality? Do employees know this? How do they know?

<i>RATING (circle one)</i>	<i>needs improvement</i>	<i>adequate</i>	<i>excellent</i>
<i>IF NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, HOW HIGH A PRIORITY? (circle one)</i>	<i>low</i>	<i>moderate</i>	<i>high</i>

(4) Do our counselors/EAP staff know the community agencies that can help? How do they know? Are there regular updates of this information?

<i>RATING (circle one)</i>	<i>needs improvement</i>	<i>adequate</i>	<i>excellent</i>
<i>IF NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, HOW HIGH A PRIORITY? (circle one)</i>	<i>low</i>	<i>moderate</i>	<i>high</i>

(5) How do our attendance and leave policies accommodate an employee’s need to address personal safety issues? Do our personnel policies allow for employees to take time off for personal safety reasons? For going to court?

RATING (circle one)	needs improvement	adequate	excellent
IF NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, HOW HIGH A PRIORITY? (circle one)	low	moderate	high

(6) Do we make reasonable accommodations for employees who have disabilities?

RATING (circle one)	needs improvement	adequate	excellent
IF NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, HOW HIGH A PRIORITY? (circle one)	low	moderate	high

(7a) If it became apparent that the workplace cannot work with the employee because of the complexities or danger involved in the situation, are there resources that the employee can be referred to for other employment or other resources?

RATING (circle one)	<i>needs improvement</i>	<i>adequate</i>	<i>excellent</i>
IF NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, HOW HIGH A PRIORITY? (circle one)	<i>low</i>	<i>moderate</i>	<i>high</i>

(7b) (Would the company contest an application for unemployment benefits if the employee left because of domestic violence?)

(8) Do our benefit plans use a history of domestic violence in any way during underwriting, benefits approval, or claims processing?

RATING (circle one)	<i>needs improvement</i>	<i>adequate</i>	<i>excellent</i>
IF NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, HOW HIGH A PRIORITY? (circle one)	<i>low</i>	<i>moderate</i>	<i>high</i>

(9) Do we make certain that our insurers do not use an employee's past or current exposure to domestic violence as a pre-existing condition, a health impairment, or an avoidable source of injury?

<i>RATING (circle one)</i>	<i>needs improvement</i>	<i>adequate</i>	<i>excellent</i>
<i>IF NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, HOW HIGH A PRIORITY? (circle one)</i>	<i>low</i>	<i>moderate</i>	<i>high</i>

(10) If we, or our insurers, have discriminatory practices, how are we going to remedy this?

RATING (circle one)	<i>needs improvement</i>	<i>adequate</i>	<i>excellent</i>
IF NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, HOW HIGH A PRIORITY? (circle one)	<i>low</i>	<i>moderate</i>	<i>high</i>

(11) What occupational health services do we offer?

RATING (circle one)	<i>needs improvement</i>	<i>adequate</i>	<i>excellent</i>
IF NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, HOW HIGH A PRIORITY? (circle one)	<i>low</i>	<i>moderate</i>	<i>high</i>

(12) Do our occupational health professionals have materials they can give employees about increasing their safety in a domestic violence situation?

RATING (circle one)	<i>needs improvement</i>	<i>adequate</i>	<i>excellent</i>
IF NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, HOW HIGH A PRIORITY? (circle one)	<i>low</i>	<i>moderate</i>	<i>high</i>

(13) Do the occupational health professionals refer employees to in-house counseling programs when appropriate?

<i>RATING (circle one)</i>	<i>needs improvement</i>	<i>adequate</i>	<i>excellent</i>
<i>IF NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, HOW HIGH A PRIORITY? (circle one)</i>	<i>low</i>	<i>moderate</i>	<i>high</i>

(14) Do the occupational health professionals screen for and document domestic violence?

<i>RATING (circle one)</i>	<i>needs improvement</i>	<i>adequate</i>	<i>excellent</i>
<i>IF NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, HOW HIGH A PRIORITY? (circle one)</i>	<i>low</i>	<i>moderate</i>	<i>high</i>

LEGAL ISSUES

(1) How do we make sure that supervisors understand and comply with all federal, state, and local laws?

RATING (circle one)	<i>needs improvement</i>	<i>adequate</i>	<i>excellent</i>
IF NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, HOW HIGH A PRIORITY? (circle one)	<i>low</i>	<i>moderate</i>	<i>high</i>

(2) Do our supervisors understand how our sexual harassment policy applies in cases of domestic violence between co-workers?

RATING (circle one)	<i>needs improvement</i>	<i>adequate</i>	<i>excellent</i>
IF NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, HOW HIGH A PRIORITY? (circle one)	<i>low</i>	<i>moderate</i>	<i>high</i>

(3) How do we inform our supervisors about compliance with laws as they may apply to domestic violence situations, including requests for reasonable accommodations, time off, transfers, leave, and other issues?

<i>RATING (circle one)</i>	<i>needs improvement</i>	<i>adequate</i>	<i>excellent</i>
<i>IF NEEDS IMPROVEMENT, HOW HIGH A PRIORITY? (circle one)</i>	<i>low</i>	<i>moderate</i>	<i>high</i>

TEMPLATE TO IMPROVE POLICIES/PROCEDURES

Complete this template for each topic that needs improvement.

Topic that needs improvement _____

A. How can our policies/procedures be improved?

B. What are our next steps to make this happen?

C. Who will make this happen?

D. By when?

E. What resources are needed to accomplish this plan?