

Employers Addressing Intimate Partner Violence

IN THE WORKPLACE >>



Roadmap to Action

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ALMOST EVERY
WORKPLACE HAS
EMPLOYEES WHO
ARE NOT SAFE
AT HOME.



Introduction

At least one in four women and one in seven men report physical abuse, stalking, or threats from an intimate partner in their lifetime – these survivors are our employees. More than 50% of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) survivors report losing at least one job because of the violence. IPV impacts every workplace, whether it is widely recognized or not, and every socio-economic, racial, and gender demographic across the community is affected.

On March 8, 2022, Pittsburgh corporate, civic, and community leaders met for the annual Leadership Breakfast to Prevent Domestic Violence, hosted by the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust. The room was filled with employers of all sizes and across all industries and sectors. The attendees not only reflected the diversity of employers in our region, but their presence served as a reminder that every employer is impacted by IPV in their workplace. Leaders in attendance viewed the premiere of “Survivor’s Speak”, a short film in which five survivors of IPV share how IPV impacted their lives and followed them to their place of work. Their experiences sharpened everyone’s lens about the critical difference employers can make in a survivor’s journey to safety.

The second half of the morning was devoted to three roundtable exchanges where leaders in smaller groups reviewed a “Roadmap of Action.” Facilitators guided group members through a deep dive into the issues affecting the workplace and shared successful approaches. Each employer developed their own plan to build a more effective organizational response to support employees experiencing an abusive relationship. This report features the employer roadmap of action steps with the added benefits of the insights, questions, and analysis from roundtable participants and survivor attendees. The goal of this report is to serve as a guide for your workplace in the coming year.

EMPLOYERS EMPOWER VICTIMS WITH THE POTENTIAL TO LEAVE AN ABUSER THROUGH FINANCIAL INDEPENDENCE, INCREASED SELF ESTEEM, AND A SAFE SPACE TO FIND HELP.

TAKE ACTION STEP 1:

Assess your Workplace Culture

It is imperative that workplace culture fosters an environment where survivors can expect support, concern, and resources.

Corporate culture is an important part of every workplace and employers work hard to ensure workplace culture reflects their values, including standing against IPV. According to a STANDING FIRM survey, 65% of employees said that involvement in IPV at home negatively affected their ability to work.² We know that domestic violence is an issue in our community and that it comes into the workplace. Leaders who met at the roundtables identified the divide between the understanding of this issue and an organized response within the workplace.



38%

OF SURVEYED EMPLOYEES HAVE KNOWN A COWORKER WHO WAS AN IPV VICTIM OR ABUSER.²

Think About It

Do we have an existing culture that would allow for a survivor to seek help or ask for assistance to stay safe?

Do we have a track record of taking employees' concerns seriously in other matters?

What to Do



Assess your current culture:

- Where are we?
- Where do we want to be?
- What barriers are stopping us from being where we want to be?

TAKE ACTION STEP 2:

Build a Response Team

It's important to form a cross-departmental response team that includes members of key areas of your workplace.

Employers have to be proactive in raising the issue, in letting employees know that IPV is a safe topic to discuss, and communicating that help is available. Survivors have shared with us that they often won't bring up the abuse they are experiencing at home for fear that disclosing this information could result in them losing their job. Additionally, they do not want to be seen as a victim, but rather be regarded for their work product by their colleagues.



Think About It

Do we have everyone at the table thinking about how domestic violence impacts our workplace and affects our employees?

Do we have a culture where employees can be believed, treated with compassion and respect, and gain access to help?

What to Do



Create a response team that includes the following:

- Executives
- HR
- Safety/Security
- Union Representatives
- IPV Champion

ADDRESS IPV IN YOUR WORKPLACE:

RECOGNIZE: KNOW THE SIGNS

RESPOND: KNOW WHAT TO DO

REFER: KNOW WHERE TO TURN TO FOR HELP

TAKE ACTION STEP 3:

Review Workplace Policies

When employers have a plan and educate their employees about how to effectively recognize, respond, and refer, survivors can experience themselves as valued team members and get the support they need.

A formal policy is needed so that employees know where to go when they or a coworker is in an IPV situation. Your employees may not know that confidential help is available through channels like HR, risk management, or EAP. As a result, they may feel they need to hide the abuse and may fear being judged. Creating, implementing, and informing your staff about policies around IPV in the workplace allows your entire staff to know where to turn.

Think
About It

Do employees know that our workplace will provide tangible support to survivors to stay safe and connect with resources?

Could updates to our benefits allow for someone to be able to leave an abusive situation?

What to Do >>

Create or update existing policy:

- Consult with HR, safety, and corporate compliance or legal teams
- Create specific policies about keeping employees who have Protection from Abuse Orders (PFAs) safe
- Ensure that employees have confidential ways to speak up
- Make it easy for employees to access community resources and get help

56%³

OF ORGANIZATIONS
**DO NOT HAVE
A SAFE LEAVE
POLICY, BUT
ARE INTERESTED
IN ONE.**

TAKE ACTION STEP 4:

Train Employees

Coworkers and managers may not recognize warning signs of abuse, or if they do, they don't know what to do next.

Once you have created a policy, the next step is to train your employees in how to recognize and discuss IPV. By providing training, you can ensure employees know what to say and avoid providing good-intentioned but unhelpful, or even dangerous, advice. Knowledge about IPV builds trust and assures employee equity by treating survivors of abuse with respect and concern for their safety.

Think About It

Do we recognize signs that suggest our employees may be unsafe?

Would an employee know where and how to connect with resources for themselves or a colleague?



AMONG ORGANIZATIONS WITH <1000 EMPLOYEES, ONLY ABOUT 25% ARE PROVIDING IPV TRAINING FOR ALL EMPLOYEES OR LEADERSHIP.³

What to Do



Hold trainings on the Recognize, Respond, Refer model, including:

- Signs of IPV
- How to approach someone about IPV
- What resources are available



DO YOUR MANAGERS
KNOW WHAT TO DO IF AN
EMPLOYEE IS SENDING
THREATENING TEXTS TO
THEIR PARTNER ON A
WORKPLACE CELL PHONE?

TAKE ACTION STEP 5:

Provide Ongoing Education

Your commitment to addressing IPV must remain a pillar of your corporate culture year round.

Education about IPV must be an ongoing commitment. Employees may not know they can access help confidentially. They may not know that there are benefits in place that they can access including: workplace safety plans, workplace response team, and safe leave. Reviewing your policy and employee IPV education should be part of your onboarding process. A successful employer program offers recurring training for leadership, employees, and HR staff.

81%³

OF HR PROFESSIONALS FEEL THAT IT'S IMPORTANT FOR ORGANIZATIONS TO ADDRESS IPV'S EFFECTS ON THE WORKPLACE, YET *ONLY 42%* COMMUNICATE TO STAFF REGARDING IPV.

Think
About It

Has our workplace successfully implemented diversity, equity, and inclusion practices that foster compassionate response to survivors?

Do we have a strong track record of continuing education past the initial announcement or onboarding process?

What to Do >>

- Make IPV training part of onboarding process
- Hold an annual NO MORE Pledge campaign
- Remind employees about programs and policies available throughout each year

TAKE ACTION STEP 6:

Take the NO MORE Pledge

The NO MORE Pledge is an invitation for individuals, organizations, and workplaces to speak out against domestic and sexual violence.

This regional effort is an opportunity for our community to take action and be part of the solution. It makes a difference when we confront disrespectful talk or behavior, talk to our children about healthy relationships, and actively support survivors of abuse in getting help. The NO MORE Pledge is a chance for people to express our support and get involved. Many workplaces use the Pledge as an annual reminder to employees about company policies and how to access help if they need it.

The NO MORE Pledge

I PLEDGE TO:

- Not use violence of any form in my relationships.
- Speak up if I witness harassment or abusive behavior.
- Take reports of abuse seriously and support survivors.
- Mentor and teach young people to have safe, mutually respectful relationships.
- Work to end all forms of violence. I will lead by example.

Adapted from *10 Things Men Can Do to Prevent Gender Violence* by Dr. Jackson Katz, 2013

What to Do >>

- Download the [NO MORE Pledge Campaign Toolkit](#)
- Run a short but visible awareness campaign in your workplace
- Get the word out, get people excited, and have them sign the pledge

TAKE ACTION STEP 7:

Respond to an Incident

Does your workplace have emergency protocol for partner violence?

27% of U.S. workplace violence incidents are related to partner violence.⁵ Your organization must also be prepared to address an incident connected to IPV in your workplace. In one study, 1 in 5 workers experienced the impacts of domestic violence at work.⁴ Having a response plan in place will help to protect your employees.



74%⁶

**OF ABUSERS REPORT
HAVING EASY ACCESS TO
THEIR INTIMATE PARTNER'S
WORKPLACE**

**Think
About It**

How has domestic violence and assault shown up at our workplace?

Do we have employees that are misusing workplace resources to abuse their partners (sending harassing emails, driving by a partner's workplace on a service call)?

Do our employees know how to report a concern?

What to Do >>

- Create response plans as part of your workplace safety protocols and communicate with employees about how to seek support
- Implement policies to address perpetrators and support survivors

Resources

[Survivors Speak Video](#)

[STANDING FIRM](#)

[Resources for Victims](#)

[Policies](#)

[IPV and Remote Workers](#)

[NO MORE Pledge](#)

[NO MORE Pledge Campaign Toolkit](#)

[City of Pittsburgh
Employment Protections
for Survivors of Domestic
Violence](#)

References

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