Tool: Supervisor's Guide – Responding to Domestic Violence in the Workplace

Domestic violence often crosses over into the workplace and many domestic violence victims are in danger of being attacked, harassed, or stalked while at work. Would you know what to do if an employee came to you about violence they are experiencing at home? Does your organization have a plan? An organization's response to and support of victims can help to keep the workplace safe and secure for everyone.

Incident Response Guide – Domestic Violence in the Workplace

If a perpetrator involved in a personal relationship with an employee, or another employee/perpetrator, commits an act of domestic violence, sexual violence, or stalking on a work site:

Step 1: Consult the employee/victim in a safe area and ascertain their immediate needs, which may range from helping them obtain medical attention and providing leave to referring them to community-based service providers.

Step 2: Re-assess the threat to ascertain the perpetrator's likelihood to return to the work site, and whether additional precautions such as a protective order and security enhancements are necessary.

If the perpetrator is also an employee, refer the matter to the appropriate disciplinary channels and re-organize the workplace to deny further contact between the parties.

Major benefits of a workplace policy specific to domestic violence, sexual violence, and stalking include the availability of procedures pertaining to employee/perpetrators, an investigation process, procedures to implement restrictions on the employee/perpetrator's work contacts, disciplinary consequences, and treatment plan requirements.

Employee/perpetrators should be given proper process, and if the work site is unionized, the union should fulfill any duties of fair representation towards the employee/perpetrator and the employee/victim.

Step 3: Organize and offer access to counseling, information or other services to co-workers and others. Employees that witnessed or otherwise appear to be impacted by the incident should be offered services through Employee Assistance Programs, community-based service providers, or counselors.

Step 4: Security personnel or a designated employee should continue to monitor the situation for one to three months (or longer) to determine if the matter has escalated or been resolved.

https://www.workplacesrespond.org/resource-library/incident-prevention-response/