

# HOW SAFE is your WORKPLACE

## Have you overlooked a common workplace hazard?

Alberta's *Occupational Health and Safety Act* identifies domestic violence as a workplace hazard. In a recent survey, **25% of Alberta workers reported experiencing the effects of domestic violence at work** and **78% wanted organizations to do more to address domestic violence.**<sup>1</sup>

More than half of people experiencing domestic violence face attacks from their abusers while at work.<sup>2</sup> Colleagues are often aware of relationship violence their co-workers are experiencing but lack the needed information and skills to help provide support. In some cases, employers have faced multimillion-dollar lawsuits for failing to keep an employee safe from domestic violence while at work.

<sup>1</sup> *Violence and the Workplace Study*, Leger, 2019

<sup>2</sup> *Canadian Labour Congress*, 2014

***I wish we had known what to do.*** It was so hard not knowing, then feeling guilty because you didn't do enough or do the right thing. In retrospect, there was such an obvious escalation of signs.

Co-worker, front desk

***To this day, we can't believe he did it.*** We listened to him say, over and over, he was going to end things for good. But if you don't have any training, any information, you just think the guy's effed up. You say, "He can't handle this break-up."

Supervisor,  
construction site

***As a co-worker, I wish I had known what resources were available.*** At some point, I told her she could stay with my wife and I. Maybe, if I was more aware of company policy, I could have said, "HR has ways to support you."

Co-worker, sales

### TEST YOURSELF

- Y  N Does your workplace safety policy address domestic violence specifically?
- Y  N Are your supervisors and workers trained to recognize the signs of domestic violence?
- Y  N Do you have procedures in place to respond to domestic violence?
- Y  N Does your workplace circulate current information about community and in-house supports for staff dealing with domestic violence?
- Y  N Are your employees trained to receive and respond to disclosures from co-workers?
- Y  N Have you completed a domestic violence-specific hazard assessment?

Do you have any "no's"? Get ahead of the issue.  
Contact us: [leadingchange@acws.ca](mailto:leadingchange@acws.ca)

## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE DOES NOT END WHEN PEOPLE EXPERIENCING ABUSE AND PERPETRATORS GO TO WORK.

In fact, domestic violence is the second most common form of workplace violence in Alberta.

The Alberta Council of Women's Shelters works with Alberta workplaces to address domestic violence as a workplace safety issue. Our comprehensive Domestic Violence and Your Workplace program offers a multi-faceted approach to supporting your employees and helping to keep your workplace safe. Evidence-informed and supported by current research and relevant Alberta stories, we tailor our supports to the unique needs of each workplace.

Visit [www.acws.ca/workplace-training](http://www.acws.ca/workplace-training) to learn more.



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