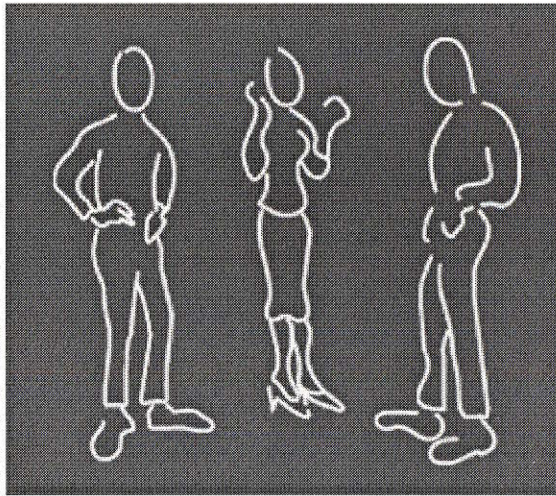


What is Domestic Violence?

Domestic violence (DV) can be defined as any behavior in a relationship that is used to gain or maintain power and control over an intimate partner. Domestic violence can happen to anyone of any race, age, sexual orientation, religion or gender. It can happen to couples who are married, living together or just dating. It affects people of all educational backgrounds and income levels. Also referred to as partner abuse, it is a form of family violence where patterns of assault and coercive behaviors result in fear, intimidation, injury, suffering or death. These behaviors can take the form of physical, sexual, or psychological attacks.



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With **one out of every four American women reporting physical abuse** by an intimate partner at some point in their lives, it is a certainty that in every workplace, domestic violence is affecting employees. Whether it's a threatening phone call, repeated absences due to injury, or decreased productivity as a result of stress, domestic violence is a pervasive force in the American businessplace. Until a few years ago, domestic violence was a forbidden topic that was only addressed by close family members, law enforcement or the courts. No one spoke about it in the workplace. It is now absolutely clear that companies must take steps to educate employees and help victims.

The U.S. Department of Justice estimates that more than 90 percent of all victims of domestic violence are women and most perpetrators men. For this reason, this website uses she when referring to victims and he when referring to abusers.*

* Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Violence Between Intimates*. Washington DC: U.S. Department of Justice, 1994

**Contact Your Employee Assistance Program
Outcomes, Inc. (505)243-7145 or 1-800-677-2947**