



## **Sample Protocol: Domestic Violence in the Workplace for Vermont Employers**

I. **PURPOSE:** \_\_\_\_\_ is committed to the health and safety of our employees. The purpose of this protocol is to raise awareness of domestic violence; provide support, give guidance to management in addressing the occurrence of domestic violence and its effects in the workplace and to create a safer work environment.

### II. **DEFINITIONS:**

**A. Domestic Violence:** A pattern of coercive behavior used by one person to gain power and control over another. Domestic Violence may include physical violence, sexual, emotional, and psychological intimidation, verbal abuse, stalking and economic control. Although men can be victims of domestic violence, it is a major cause of injury or death to women. Domestic Violence occurs between people of all racial, economic, educational and religious backgrounds, in heterosexual and same sex relationships, and between people living together or separately, married or unmarried, and in short-term or long-term relationships. Domestic Violence is legally defined in Vermont as occurring between family members or persons who, for any length of time, are living or have lived together as sexual partners or as roommates, are having or have had a sexual relationship, and adults or minors who are dating or have dated.

**B. Batterer, Abuser, Offender, Perpetrator:** The individual who commits an act of domestic violence as defined above.

**C. Survivor or Victim:** The individual who has been or is currently the subject of domestic violence.

**D. Safety Plan:** A course of action and precautions that help the victim maintain safety at work and/or home.

**E. Protection Order:** The Vermont Abuse Prevention Statute (15 V.S.A. Sec. 1101-1115) provides a mechanism for a victim of abuse to apply for a protection order from the Court called a Relief from Abuse Order. The Order restrains an abuser from abusing the victim, prohibits violent or threatening acts and/or harassment, and/or contact or communication with or physical proximity to another person. The Order also addresses possession of the residence and custody of children. A protection order from another state or territory shall be accorded full faith and credit through out Vermont and shall be enforced as if it were an order of this state.

### III. **OUR PROTOCOL**

**A. Education and Support for Employees who are Victims of Domestic Violence**  
\_\_\_\_\_ will attempt to make available appropriate information, referrals, and resources to victims and other employees.

**NOTE: IF APPLICABLE TO OUR WORKPLACE INCLUDE THIS SECTION, IF NOT SKIP TO COMMUNITY AGENCIES SECTION BELOW**

\_\_\_\_\_ will provide support through our Employee Assistance Program, our Security and Human Resources personnel, as well as referrals to community agencies. We encourage all staff to take advantage of these resources.

To contact these resources call the following numbers:

Employee Assistance Program: \_\_\_\_\_

Security: \_\_\_\_\_

Human Resources: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Community Agencies**

\_\_\_\_\_ encourages victims and other staff to contact community agencies for resources and referrals. Many provide free services for safety planning, accessing protection orders, counseling, support groups, shelter, advice and legal assistance. To contact these resources call the following numbers, which are available twenty-four (24) hours a day and seven (7) days a week:

**National Domestic Violence Hotline 1-800-799-SAFE (7233)**

**Vermont Domestic Violence Hotline 1-800-228-7395**

**Vermont Sexual Violence Hotline 1-800-489-7273**

**United Way Information and Referral 211**

Other local and national resources include:

**Vermont Network Against Domestic and Sexual Violence**

[vtnetwork.org](http://vtnetwork.org) / (802) 223-1302

**Vermont Commission on Women**

[women.vermont.gov](http://women.vermont.gov) (see on-line resource guide) / (800) 881-1561

**Vermont Center for Crime Victim Services**

[ccvs.state.vt.us](http://ccvs.state.vt.us) / (802) 241-1250

**Vermont Safe At Home Program**

[sec.state.vt.us/otherprg/safeathome/safeathome](http://sec.state.vt.us/otherprg/safeathome/safeathome) / (802) 828-0586 / (800) 439-8683 Vermont only

**Vermont Department of Labor**

[labor.vermont.gov](http://labor.vermont.gov) / (802) 828-4000

The Vermont Department of Labor coordinates the Survivor Transitional Employment Benefit Program

**Vermont Attorney General's Office**

[atg.state.vt.us/issues/criminal-law/domestic-violence.php](http://atg.state.vt.us/issues/criminal-law/domestic-violence.php) / (802) 828-5520

**Family Violence Prevention Fund**

[endabuse.org](http://endabuse.org) / (415) 252-8900

**Peace at Work**

[peaceatwork.org](http://peaceatwork.org) / (919) 274-5515

**Safe at Work Coalition**

[safeatworkcoalition.org](http://safeatworkcoalition.org)

## **Liz Claiborne Love is Not Abuse Initiative**

Loveisnotabuse.com

### **Employment**

\_\_\_\_\_ will not discriminate against domestic violence victims or employees perceived as domestic violence victims in hiring, firing, staffing, or other terms, conditions, or privileges of employment.

\_\_\_\_\_ is aware that domestic violence victims may have performance problems such as absenteeism, tardiness or lower productivity as a result of domestic violence. When addressing performance and safety issues, \_\_\_\_\_ will make reasonable efforts to consider all aspects of the employee's situation and, to the extent possible, utilize reasonable options to help resolve performance and/or safety problems. If reasonable attempts to resolve performance and/or safety problems are unsuccessful, \_\_\_\_\_ may have to take appropriate action.

#### **B. Employees who Commit Acts or Threats of Domestic Violence**

Any employee who commits acts/threats of domestic violence at the workplace or while using workplace resources will be subject to disciplinary action, which may include but is not limited to dismissal. If appropriate, law enforcement will be contacted, which may result in arrest, criminal charges and/or prosecution. Workplace resources include, but are not limited to phones, fax machines, e-mail, mail, automobiles, pagers, office supplies, and photocopy machines.

Some job positions may give an employee access to certain types of information or resources. If that employee intentionally uses this access to enable an abuser to harm/contact a victim, that employee and abuser, will be subject to disciplinary action, which may include but is not limited to dismissal. If appropriate, law enforcement will be contacted, which may result in arrest, criminal charges, and/or prosecution.

\_\_\_\_\_ recognizes that abusers also need assistance and resources. We will provide, when appropriate, referrals to our Employee Assistance Program and/or Batterers' Intervention Programs, defined as programs designed to eliminate violence in intimate relationships, stop other forms of abusive behavior and increase victim safety.

#### **C. Law Enforcement and Laws**

\_\_\_\_\_ will cooperate to the fullest extent legally possible with lawenforcement and other appropriate government agencies. In addition, this policy shall be interpreted and applied in accordance with all applicable local, state or federal laws.