



UNDERSTANDING THE EFFECTS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, SEXUAL ASSAULT AND STALKING ON HOUSING AND THE WORKPLACE

395 Hudson Street New York, NY 10014-3684 t: 212.925.6635 f: 212.226.1066 www.legalmomentum.org

Domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking take a staggering toll on women. The incidence of domestic and sexual violence is appallingly high, and the vast majority of victims are women.

- Between 960,000 and three million Americans are physically abused by a current or former spouse or boyfriend or girlfriend each year.¹
- 25% of women, and about 7% of men, say they have been raped or assaulted by a current or former partner. Approximately 1.5 million American women and over 800,000 men are raped or assaulted by an intimate partner annually.²
- Approximately 10.2 million people have been stalked at some time in their lives. 4 out of every 5 stalking victims are women.³
- Nearly one third of women state that they have faced abuse from an intimate partner at some point in their lives.⁴
- Women account for 85% of the victims of intimate partner violence and men account for approximately 15% of the victims.⁵
- More women are injured by their partners than by rape, auto accidents and muggings combined!⁶

Victims of domestic and sexual violence and stalking face major obstacles in obtaining and maintaining housing independent from their abusers.

- More than two-thirds of domestic violence service providers surveyed identified “discriminatory practices by landlords” as a barrier that survivors face in their effort to obtain housing.⁷
- Nearly half (50%) of the 24 cities surveyed in 2005 by the US Conference of Mayors identified domestic violence as a “primary cause” of homelessness.⁸
- Of all homeless women and children, 60% have been abused by age 12, and 63% have been victims of intimate partner violence as adults.⁹
- A survey of homeless parents (mostly mothers) in cities around the country found that 22% had fled their last home because of domestic violence. Among parents who had lived with a spouse or partner, 57% of homeless parents left their last home because of domestic violence.¹⁰
- States typically report that 50-60% of current welfare recipients say that they have experienced violence by a current or former male partner.¹¹

Violence against women affects the workplace. Domestic and sexual violence does not often result in workplace violence, but when it does, it can be lethal. More typically, violence outside the workplace interferes with the ability of victims (and offenders) to work.

- Homicide is the leading cause of death for women on the job.¹² Husbands, boyfriends, and ex-partners commit 15% of workplace homicides against women.¹³
- Approximately 11% of all rapes occur in the workplace.¹⁴
- Studies indicate that between 35 and 56% of employed battered women surveyed were harassed at work by their abusive partners.¹⁵
- Abusers frequently seek to control their partners by actively interfering with their ability to work, including preventing their partners from going to work, harassing their partners at work, limiting the access of their partners to cash or transportation, and sabotaging the child care arrangements of their partners.¹⁶

- One study of female domestic violence victims found that 44% were left without transportation when their partner hid the car keys or disabled the car.¹⁷
- Domestic violence also affects perpetrators' ability to work. 48% of abusers reported having difficulty concentrating at work and 42% reported being late to work because of the abuse. 78% reported using their own company's resources in connection with the abuse.¹⁸

Domestic and sexual violence places significant costs on employers, in terms of medical expenses, lost productivity, and increased turnover.

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that the costs of direct medical and mental health care services related to intimate partner violence total (in 1995 dollars) nearly \$4.1 billion a year, with an additional \$1.8 billion in productivity losses.¹⁹
- The Bureau of National Affairs has estimated that domestic violence costs employers between \$3 billion and \$5 billion annually in lost time and productivity,²⁰ while other reports have estimated the cost at between \$5.8 billion and \$13 billion annually.²¹
- Victims of intimate partner violence lose 8 million days of paid work each year – the equivalent of over 32,000 full-time jobs.²² The experience of domestic violence reduces a woman's annual work hours by 137 hours – almost four full-time weeks!²³
- 44% of employed adults have personally experienced the effects of domestic violence in their workplaces, and employees consider domestic violence as important a workplace issue as terrorism, job insecurity, and employee theft.²⁴
- More than 35% of stalking victims report losing time from paid work due to the stalking,²⁵ and 7% never return to work.²⁶
- Almost 50% of sexual assault survivors lose their jobs or are forced to quit in the aftermath of the assaults.²⁷
- The General Accounting Office found that between 1/4 and 1/2 of domestic violence victims reported losing a job due, at least in part, to domestic violence.²⁸
- A partner at Deloitte & Touche estimates that it costs \$12,000 in recruitment and training expenses to replace the average nonprofessional worker and \$35,000 to replace a professional employee. The Families and Work Institute estimates it costs about 75 percent of a non-managerial worker's annual salary to replace him or her and 150 percent of a manager's annual salary.²⁹

Employers can take effective steps. Fortunately, employers are beginning to recognize that it's important to address domestic and sexual violence – and implementing effective policies has been shown to be successful.

- In a recent survey, 66% of senior executives and 75% of human resources directors indicated that they believed addressing domestic violence would decrease its negative workplace effects.³⁰
- 94% of corporate security and safety directors at companies nationwide rank domestic violence as a high security concern.³¹
- 68% of corporate leaders say that a company's financial performance would benefit if domestic violence were addressed among its employees.³²
- 61% of employed adults believe addressing domestic violence would improve their employer's "performance and reputation."³³
- 66% of abusers said domestic abuse posters and brochures in the workplace would help prevent domestic abuse from impacting the business.³⁴
- When a sample group of 40 abused employees at the factory began using the domestic abuse counseling services, their average absence rate was higher than the factory's average absence rate. After using counseling services, the abused employees reduced their absenteeism rates to normal.¹⁷
- After being trained on domestic violence, 91% of employees said they were more likely to know where to refer someone who is abused, 89% said they were more likely to be supportive of a colleague who is abused, and 86% said they were more aware of what to do if there is a threat of domestic violence at work.³⁵

-
- ¹ U.S. Department of Justice, *Violence by Intimates: Analysis of Data on Crimes by Current or Former Spouses, Boyfriends, and Girlfriends* (March 1998).
- ² Patricia Tjaden & Nancy Thoennes, Nat'l Inst. of Just. & Ctrs. for Disease Control and Prevention, *Findings from the National Violence Against Women Survey* (Nov. 2000).
- ³ Patricia Tjaden & Nancy Thoennes, Nat'l Inst. of Just. & Ctrs. for Disease Control and Prevention, *Stalking in America: Findings from the National Violence Against Women Survey 3* (April 1998).
- ⁴ The Commonwealth Fund, *Health Concerns Across a Woman's Lifespan: 1998 Survey of Women's Health* (May 1999).
- ⁵ Bureau of Justice Statistics Crime Data Brief, *Intimate Partner Violence, 1993-2001* (February 2003).
- ⁶ The Commonwealth Fund, *Health Concerns Across a Woman's Lifespan: 1998 Survey of Women's Health* (May 1999).
- ⁷ Amy Correia, *Housing and Battered Women: A Case Study of Domestic Violence Programs in Iowa*. National Resource Center on Domestic Violence (March 1999).
- ⁸ United States Conference of Mayors, "Hunger and Homelessness Survey: A Status Report on Hunger and Homelessness in America's Cities, A 24-City Survey," at 64 (December 2005).
- ⁹ Browne, A. & Bassuk, E., "Intimate Violence in the Lives of Homeless and Poor Housed Women: Prevalence and Patterns in an Ethnically Diverse Sample," *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 67(2): 261-278 (1997); Bassuk, E., Melnick, S. & Browne, A., "Responding to the Needs of Low Income and Homeless Women Who are Survivors of Family Violence," *Journal of American Medical Women's Association*, 53(2): 57-64 (1998).
- ¹⁰ Homes for the Homeless & Institute for Children and Poverty, *Homeless in America: A Children's Story, Part One 23* (1999).
- ¹¹ Institute for Women's Policy Research, *Domestic Violence and Welfare Receipt*, IWPR Welfare Reform Network News, Issue No. 4 (April 1997).
- ¹² Nat'l Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, U.S. Dep't of Health and Human Services, Current Intelligence Bulletin 57, *Violence in the Workplace: Risk Factors and Prevention Strategies 3* (June 1996).
- ¹³ AFSCME & Center for Women in Government, *Hidden Violence Against Women at Work*, Women in Public Service (Fall 1995).
- ¹⁴ Greg Warchol, U.S. Dep't of Justice, *Workplace Violence, 1992-96* (July 1998).
- ¹⁵ U.S. Gen. Acct. Office, *Domestic Violence Prevalence and Implications For Employment Among Welfare Recipients 19* (Nov. 1998). See also Spokane County Domestic Violence Consortium (August 2005) (51% of employed female intimate partner violence victims and 35% of employed male victims report some level of IPV work disruption).
- ¹⁶ Jody Raphael & Richard M. Tolman, *Trapped In Poverty, Trapped By Abuse: New Evidence Documenting the Relationship Between Domestic Violence and Welfare* (1997).
- ¹⁷ J. McFarlane, et al., *Indicators of Intimate Partner Violence in Women's Employment: Implications for Workplace Action*, AAOHN Journal, 48(5), 215 (2000).
- ¹⁸ Ellen Ridley, Maine Dep't of Labor & Family Crisis Services, *Impact of Domestic Offenders on Occupational Safety & Health: A Pilot Study* (2004).
- ¹⁹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *Costs of Intimate Partner Violence Against Women in the United States* (2003).
- ²⁰ Bureau of Nat'l Aff., Special Rep. No. 32, *Violence and Stress: The Work/Family Connection 2* (1990).
- ²¹ Joan Zorza, *Women Battering: High Costs and the State of the Law*, Clearinghouse Rev., Vol. 28, No. 4, 383, 385 (1994); Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *Costs of Intimate Partner Violence Against Women in the United States* (2003).
- ²² Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *Costs of Intimate Partner Violence Against Women in the United States* (2003).
- ²³ Richard Tolman & Hui-Chen Wang, *Domestic Violence and Women's Employment: Fixed Effects Models of Three Waves of Women's Employment Study Data*, 36 American Journal of Community Psychology, No. 1/2 (Sept. 2005).
- ²⁴ Corporate Alliance to End Partner Violence, *National Benchmark Telephone Survey* (2005).
- ²⁵ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *Costs of Intimate Partner Violence Against Women in the United States* (2003).
- ²⁶ Patricia Tjaden & Nancy Thoennes, Nat'l Inst. of Just. & Ctrs. for Disease Control and Prevention, *Stalking in America: Findings from the National Violence Against Women Survey 11* (April 1998).
- ²⁷ S. Rep. No. 138, 103rd Cong., 2d Sess. 54, n. 69 (citing E. Ellis, B. Atkeson and K. Calhoun, *An Assessment of the Long Term Reaction to Rape*, 50 J. Abnormal Psychology No. 3, 264 (1981)).
- ²⁸ U.S. Gen. Acct. Office, *Domestic Violence Prevalence and Implications For Employment Among Welfare Recipients 19* (Nov. 1998).
- ²⁹ Workplace Violence 911, *Background Buzz E-zine, Volume 8* (2005).
- ³⁰ Partnership for Prevention, *Domestic Violence and the Workplace Study* (2002).
- ³¹ Joseph A. Kinney, Nat'l Safe Workplace Inst., *Domestic Violence Moves Into Workplace* (1994).
- ³² Liz Claiborne, Inc., *2d Corporate Leader Survey* (2002).
- ³³ Corporate Alliance to End Partner Violence, *National Benchmark Telephone Survey* (2005).
- ³⁴ Ellen Ridley, Maine Dep't of Labor & Family Crisis Services, *Impact of Domestic Offenders on Occupational Safety & Health: A Pilot Study* (Feb. 2004).
- ³⁵ B. Younger Urban, *Evaluation Report, Harman International Domestic Violence Prevention Project* (May 2004).