HOW CO-WORKERS CAN HELP

Be alert to possible signs of domestic violence in co-workers, changes in behavior and work performance, lack of concentration, increased or unexplained absences, placing or receiving harassing phone calls, bruises or injuries that are unexplained or come with questionable explanations.

- If a co-worker confides in you that s/he is being abused, believe her/him.
- Listen without judging. Victims of abuse often feel responsible, ashamed and afraid.
- Recognize the difficulties that prevent victims from leaving an abusive relationship: financial dependency, lack of housing, employment, daycare and transportation options, family pressures and fear.
- Recognize that the most dangerous time for a victim is when s/he attempts to leave an abusive situation, as this is when the violence often increases and may become deadly.
- Refer victims to a local domestic violence crisis center for free, confidential support and resources.

To access your local crisis center, call the New Hampshire Domestic Violence Hotline at: 1-866-644-3574

The New Hampshire Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence is comprised of 14 crisis centers throughout the state that have been established to provide services to survivors of sexual assault, domestic violence and stalking. Services that the Coalition member programs provide include: 24-hour crisis lines; emergency shelter and access to transportation; legal advocacy in obtaining protective orders against abusers; hospital and court accompaniment and information about and help in obtaining public assistance.

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### WHAT IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?

Everyone has experienced tension in his or her relationships, yet most relationships are not abusive. Domestic violence is not a disagreement, a marital spat or an anger management problem. Domestic violence is based on power and control.

Domestic violence is a pattern of abusive and controlling behavior that restricts the activity and independence of another individual. It can include physical, sexual and psychological attacks, and economic control. Domestic violence affects persons of all ages, cultures, religions, sexual orientations, income levels, and educational and ethnic backgrounds. The majority of victims are women, but men can be victims of domestic violence too.

### DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IS A WORKPLACE CONCERN

Domestic violence can affect one’s productivity, medical expenses, attendance, and risk of violence at the workplace. The workplace is an ideal place for employees to get help — after all, it is the place where s/he spends approximately eight hours a day away from her/his abuser.

**FACT**

96% of employees who were victims of domestic violence reported some type of workplace problem as a direct result of their abuse. More than 60% were late, 54% missed at least three full days of work per months and work performance suffered for 70% of the victims.

- *New York Victim Services; US Department of Labor*

**FACT**

74% of employed battered women reported being harassed by their partners in the workplace, whether in person or via the telephone, email, voicemail or fax.

- *New York Victim Services; US Department of Labor*

### SAFETY PLANNING

No one deserves to be abused. If this is happening to you, it is not your fault and you are not alone. You have choices and there are people who can help and support you.

It is a good idea for anyone facing domestic violence to create a safety plan, both for home and for work. Here are some suggestions:

**at work...**

- Talk with someone at the workplace you trust.
- Explore the option of obtaining a protective order. Your local crisis center can assist you with that process.
- For security measures, consider providing your employer with a picture of the perpetrator and a copy of your protective order, if you have one, for security measures.
- Work with your employer to address telephone, fax, and email or mail harassment.
- Consider removing your name and number from automated phone directories.
- Review the safety of your parking arrangements. Consider an escort to your car and park near the building entrance if possible. Park your car so the front is facing out. Consider changing your license plates from a vanity plate if you have one.
- Review the safety of your childcare arrangements. Give a picture of the perpetrator and a copy of your protective order to the childcare provider.

### FACT

**One in four** American women report that they have been physically or sexually abused by an intimate partner at some point in their lives.

- *The Family Violence Prevention Fund*

### FACT

Children in homes where domestic violence occurs are physically abused or seriously neglected at a rate 1,500% higher than the national average in the general population.

- *Children’s National Women Abuse Prevention Project*

### FACT

From 1990 through 2004 the State of New Hampshire had 298 homicides, of which 142 (53%) were domestic violence related.

- *NH Department of Justice*