



HR Family Violence Guide

What is Family Violence ?

Family violence is a pattern of abusive behaviours in a relationship in which tactics are used to gain or maintain power and control, which creates an environment of fear. There are different types of abuse such as: emotional, coercion, financial, spiritual, cultural, immigration, physical, and sexual.

Key Points:

- Family violence happens at home but in many cases can spill over to the workplace creating unsafe working conditions.
- Family violence is included in the definition of violence in the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Act.
- Employers must take steps to protect their employees if they believe family violence may happen at the workplace.
- Employees must report to supervisors if they believe family violence is happening at the workplace.

Recognizing Signs

These indicators are opportunities to connect with co-workers or staff, it does not always mean a person is experiencing abuse at home.

- Tired, have interrupted sleep so they are not effective at work
- Clothes may be ruined or soiled
- Receives harassing phone calls, emails, or texts from partner
- Their partner may pester co-workers about whereabouts and activities
- They might minimize their partner's actions
- Their partner might make disruptive personal visits to the workplace
- Their partner might damage work property
- The employee may work late to avoid going home

Things to Remember

- You are not alone
- There are supports available for you and colleagues
- People may not be ready to act or it may be dangerous to do so
- Your job is to listen, be empathetic, NOT to solve their problems
- Listening and empathy are powerful tools to support someone on their healing journey
- Document incidents & conversations

How to start a conversation

To ensure safety and privacy of co-workers or staff, be sure you are in a private space where no one else can hear your conversation.

- Start the conversation with "I've noticed ____ and I'm concerned. Would you like to talk?"
- If someone says no or does not respond, respect their choice and privacy. Do not force them to engage in conversation.
- If they share they are experiencing violence, listen and believe them. Say "I believe you."
- **Be calm. Listen. Empathize.** Give them a chance to share without interruption or offering solutions.
- What kind of support are you looking for?

Occupational Health & Safety Legislation & Employment Standards

Domestic Violence Leave:

- All eligible employees can take up to 10 days of unpaid, job-protected leave due to the effects of violence in the home (Part 2, Division 7.6 of the Employment Standards Code).

Violence Prevention Policy and Procedures:

- As per Part 27 of the OHS Code, the plan must include a violence prevention policy and procedures.

Supports & Resources

www.thetodaycentre.ca | 780.455.6880

You are not alone, consult with someone who has expertise:

Family Violence Supports for Edmonton and Area

The Today Centre 780-455-6880
Family Violence Prevention Centre – 780-423-1685

24 Hour Help Lines

Family Violence Info Line 310-1818 – Alberta
Information and Referral – 211

OH&S Contact Centre

1-866-415-8690 – Alberta

1-800-232-7215 - Deaf or hard of hearing (TTY)

Notify OHS of health and safety concerns alberta.ca/file-complaint-online.aspx