

Domestic Violence in the Workplace Policy

Policy Statement

The purposes of these guidelines are to heighten the awareness of domestic violence and all forms of violence against women/men and to provide guidance for management and employees in addressing these issues in the workplace.

Purpose of Policy

In 1985, the United States Health Service and the Surgeon General brought national focus on violence as a leading public health issue in the country. This epidemic of violence has spread to the work place. We recognize the reality of domestic violence in our society and that this issue can affect employees and their work. To address these concerns, Southeastern Louisiana University has adopted guidelines to heighten awareness of domestic violence as it affects our employees and to provide supervisors, managers, and human resource managers to assist employees in managing family violence situations as they affect them – directly or indirectly - in their job. We are committed to full compliance of all applicable laws governing domestic violence in the workplace.

Statistics from the National Institute of Occupational Safety (NIOSH) show that murder is the third leading cause of death in the workplace and the first among female employees. As most companies have experienced threats of violence at some level, and Southeastern Louisiana University is no exception, the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OSHA) obligates employers to provide a safe and healthy work place.

- Southeastern Louisiana University is committed to nondiscrimination against victims of violence in all aspects of our business and operations.
- Southeastern Louisiana University believes that employees should not be disciplined or terminated simply because they have been the victims of domestic violence or because the employer fears the impact of violence in the workplace.
- Southeastern Louisiana University will not retaliate against an employee who reports circumstances raising a concern for safety from violence.
- Southeastern Louisiana University believes that employees or individuals that commit acts of violence at or from the workplace must be treated in accordance with this policy. Where it is appropriate Southeastern Louisiana University will attempt to provide referrals to certified batterers' intervention programs.

C.

- Southeastern Louisiana University will strive to provide education on workplace violence to all employees.
- Southeastern Louisiana University will strive to make all personnel, benefits, and security policies responsive to the needs of employees who are victims of violence.

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- As a member of local, state, and national communities, Southeastern Louisiana University believes in our responsibility to support community efforts to end domestic violence.

A.

Southeastern Louisiana University is committed to assisting employees who are, or have been, the victims of domestic violence or sexual assault. This assistance may include, but should not be limited to:

- Creating a workplace safety plan for the employee;
- Changing an employee's work routine;
- Referring the employee to appropriate internal and external resources and organizations;
- Addressing employee performance concerns; and/or
- Discussing personal leave options. Southeastern Louisiana University will respond sensitively to victims and ensure confidentiality regarding reports of abuse.

B.

In all responses to domestic violence, Southeastern Louisiana University will respect the confidentiality and autonomy of the reporting employee, informing other employees on a need to know basis only, and only to the extent necessary to protect safety and to comply with the law. Wherever practicable, advance notice will be given to the reporting employee if Southeastern Louisiana University needs to inform others about the domestic violence situation. Recognizing the complexity of the issues surrounding domestic violence and that a survivor of domestic violence may face threats of violence or death when he or she attempts to end a violent relationship, Southeastern Louisiana University will make every effort to provide a nonjudgmental and supportive

confides that the job performance or conduct problem is caused by domestic violence, a referral for

1. The following information is provided to help employees of Southeastern Louisiana University who are

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It is important that all employees know how best to respond to the effects of domestic violence in the workplace. The following clarifies roles for all staff:

1.

Supervisors are often among the first people in the workplace to become

abusers better than anyone else. When it comes to their own safety, offer to assist them in developing a personal workplace safety plan, but allow them to decide what goes in the final plan. However, if it is determined that other employees or customers are at risk, it is essential to take measures to provide protection for them.

- j. If possible, the supervisor will make efforts to adjust the survivor/employee's work schedule and/or grant leave [sick, annual, shared, leave, compensatory time, or leave without pay] if the employee needs to take time off for medical assistance, legal assistance, court appearances, counseling, relocation, or to make other necessary arrangements to enhance her or his safety. Be sure to follow all applicable personnel policies and procedures, [union contract provisions,] and statutes. This approved leave should not be held against the employee.
- k. The employee should maintain communication with their manager during their absence. The employer should maintain the confidentiality of the employee's whereabouts.
- l. Work with Human Resource managers [and union representatives, if applicable,] to relocate the employee to an alternate worksite, whenever feasible, if the employee requests to relocate for safety reasons. If relocation is offered, it should not produce any reduction in pay, status, or benefits.
- m. Review the safety of parking arrangements. Make sure that parking areas are well lit. Provide security escorts to parked cars and priority parking near the building entrance for employees who fear an attack at work.
- n. With Human Resources department approval, post information about domestic violence in your work area. Also, have information available where employees can obtain it without having to request it or be seen removing it. Some suggestions are: restrooms, lunchrooms, health and/or first aid offices, or where other employee resource information is located. Employers should seek out other confidential means of accessing information, such as Web sites.
- o. Comply with all civil protection orders. If both the plaintiff and defendant in a civil protection order are employees of Southeastern Louisiana University, managers must work with Human

State Coalition Against Domestic Violence Coalition Hotline [1-888-411-1333], Employee Assistance Program, local domestic violence shelters, certified batterers' intervention programs available to perpetrators, information on how to obtain civil orders of protection and criminal justice options, and any other available community resources.

- c. Be a resource to employees, managers, and supervisors in addressing domestic violence situations.
- d. Work with survivors, Security staff, the EEO/ADA Officer, [union representatives], the Occupational Health office, law enforcement, and community domestic violence programs, if necessary, to develop a personal workplace safety plan to minimize the risk to the victim, other employees, and clients.
- e. Work with supervisors and managers [and union representatives] to grant leave, adjust work schedules, or attempt to find continued employment for employees who are survivors of domestic violence, if possible.
- f. Maintain the confidentiality of domestic violence circumstances and any other referrals under this policy to the extent permitted by law.
- g. Consult legal counsel and advise supervisors and managers in considering corrective or disciplinary actions against employees who commit acts of domestic violence at Southeastern Louisiana University worksites as outlined in the policy or who are convicted of a crime as a result of domestic violence when such action affects the work performance of the employee or affects the normal operation of Southeastern Louisiana University.
- h. Work with the survivor, the manager, the Employee Assistance Program, and the State Coalition Against Domestic Violence Coalition Hotline [1-888-411-1333], Employee Assistance Program, local domestic violence shelters, certified batterers' intervention programs available to perpetrators, information on how to obtain civil orders of protection and criminal justice options, and any other available community resources.

supervisors with respect to issues of domestic violence in the workplace in order to achieve workplace cooperation regarding leave of absence, fair consideration of any performance or conduct problems directly related to the violence, safety needs, disciplinary actions towards a perpetrator who works with a survivor and abuses that person in the workplace, and access to any other needed services. Discuss with Human Resources any personnel policy that may negatively impact survivors.

- h. Establish a relationship with domestic violence service agencies in the community, sharing information and resources. One method of establishing a working relationship with a community organization would be to ask its staff to participate in workplace educational events on domestic violence.
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- a. Participate in domestic violence training as provided
 - b.

c. Document violations of a restraining order and each report of domestic violence in the

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might come to the work site. Ask co-workers and/or supervisors to call the police if the perpetrator threatens, harasses you at work or violates the civil order for protection in any way.

- b. Consider providing a picture of the perpetrator to reception areas and/or security.
- c. Consider identifying an emergency contact person should your employer be unable to contact you.
- d. Review the safety of your parking arrangements.
- e. Consider having Security escort you to and from your car or public transportation and/or obtaining special parking access.
- f. Consider requesting a change and/or unpredictable rotations of your work schedule, work site, or work assignment if such a change is possible and would enhance your safety at work.
- g. Consider having your telephone calls screened at work.
- h. Consider requesting additional security measures for your work site. It may be possible to post security near your work site, install security cameras or silent alarms at your work site, relocate your work station to a more secure area, or provide you with a cellular phone for emergency use at work.
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