

# What **can you do** to help victims?

## Make your company a safe and supportive workplace

- ❑ **Adopt** internal policy to counter conjugal violence and support victims (e.g. a protocol on what to do if a woman discloses that she is a victim).
- ❑ **Agree** to adjust the employee's position and working conditions if she wishes (change of telephone number, e-mail, flexible hours, etc.).
- ❑ **Provide** the employee with appropriate leave: to consult a lawyer, doctor, prepare for a move, go to a women's shelter, etc.
- ❑ **Implement** adapted security measures if the employee believes she is in danger: filter calls, procedure for dealing with the spouse if he comes to the workplace, job transfer, etc.

## Support victims in dealing with the situation

- ❑ **Listen** if an employee confides in you, show understanding, do not judge, and refer her to resources.
- ❑ **Assign** a manager or human resources person to assist victims.

## Raise employee awareness of the issue

- ❑ **In partnership** with a shelter that is a member of the Regroupement, organize activities for staff and management to make them aware of the problem, help them recognize the signs and introduce them to specialized resources.
- ❑ **Distribute** informational materials or post them widely in targeted locations: awareness-raising tools and campaigns produced by shelters, general information on the problem, etc.
- ❑ **Communicate** regularly on the subject (newsletters, staff meetings, articles on the intranet site).
- ❑ **Mark** November 25 as a day of action. Organize an awareness-raising activity with a shelter that is a member of the Regroupement.
- ❑ **Promote** yourself as a workplace ally against conjugal violence.



# Conjugal violence reaches beyond the home



Learn how to help and support an employee who is a victim, and become a workplace ally against conjugal violence.



REGROUPEMENT DES MAISONS  
POUR FEMMES VICTIMES  
DE VIOLENCE CONJUGALE

## A woman who is a victim of conjugal violence is not protected from her partner's harassment while she is at work.

Harassment comes in the form of constant text messages and calls, emails, intrusions in the workplace, and communications with the victim's co-workers. There are many means employed by abusive partners or ex-partners to continue harassing their partner while she is at work.

These acts of violence affect the whole organization. In Canada, it is estimated that the cost of conjugal violence to employers is \$77.9 million per year.



**One out of three\*** women employees reports having been a victim of conjugal violence.

**Over half** state that the violence extends into their workplace.

**71% of employers** have experienced a situation where it was necessary to protect a victim of conjugal violence.

The workplace may be the only place where a woman who is a victim of conjugal violence still feels safe and respected.

As an employer, you can play an especially important role with victims, including making them feel safe in the workplace, providing them with adequate support and adapting working conditions to their situation.

The violence also affects a victim's co-workers. If she is absent more often, her workload will be redistributed within the team.

For managers, it may mean a lot of time spent managing the situation, and a source of concern.

Convey the message to your employees that your company does not tolerate conjugal violence.

Steps can be taken to make the workplace safe and supportive for a woman who is a victim of conjugal violence and her co-workers.

**You can make a difference in their lives!**



ILLUSTRATION: JOHANA LAURENÇON

\* According to a survey of the Canadian Labour Congress

\*\* Drawn from the *Guide pour l'employeur - La violence conjugale... une menace pour mon entreprise?* produced by the work group for the *Projet régional de prévention et de sensibilisation en violence conjugale et dans les relations amoureuses*. Also, the *Guide de l'employeur - La violence conjugale*, produced by the women's shelter, La Bouée Régionale.

## What is conjugal violence?

Conjugal violence occurs in a current or past love relationship. It refers to a host of behaviours used by the abuser to control and dominate his victim and ensure that she will not leave him. Conjugal violence can be physical but also psychological, verbal, economic and sexual.

## Signs\*\* that can alert you to a potential victim:

- She receives numerous personal calls and text messages.
- Her partner frequently comes to her workplace and waits for her at the door or in the parking lot.
- She is often late or absent from work.
- She isolates herself from other employees and keeps to herself. She systematically turns down invitations to participate in activities.
- Her work performance is suffering due to her difficulties in concentrating.
- She is unable to complete all her tasks or meet deadlines.
- She is always on her guard and appears anxious.

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