

Policy 2.1.15

Domestic Violence and the Workplace

Contact: Human Resources Director

2.1.15.1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to set forth procedures and guidelines for all WaTech/CTS employees to address the occurrence of domestic violence and its impact in the workplace. Domestic violence is a serious problem that affects people from all walks of life. It can adversely affect the well-being and productivity of employees who are victims, as well as their co-workers. Other effects of domestic violence in the workplace include increased absenteeism, turnover, health care costs, and reduced productivity.

Washington Technology Solutions (WaTech) refers to the “consolidated technology services (CTS) agency” identified in RCW 43.105.

2.1.15.2 Domestic Violence Defined

“Domestic Violence” is abusive behavior that is either physical, sexual, and/or psychological, intended to establish and maintain control over a partner, family member or household member, past or present. See [RCW 26.50.010](#).

2.1.15.3 Assistance for Domestic Violence Victims

Based on individual need and agency ability, WaTech/CTS will provide appropriate support and assistance to employees who are victims of domestic violence. This includes: confidential means for coming forward for help, resource and referral information, work schedule adjustments or leave as needed to obtain assistance, and workplace relocation as feasible. Other appropriate assistance may be provided based on individual need and agency ability. (For additional resource information see “Employee Resources” at <http://intranet.watech.wa.gov/hr-and-payroll/hr/employee-resources>.)

WaTech/CTS is committed to working with employees who are victims of domestic violence to prevent abuse and harassment from occurring in the workplace. No employee will be penalized or disciplined solely for being a victim of harassment in the workplace.

All employees need to take seriously the problem of domestic violence and its effect in the workplace. While WaTech/CTS cannot guarantee anyone’s protection, WaTech/CTS will take reasonable steps to foster a safe working environment for all employees.

2.1.15.4 Prohibited Workplace Behavior

WaTech/CTS will not tolerate domestic violence, including harassment of any employee while in state offices, facilities, work sites, vehicles, or while conducting state business. This includes the display of any violent or threatening behavior (verbal or physical) that may result in physical or emotional injury or otherwise places one’s safety and productivity at risk.

Any employee who threatens, harasses, or abuses someone while at work or while using any state resources such as work time, workplace telephones, FAX machines, mail, e-mail, or other means may be subject to corrective or disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. Corrective or disciplinary action may also be taken against employees who are convicted or issued a permanent injunction as a result of domestic violence when such action has a direct connection to the employee's duties as a state employee.

In addition, employees are prohibited from ridiculing or retaliating against any employee who is or is suspected of being a victim of domestic violence. Victims of domestic violence are encouraged to report incidents of retaliation to their supervisor or the Human Resources Office. Acts of retaliation may result in corrective or disciplinary action.

Corrective or disciplinary action may also be taken against any employee who knowingly misrepresents reporting of any domestic violence incident, whether as a victim, perpetrator, or whistle-blower.

References and Resources

- [WaTech/CTS Employee Resources web page](#)
- [Executive Order 96-05](#)
- [RCW 26.50.010](#)
- [Employee Assistance Program](#): Olympia (360) 753-3260, Seattle (206) 281-6315, Spokane (509) 482-3686 or TTY (360) 664-3563
- 24-Hour Washington State Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-562-6025
- Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence: (360) 407-0756 or TTY (360) 407-0760
- The National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-SAFE or TTY 1-800-787-3224
- Safeplace: (360) 754-6300
- Crisis Clinic: (360) 586-2800

Procedure 2.1.15

Domestic Violence and the Workplace

Action by	Action
Supervisor	<p>Participate in domestic violence training.</p> <p>Be aware of physical or behavioral changes in employees and consult with the Human Resources Office and/or the Employee Assistance Program for advice. Do not attempt to diagnose the employee.</p> <p>Be responsive when an employee who is either the victim or the perpetrator of domestic violence asks for help. Immediately contact the Human Resources Office for assistance.</p> <p>Maintain confidentiality. Information about the employee should only be given to others on a need-to-know basis.</p>

Work with the victim, your HR Rep, the Employee Assistance Program, available security staff, law enforcement, and community domestic violence programs, if necessary, to assess the need for and develop a workplace safety plan for the victim. Victims of domestic violence know their abusers better than anyone else. When it comes to their own personal safety, offer to assist them in developing a workplace safety plan, but allow them to help decide what goes in it. If it is determined that other employees are at risk, it is essential to take measures to provide protection for them.

To the extent you are able to do so without jeopardizing agency operations, adjust the employee's work schedule and/or grant leave (sick, annual, 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 create a safe situation. Be sure to follow all applicable personnel rules and statutes.

Maintain communication with the employee during the employee's absence. Remember to maintain confidentiality of the employee's whereabouts.

Work with the Human Resources Office, WA State HR office, and/or other state employers to assist the employee in finding other state employment if the employee needs to relocate for safety reasons.

After consultation with your HR Rep, take any appropriate corrective/disciplinary action against employees who: misuse state resources to perpetrate domestic violence; harass, threaten, or commit an act of domestic violence in the workplace or while conducting state business; or are convicted or issued a permanent injunction as a result of domestic violence when that action has a bearing on the employee's duties as a state employee.

Honor all civil protection orders. If called to testify on the employee's behalf should the employee seek a civil protection order, participate in court proceedings in as neutral a manner as possible.

Employee Victim

Options for seeking assistance:

- Tell a trusted co-worker, supervisor, or manager, and ask for help.
- Contact the Human Resources Office for assistance.
- Contact the Employee Assistance Program.
- Contact the 24-hour Washington State Domestic Violence Hotline or the Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence.
- Call the police.

Notify your supervisor of the possible need to be absent and find out your

leave options. Be clear about your plan to return to work and maintain communications with your supervisor during your absence. If necessary, make alternate arrangements for receiving your paycheck. Consider obtaining civil orders for protection. Ensure they are current and are in hand at all times.

If safety is a concern, as appropriate, submit a recent photograph of the abuser and a copy of your protection order to your supervisor.

Employee Perpetrators

Options for seeking assistance:

- Tell a trusted co-worker, supervisor, or manager, and ask for help.
- Contact the Human Resources Office for assistance.
- Contact the Employee Assistance Program.
- Obtain a referral to a certified domestic violence perpetrators treatment program from the Employee Assistance Program.

Co-Worker

Options:

- Tell a supervisor or manager.
- Contact the Human Resources Office.
- Contact the Employee Assistance Program.

Human Resources

Post information about domestic violence in work areas and where employees can obtain it without having to request it or be seen removing it.

Maintain a list of services available to victims and perpetrators of domestic violence. This list should include: the Employee Assistance Program, local shelters, certified domestic violence treatment programs available to perpetrators, information on how to obtain civil orders of protection, and any other available community resources. The Employee Assistance Program can assist in developing this list.

Participate in domestic violence training.

Be a resource to employees, managers, and supervisors in addressing domestic violence situations.

Work with victims, the Employee Assistance Program, Attorney General's Office, available security staff, law enforcement, and community domestic violence programs, if necessary, to develop a workplace safety plan to minimize the risk to the victim, and other employees. Work with supervisors and managers to grant leave, adjust work schedules, or attempt to find continued employment for employees who

are victims of domestic violence.

Maintain confidentiality. Information about the employee should only be given to others on a need-to-know basis.

Advise and assist supervisors and managers in taking corrective or disciplinary actions against employees determined to be perpetrators of domestic violence when the acts of domestic violence have a bearing on the employee's duties as a state employee.

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