



TED STRICKLAND
GOVERNOR
STATE OF OHIO

Executive Order 2008 – 08S

Creating the Barbara Warner Workplace Domestic Violence Policy and Barbara Warner Committee on Workplace Domestic Violence

- 1. Domestic Violence Is a Public Health Issue in Ohio.** Domestic violence is a pattern of coercive behavior used by one person to establish or maintain power and control over family or household members. It may include physical violence, sexual, emotional and psychological intimidation, verbal abuse, stalking, and economic control. Domestic violence transcends boundaries of age, gender, religion, income, race, culture, education, and sexual orientation. Victims of domestic violence are more likely to experience a broad range of health problems including, but not limited to, depression, anxiety, exhaustion, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease.
- 2. Domestic Violence and Its Impact On the Workplace Has Become Increasingly Prevalent.** While domestic violence between family or household members is alarmingly prevalent, domestic violence in the workplace, as well as its impact on the workplace, has also become increasingly more common. The impact of domestic violence in the workplace includes conduct that interferes with an individual's capacity to safely and securely perform their work duties and, ultimately, affects an employee's job performance and attendance. Consequently, both actual and threatened domestic violence from within and outside of the workplace can affect an employee's morale and productivity.
- 3. Domestic Violence and Its Impact on the Workplace Can Create Economic Challenges for Employers.** Studies suggest that the economic impact of domestic violence on the workplace is profound, as it leads to increased absenteeism, increased employee turnover, reduced productivity, and excessive health care costs for the victim and, in some cases, their co-workers.

4. Ohio Is Committed to Promoting the Health and Safety of Its Employees and to Making a Significant Difference in the Fight to End Domestic Violence. The State's employees are a vital part of creating and fostering efficient governmental practices and ensuring that all Ohioans receive the support and services that they need. Consequently, the State is committed to working with cabinet agencies, boards, and commissions (collectively "State Agencies") to create and foster safe working environments, while also working with employees to prevent abuse, harassment and discrimination that may be the results of domestic violence.

5. Establishing the Barbara Warner Workplace Domestic Violence Policy. In order to facilitate healthy working environments that are free from abusive behaviors, I hereby order the establishment of the Barbara Warner Workplace Domestic Violence Policy ("Workplace Domestic Violence Policy"), to honor the memory of Barbara Warner, an employee of the Ohio Department of Health who was a victim of domestic violence and was ultimately murdered by her husband in 1997, and to assist with eliminating violence by or against State employees in the workplace, on State time, and on State property. The Workplace Domestic Violence Policy will provide guidance for management and employees in an effort to address and reduce the occurrence of domestic violence and its impact on the workplace.

6. Components of the Workplace Domestic Violence Policy. Under the Policy, each State Agency will:

a. Maintain, publish, and post a list of resources for survivors and perpetrators of domestic violence.

b. Within established personnel policies, give due consideration and accommodation to employees who are victims or survivors of domestic violence by:

i. modifying their work duties, assignments, or work sites when the perpetrator and victim are employed at the same work site;

ii. granting leave requests if an employee needs to be absent from work due to current or past domestic violence;

iii. working collaboratively with the Ohio Employee Assistance Program when considering corrective actions related to the job performance of a victim of domestic violence.

c. To the extent permitted under established personnel policies, refer an employee who is a perpetrator of domestic violence to the Ohio Employee Assistance Program for services and/or short-term counseling.

d. Take necessary corrective action, up to and including termination, and contact appropriate law enforcement personnel regarding employees who commit acts or threats of domestic violence while on State property, conducting State business at a State-sponsored event, or when using State resources.

e. Not discriminate, penalize, or discipline a state employee, solely for acts resulting from being a victim or survivor of domestic violence.

f. Respect the confidentiality and autonomy of the reporting employee and the victim or survivor, by informing others about facts associated with the domestic violence incident only to the extent necessary to protect safety or comply with the law and/or applicable collective bargaining agreements. Whenever practicable, advance notice will be given to the reporting employee if the State Agency needs to inform others about the domestic violence situation.

7. Creation of the Barbara Warner Committee on Workplace Domestic Violence. In order to ensure that the Workplace Domestic Violence Policy is being implemented by State Agencies, I also hereby order the creation of the Barbara Warner Committee on Workplace Domestic Violence (the "Committee"). The Committee will be comprised of representatives from the Governor's Office, the Ohio Department of Administrative Services, the Ohio Department of Health, the Ohio Department of Public Safety, the Employee Assistance Program, and any other individuals with expertise on issues associated with domestic violence appointed by the Governor. A representative from the Ohio Department of Health will be the Chairperson of the Committee, which will meet on a quarterly basis, beginning January 2009. Additionally, beginning July 2010, and every July thereafter, the Committee will submit a report to the Governor on the progress of implementing the Policy.

8. **Implementation of the Workplace Domestic Violence Policy.** All employees of State Agencies should implement the Policy by July 1, 2009. In order to facilitate the implementation, all employees of State Agencies will receive training on the Policy, as well as the risk factors associated with, and the impact of, domestic violence. At a time specified by the Committee, State Agencies will be required to report to the Committee regarding their implementation of the Policy.

9. I signed this Executive Order on April 16, 2008 in Columbus, Ohio and it will expire on my last day as Governor unless rescinded before then.

Ted Strickland, Governor