



April 26, 2021

National Workplace Violence Prevention Month: A Critical Time to Review Required Workplace Domestic Violence Policies and Active Shooter Prevention and Mitigation Strategies

An average of 20 workers are murdered, and another 18,000 are assaulted each week while at work in the United States.¹ Such violence demands that all employers continually evaluate their existing workplace conduct and violence prevention policies. The month of April, as National Workplace Violence Prevention Month, should help remind every employer that creating an employee environment free of violence, harassment, and intimidation should be an integral component of their overall safety program.

On average, nearly 20 people per minute are physically abused by an intimate partner in the United States. During one year, this equates to more than 10 million women and men.² It is clear that often this violence may impact the workplace by targeting domestic violence victims and their co-workers at the place of employment. This should be of particular concern, as there is growing research to indicate the correlation between domestic violence and active shooter incidents in the workplace.³

The State of New Jersey has directed that all local governments implement a policy that addresses domestic violence in the workplace. A model policy is available in the [MEL Model Employee Practices Policies and Procedures Manual](#).

In addition to implementing the requirements established by this policy, employers are encouraged to initiate a number of measures that can help create a safer workplace and assist employees in recognizing concerning behavior. It is imperative that employers cultivate an environment where employees have a clear understanding of appropriate employee conduct and a comprehensive understanding of how to report any alarming behavior.

The MEL Safety Institute recently updated the course *Employee Conduct and Violence Prevention in the Workplace* on the MSI LIVE platform. This course is 1.5 hours in length and primarily addresses violence in the workplace and steps that can be taken by employees to promote a safe work environment. Topics discussed include the four types of workplace violence, how to recognize the warning signs of potential violence, and coping and de-escalation strategies. Recent domestic violence legislation is also discussed. The Department of Homeland Security's Active Shooter video and active shooter strategies are a component of this course.

¹Center for Disease Control. (2021, April 18). *The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health*. Retrieved from Center for Disease Control: <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/docs/96-100/introduction.html>

²National Coalition Against Domestic Violence. (2021, April 18). *Statistics*. Retrieved from National Coalition Against Domestic Violence: <https://ncadv.org/STATISTICS>

³Gold, L. (2020). Domestic Violence, Firearms, and Mass Shootings. *Journal of American Academy of Psychiatry and the Law*.