



# COVID-19 DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RESPONSES FOR EMPLOYERS

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COVID-19 has bought a new wave of domestic violence through homes and lives. Isolation for many has become the new normal.

## Domestic violence may present in new ways during COVID-19:

- Withholding hand sanitiser or disinfectants
- Prevent from seeking appropriate medical attention
- Travel restriction preventing escape
- Using COVID-19 misinformation to control and manipulate
- Withholding money cards
- Threats to insurance and medical schemes

## How COVID-19 can be used against an employee:

- “As a scare tactic to keep me away from my children.”
- “To stop me visiting or talking to my family.”
- “I work at a hospital. My abuser assaulted me after being accused of infecting them with COVID-19.”
- “My abuser told me they had the virus and so I couldn’t leave the house.”
- “They told me my work colleague has COVID-19 and will infect the household if they visit.”

## HOW DO I RESPOND?

1

**Create a workplace safety plan** with experts to protect your employees during this stressful time. Safety plans can be made for anyone experiencing domestic violence or abuse, employees working from home, organisations, friends, family members or other people supporting someone impacted. Look, listen and link to specialists.

2

**Self-care for leaders** supporting affected employees is vital. COVID-19 may not allow face-to-face conversations which could cause concern or worry. Understand where leaders can get help for them and how. Employers have a responsibility to keep employees safe while working from home where reasonably practicable.

## Three ways to help people feel safer

3

**Reach out for support.** Ask for help. Your employees need to know they are not alone. Employers and people leaders should seek guidance from domestic violence advisors and experts to manage hidden risk and safety plans.

**“EVERYTHING IS FIGUREOUTABLE”**

Marie Forleo

