

## Success Stories & Educational Materials

Liz Claiborne Inc.

Labor/Mgmt Awareness Program

A Coordinated Response to DV

American Express

Altria Group, Inc. DV Commitment

A Successful Resolution

Educational Literature

## A Successful Resolution to an Incident in the Workplace

### The Incident:

Early one morning, Jane called her supervisor to request a few days off for personal reasons. The night before, Jane's husband, John, had attacked her during an argument, which ended with him hitting and choking her until she nearly blacked out. Jane managed to escape, ran to a neighbor's home and called police. At the suggestion of the police, Jane and her children were to stay at a local hotel, until the courts could order John to vacate the family home. This was not the first time that John had attacked Jane. The marriage had been in trouble for some time because of John's drug use and consequent unemployment, which had been the basis for several violent arguments.

However, the near-deadly violence of this latest attack convinced Jane that she needed to take action to protect herself and her children, and prevent possible future incidents of domestic violence.

### The Response:

Meanwhile, with Jane's consent, the supervisor contacted both Human Resources and Corporate Security. A Security Manager met with Jane at her office, which was located in a commercial building, to assess the situation and coordinate the personal security for her and her children. Given the wide range of services needed for Jane's protection, the corporation's efforts involved several other departments, including Employee Relations and the Employee Assistance Program, among others. Some of the steps we took to safeguard Jane follow:

- Worked with local police to make certain that a complaint had been filed and to assess the police emergency notification response in case future assistance would be needed.
- Evaluated whether John had the means to follow through on threats to harm Jane.
- Helped Jane obtain an order of protection that covered both her home and workplace.
- Developed a safety plan for Jane's home, and arranged for a private security firm to provide temporary surveillance at her home.
- Developed a security plan for Jane's workplace that included escort service whenever she left the premises, the posting of John's picture to prevent his access to the building, contracting with a local security firm to provide uniform guards in the building lobby and on the floor where Jane's office was located. The plan also covered protection for the children and instructed Jane on how to make certain the children (or their friends) did not give John access to the home. At work, Jane's calls were screened, and her supervisor was instructed in security measures to prevent John from manipulating coworkers in order to contact Jane, and what to do in the event he gained access to the office.

### Resolution:

The situation was closely monitored for eight weeks as the process moved from temporary court orders to permanent ones. Local community resources were extended to both Jane and John, who received a court order to enter drug rehab. Corporate Security periodically monitors the situation to make certain that Jane and her children remain safe and to ensure that the rehab and legal processes move forward.

### Lessons Learned:

- It is important to coordinate all efforts with local law enforcement, court system and community resources.
- The employee must be directly involved in all decisions affecting his or her situation.
- On occasion, it is necessary to check back with victims to evaluate any changes to their situations.
- A safe work environment, not only protects domestic violence victims, but also other employees.
- One size does not fit all. While it is necessary to have defined procedures in place, it is also important to have the flexibility to adapt to specific domestic violence situations.

This Web site is provided as an informational resource only and is not intended to be legal or professional advice. If you have questions about the application of issues raised to your particular situation, seek the advice of a competent attorney or other professional.