

## **Tips for Managers and Co-Workers**

### **1. Reach Out**

Survivors are often isolated from friends and extended family. Many are afraid of asking for help or feel ashamed. They might feel like the violence is their fault. Now is the time to reach out, check-in, and inform the employee that you are listening.

In reaching out, you can let them know that you care about them, are concerned for their well-being, you are there to listen, and want to help in any way you can. Acknowledge that there is a lot going on right now as we all try to cope and adapt to these new realities and that there are resources out there that can help. Don't push them to talk to you about the violence, but acknowledge these are challenging times. Offering to be there for them right now can go a long way.

Keep in mind that an abusive partner may be monitoring their phone, texts, emails, or use of social media, and it's best to reach out using the safest forms of communication possible. If you do not know if a form of communication is safe, do not discuss your concerns about violence, rather, offer general support. If a survivor discloses violence to you, ask them which forms of communication are least likely to be seen by an abusive partner.

### **2. Send Basic Necessities**

If your colleague needs food, transportation or supplies, ask them what they need and help out when you can. You could offer to drop off food or cleaning supplies, send takeout/grocery gift cards or money through cash apps, or provide them with care packages of books, toys, and other supplies for children. You can also share what you know about local resources, like food bank hours or transportation programs.

### **3. Identify and provide a referral to a local program or community group**

If you are connected to a neighborhood, faith, or other community group, you can offer to connect them or ask for support from these groups on their behalf. When suggesting that a colleague might consider contacting a program or community group, take steps to protect their confidentiality and to avoid detection by their abusive intimate partner. One strategy is to share a resource list that integrates resources focused on helping survivors of intimate partner violence as part of a general list of resources available to all workers navigating the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **4. Offer to be a lifeline**

Establish a safety word or phrase that a survivor can send by text to inform you they need immediate help or intervention, or that ask about their safety needs. This allows for urgent communication without tipping off an abusive partner who may be monitoring text messages or emails. For example, to inquire about a survivor's safety, you can text: "Are you missing french fries as much as I am right now?"

If the survivor needs help or intervention, they could text back: "Yes, I do", meaning: "call 911"  
If all is well, the survivor could text: "Not me, I'm good."

## **5. Take care of yourself**

You deserve support, too. Worrying about someone you care about who is experiencing violence can take a toll on your emotional and physical health, especially when there are so many stressful events occurring right now. Domestic Violence hotlines are available to talk and provide guidance if you are concerned about a coworker, loved one or employee as well as the victim. Your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is also available 24/7 to provide resources and guidance if you find yourself supporting a co-worker or employee who is surviving violence in their home.