



# Recognizing and Responding to Stalking in the Federal Workplace



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## Agenda

• Welcome	<b>Mamie Shiels</b> , Office on Violence Against Women
• About Workplaces Respond • Learning Objectives	<b>Aaron Polkey</b> , Futures Without Violence
• What is stalking? • Impact of stalking on employees & the workplace	<b>Julia Holtemeyer</b> , Stalking, Prevention, Awareness, & Resource Center (SPARC)
• Workplace's Role • Supporting Co-workers	<b>Robin Runge</b> , Futures Without Violence <b>Aaron Polkey</b> , Futures Without Violence
• Q&A • Closing	






## About Workplaces Respond

### Workplaces Respond to Domestic and Sexual Violence: A National Resource Center

- Educates and builds collaborations among workplace and non-workplace stakeholders – employers, worker associations, unions, and anti-violence advocates – to prevent and respond to domestic violence, sexual harassment & violence, and stalking impacting the workplace.
- Public-private partnership led by **Futures Without Violence** and funded by the U.S. Department of Justice, **Office on Violence Against Women**.



[www.workplacesrespond.org](http://www.workplacesrespond.org)

## Learning Objectives



As a result of this webinar, participants will better be able to:

- Define stalking and how it may occur independently from or concurrently with domestic violence, sexual violence, and sexual harassment;
- Describe interventions to prevent and respond to stalking in the workplace; and
- Provide survivor-centered, trauma-informed support to a co-worker experiencing stalking.

## Poll: How many trainings specifically on stalking have you attended?

- 6 plus
- 3-5
- 1-2
- None







## STALKING DEFINITION: BEHAVIORAL

Stalking is a pattern of behavior directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to feel fear for the person's safety or the safety of others; or suffer substantial emotional distress.



**CONTEXT IS CRITICAL**  
in stalking cases.

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## SURVEILLANCE

- Follow
- Watch
- Wait
- Show up
- Tracking software
- Obtain information about victim
- Proxy stalking



## LIFE INVASION

- Unwanted contact at home, work, etc.
- Showing up
- Phone calls
- Property invasion
- Public humiliation
- Harass friends/family







## INTIMIDATION

- Threats
- Property damage
- Symbolic violence
- Forced confrontations
- Threaten or actually harm self
- Threats to victim about harming others



## INTERFERENCE THROUGH SABOTAGE OR ATTACK

- Financial and work sabotage
- Ruining reputation
- Custody interference
- Keep from leaving
- Road rage
- Attack family/friends/pets
- Physical/sexual attack

<h3>SURVEILLANCE</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow to/from workplace</li> <li>• Proxy stalking: asking coworkers for information</li> <li>• Show up at workplace</li> <li>• Tracking software on work devices</li> <li>• Monitoring workplace communications for info about the victim</li> </ul> 	<h3>LIFE INVASION</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unwanted contact while at work</li> <li>• Unwanted contact through work phone, mail, email</li> <li>• Harassing coworkers, customers, clients</li> <li>• Submitting customer complaints about employee</li> <li>• Sending gifts or packages to work</li> </ul> 
<h3>INTERFERENCE</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Damaging or stealing victim's property needed for work (keys, car, laptop, papers)</li> <li>• Spreading rumors to coworkers, customers, clients, industries</li> <li>• Physical attack at the workplace</li> <li>• Constant source of distraction</li> <li>• Making victim late for work or preventing them from going</li> </ul> 	<h3>INTIMIDATION</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Damage to work property</li> <li>• Threats to attack victim at workplace</li> <li>• Threats to harm coworkers, customers, workplace</li> <li>• Threats to coworkers, customers</li> <li>• Forced confrontation at work</li> <li>• Threats to get victim disciplined or fired</li> </ul> 

## Technology & In-Person Stalking



The majority of stalking victims experienced both in-person stalking and technology-facilitated stalking.

Manning, J., Byrnes, G., M., Brown, M.L., Kayser, A., & Clarke, A. (2020). Intersections of Stalking and Technology-Based Abuse: Emerging Definitions, Conceptualizations, and Measurement. Journal of Family Violence, 35(7), 692-704.







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### How do Victims Cope?

<p><b>Move INWARD</b></p>	<p><b>Move AWAY</b></p>	<p><b>Move TOWARDS</b></p>
<p><b>Move AGAINST</b></p>		<p><b>Move OUTWARD</b></p>

Spinning, B.H. & Cuyper, W. (2007) The State of the Art of Stalking: Taking Stock of the Emerging Literature. Aggression and Violent Behavior 12(3): 41-64.

*"If you've never been in a predator-type situation, it's better to know where they're at than not know. The reason I didn't block him was to help not being caught off-guard."*

**-Stalking Victim**

### Advise Disengagement

**Recommend no contact with the stalker**

- Explain intermittent reinforcement.

**BUT realize victims engage in behaviors to keep themselves safe.**

- Maintain contact, negotiation, minimizing threat
- Contact may be a safety strategy


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**Open-ended questions can include:**

- \* How has this experience made you feel?
- \* Can you tell me what this experience has been like for you?
- \* What have you done to protect yourself?
- \* What has changed in your life as a result of their behavior?
- \* What did you think was going to happen if you didn't make these changes in your life?

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What are one or two of the workplace's primary responsibilities in addressing stalking impacting workers and the workplace?

**FUTURES**  
WITHOUT VIOLENCE

**WORKPLACES RESPOND**  
TO DOMESTIC & SEXUAL VIOLENCE

**Before: Develop/Enhance Policies & Raise Awareness**

- General workplace violence policy
- Policy specific to domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking
- Year-Long Engagement
  - Working Groups
  - Quarterly Trainings/Discussions
  - Commemorative Month Events
    - Stalking Awareness Month (January)
    - Sexual Assault Awareness Month (April)
    - Domestic Violence Awareness Month (October)

**FUTURES**  
WITHOUT VIOLENCE

**WORKPLACES RESPOND**  
TO DOMESTIC & SEXUAL VIOLENCE

**Fact Pattern**

- Whenever you and your colleague happen to end your workday at the same time, you both tend to exit the building together through the employee entrance/exit.
- One day your colleague nervously insists to leave via another out-of-the way exit, and asks that you do not accompany them.

**FUTURES**  
WITHOUT VIOLENCE

**WORKPLACES RESPOND**  
TO DOMESTIC & SEXUAL VIOLENCE

**Fact Pattern**

- Your colleague’s reasons are personal and they have no safety concerns.

**FUTURES**  
WITHOUT VIOLENCE

**WORKPLACES RESPOND**  
TO DOMESTIC & SEXUAL VIOLENCE

**Fact Pattern**

- One evening when working late, your colleague asked a security officer to walk them to their vehicle.
- From that point forward, whenever your colleague exits alone the security officer asks them if they would like to be walked to their vehicle, regardless of whether it’s late.
- Sometimes your colleague says “yes” in order to not seem ungrateful. Your colleague regrets this, as the conversations are becoming increasingly personal.
- Now that your colleague has shifted to a hybrid schedule, the security officer messages them daily to ask whether they would like to be walked to their vehicle.

**FUTURES**  
WITHOUT VIOLENCE

**WORKPLACES RESPOND**  
TO DOMESTIC & SEXUAL VIOLENCE

**After: Be Supportive, Engage in Safety Planning & Extend Reasonable Accommodations**

**Key Supportive Gestures**

- Acknowledge Changes in Behavior
- Be Empathic and Supportive
- Connect to Resources

**FUTURES**  
WITHOUT VIOLENCE

**WORKPLACES RESPOND**  
TO DOMESTIC & SEXUAL VIOLENCE

**Why is it challenging for some victims of stalking to call what they’re experiencing “stalking?”**

**FUTURES**  
WITHOUT VIOLENCE

**WORKPLACES RESPOND**  
TO DOMESTIC & SEXUAL VIOLENCE

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**Basic Considerations**

- Trust victim instincts
- Safety planning should evolve
- Consider stalker’s next tactic
- Anticipate stalker reaction
- Balance safety and freedom









**Contact Information**

**Workplaces Respond: National Resource Center**

Website: [www.WorkplacesRespond.org](http://www.WorkplacesRespond.org)

Email: [workplacesrespond@futureswithoutviolence.org](mailto:workplacesrespond@futureswithoutviolence.org)

**Stalking Prevention, Awareness, & Resource Center**

Website: [www.StalkingAwareness.org](http://www.StalkingAwareness.org)

Email: [jholtemeyer@stalkingawareness.org](mailto:jholtemeyer@stalkingawareness.org)

