

# WORK WITHOUT FEAR

How improving access to employment laws  
prevents and addresses —

**Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault  
and Stalking in the Workplace**



An Advancing Safety Through Employment Rights Report — 2026



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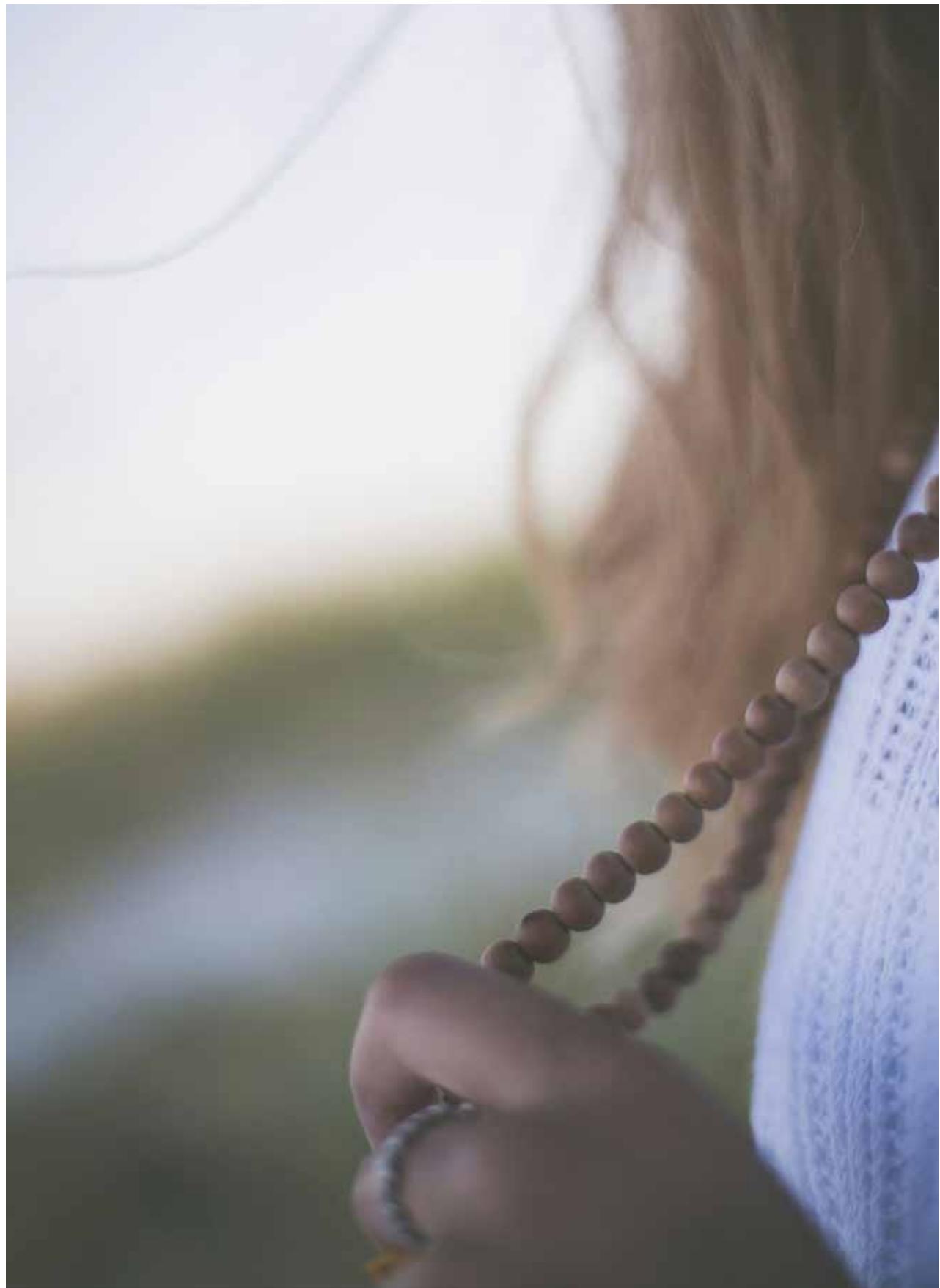
This resource is for informational purposes only. It is not legal advice. If you have questions about the laws in your state or territory, consult an attorney licensed in your jurisdiction.

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When I needed to get a protection order, I was struggling to figure out how to do that and not lose my job. If I had known that my job would be protected, it would have alleviated so much stress and allowed me to focus on protecting my children and finding safe housing. One of the reasons why I never got a protection order was that I did not know I could have job protected time off to do so.”

— A Survivor in Oregon,  
Where Paid Leave From Work Is Available



## Executive Summary

When it comes to the world of work, do employment protections exist for employees experiencing domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking? Does the law protect a survivor's ability to keep their job if they need time off to heal from injuries or get an order of protection? If a survivor must quit their job to relocate, can they do so without losing access to income?

**For most of our country's history, the answer to these questions has been "No."**

Now, due to decades of advocacy and resulting legislative change, the answer to these questions varies across the country. Many states and U.S. territories<sup>1</sup> have adopted employment laws that provide specific protections for employees who experience domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking. These laws exist to help survivors stay safe at work, take time off to seek help without losing their job, and access financial benefits if they have to leave work due to the violence they have experienced.

Where available, these laws have the potential to provide extensive protections for employees experiencing domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking. There is, however, almost no information about whether survivors are using these laws.

During 2022 and 2023, Workplaces Respond spoke with survivors, victim service organizations, advocates, lawyers, employer representatives, union members, and representatives of state enforcement agencies in five states: California, Illinois, New Mexico, New York, and Oregon.

All five states had specific employment protections for employees experiencing domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking. Through these conversations, Workplaces Respond sought to learn if these laws were achieving their intended goal of enabling survivors to obtain safety for themselves and their families without risking their financial security.

**Based on the available state law, at least 80% of the country's population is covered by one or more of these protections.<sup>2</sup>**

But, after nearly 100 meetings with national organizations, state coalitions, and survivor roundtables, Workplaces Respond learned that most organizations, advocates, and survivors do not know these laws exist.

### THIS REPORT



- Relays critical information about the employment challenges of survivors, gathered directly from survivors and those who support them.
- Contextualizes the available state laws that address the specific needs of employees experiencing domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking.
- Documents how these laws have been used to increase survivors' economic security and the gaps in current legal coverage.
- Recommends how service providers, advocates, employers, attorneys, unions, and state enforcement agencies can raise awareness about these state laws and collaborate effectively to increase the economic security and safety of survivors.

## A Note on Terminology

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Whenever a variety of state laws are discussed, having clearly defined terms is a challenge. The legal definition of a phrase like “domestic violence” or “sexual assault” may be different depending on the state or territory. Additionally, the laws discussed in this report were enacted at different times. As our understanding — of work, abusive behavior and what it means to be a survivor — has changed, so too has the language used to describe these terms.

**This report uses the following terms:**

### **Domestic Violence**

Domestic violence has been defined by the Office on Violence Against Women as a pattern of abusive behavior in any relationship that is used by one partner to gain or maintain power and control over another intimate partner.<sup>3</sup> This violence can be physical, sexual, emotional, economic, psychological, or technological actions or threats of actions. It can be other patterns of coercive behavior that influence another person within an intimate partner relationship. This coercive behavior includes behaviors that intimidate, manipulate, humiliate, isolate, frighten, terrorize, coerce, threaten, blame, hurt, injure, or wound someone.

The phrase “domestic violence” in this report includes violence that occurs within dating relationships. Across the country, different states identify this pattern of abusive behavior in a variety of ways, including “family violence”<sup>4</sup> or “domestic abuse.”<sup>5</sup> Certain states use broader terms that encompass this abusive behavior, such as “gender violence.”<sup>6</sup>

## **Economic Abuse**

Economic Abuse is the controlling or restraining a person’s ability to acquire, use, or maintain economic resources to which they are entitled.<sup>7</sup>

## **Sexual Assault**

Sexual assault means any non-consensual act proscribed by federal, tribal, or state law, including sexual acts with a victim who lacks the capacity to consent, as it has been defined by the Office on Violence Against Women.<sup>8</sup> The phrase “sexual abuse” also appears in this report. Sexual abuse encompasses a broader range of behavior, including acts where consent cannot be meaningfully given, such as in instances of coercion, manipulation, and exposure.

## **Stalking**

Stalking means engaging in a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to fear for their safety or the safety of others or suffer substantial emotional distress.<sup>9</sup> Stalking can take the form of surveillance, life invasion, intimidation, or interference.<sup>10</sup>

## **Survivor and Victim**

Survivor and victim are used interchangeably to acknowledge both the importance of empowering survivors and to reflect the state laws referenced provide protections to employees surviving domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking based on their legal status as a victim of the crimes articulated and defined by the Violence Against Women Act.<sup>11</sup>

## World of Work

The World of Work consists of any location in which employees, paid and unpaid interns, contractors, volunteers, board members, consultants, and temporary workers perform their job duties. This includes public and private spaces where they are places of work; in places where the worker is paid, takes a rest or meal break, or uses sanitary, washing, and changing facilities. The World of Work includes work-related trips, travel, training, events or social activities. It encompasses work-related communications, including those enabled by employer-provided information and communication technologies, and when someone is commuting to and from work.<sup>12</sup>

### Citations

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<sup>1</sup> A number of counties and cities, including Santa Monica, Seattle, and Philadelphia, have also adopted laws providing protections for survivors, but those laws are beyond the scope of this report. For an example of these local protections, see *Understanding Your Rights as an Employee and Survivor of Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, Human Trafficking, or Stalking in NYC*, Legal Momentum (2024).

<sup>2</sup> Calculations done by the author and available upon request.

<sup>3</sup> "What is Domestic Violence," Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice (2025).

<sup>4</sup> IN Code § 31-9-2-42 (2024).

<sup>5</sup> Minn. Stat. Sec. 268.095 (2022).

<sup>6</sup> 820 ILCS 180/1 (2022).

<sup>7</sup> In 2022, the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) was reauthorized and expanded to include economic abuse as a form of abusive behavior. 34 U.S. Code § 12291(a)(13)(2023).

<sup>8</sup> "What is Sexual Assault," Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice (2025).

<sup>9</sup> "What is Stalking," Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice (2023).

<sup>10</sup> "Identifying Stalking Behaviors," Stalking Awareness and Prevention Center (2025).  
<https://www.stalkingawareness.org/stalking-behaviors/>

<sup>11</sup> See 34 U.S. Code § 12291.

<sup>12</sup> C190 – Violence and Harassment Convention, 2019, International Labour Organization (2019).

# Targeted Employment Protections For Survivors of Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, and Stalking are Necessary

In the U.S., approximately 1 in 2 (59 million) women and 1 in 4 (31 million) men have experienced contact sexual violence, physical violence, or stalking by an intimate partner during their lifetime.<sup>13</sup>

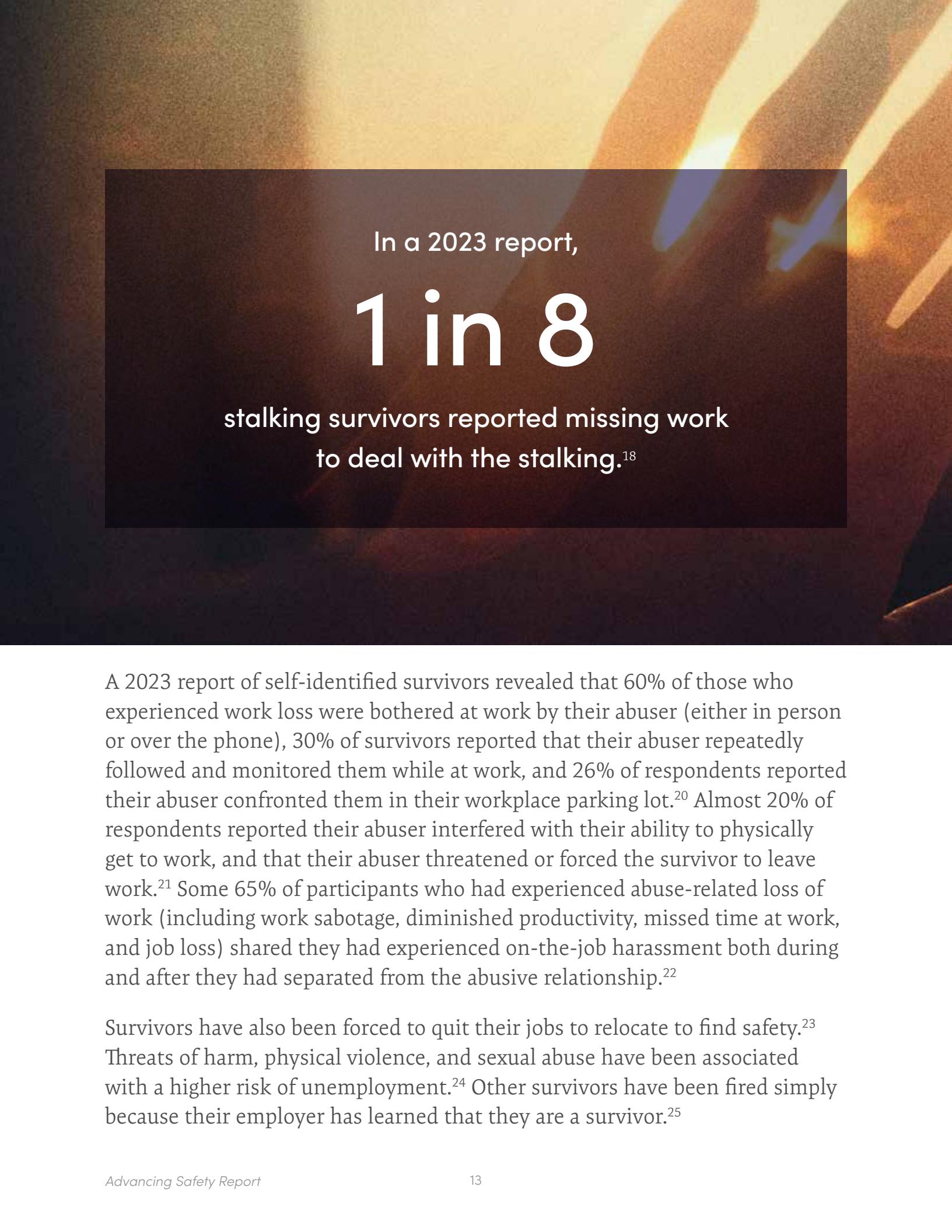
## No community is free of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

These forms of violence are experienced in some form by:<sup>14</sup>

Multi-racial	American Indian & Alaska Native	African American
<b>63.8% 51.5%</b> women men	<b>57.7% 51.5%</b> women men	<b>57.7% 57.6%</b> women men
<b>White</b>	<b>Hispanic</b>	<b>Asian or Pacific Islander</b>
<b>53.6% 44%</b> women men	<b>48.4% 40.3%</b> women men	<b>27.2% 24.8%</b> women men

A lack of economic security is a primary barrier survivors face when leaving abusive relationships and maintaining safety for themselves and their children.<sup>15</sup> A 2018 survey found nearly 3 in 4 respondents (74%) remained in abusive relationships due to financial insecurity.<sup>16</sup> A core method for supporting a survivor's financial independence is stable employment. But, survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking face many challenges maintaining stable employment because of the disruptive nature of the violence they are experiencing.

Survivors report *being fired* for missing work to heal from injuries or address abuse.<sup>17</sup> In a 2023 report, 1 in 8 stalking survivors reported missing work to deal with the stalking.<sup>18</sup> Often, abusive partners target a survivor's workplace through employment sabotage. In a survey of workers across 32 different companies, 41% of victims reported significant workplace consequences over the course of their professional life, including missed days of work, tardiness and perpetrator intrusion.<sup>19</sup>



In a 2023 report,  
**1 in 8**  
stalking survivors reported missing work  
to deal with the stalking.<sup>18</sup>

A 2023 report of self-identified survivors revealed that 60% of those who experienced work loss were bothered at work by their abuser (either in person or over the phone), 30% of survivors reported that their abuser repeatedly followed and monitored them while at work, and 26% of respondents reported their abuser confronted them in their workplace parking lot.<sup>20</sup> Almost 20% of respondents reported their abuser interfered with their ability to physically get to work, and that their abuser threatened or forced the survivor to leave work.<sup>21</sup> Some 65% of participants who had experienced abuse-related loss of work (including work sabotage, diminished productivity, missed time at work, and job loss) shared they had experienced on-the-job harassment both during and after they had separated from the abusive relationship.<sup>22</sup>

Survivors have also been forced to quit their jobs to relocate to find safety.<sup>23</sup> Threats of harm, physical violence, and sexual abuse have been associated with a higher risk of unemployment.<sup>24</sup> Other survivors have been fired simply because their employer has learned that they are a survivor.<sup>25</sup>

When leaving an abusive relationship can mean losing access to housing and income for survivors and their children, survivor-specific employment laws can be a safeguard against a cascading set of financial challenges.

In a review of data from mothers who had experienced domestic violence between 2007-2017, the existence of state-level protections correlated with the likelihood that a survivor had worked in the last week by 43%.<sup>26</sup>

**41%**

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of victims reported significant workplace consequences, including missed days of work, tardiness and perpetrator intrusion.

**30%**

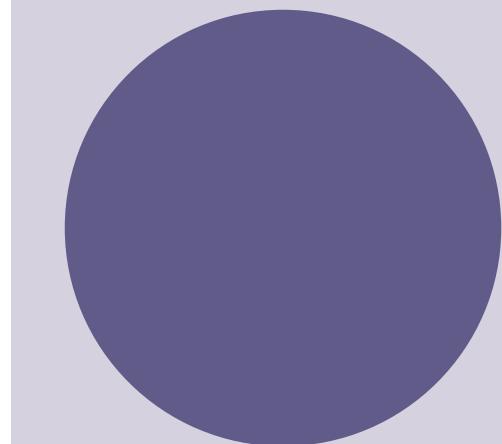
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of survivors reported that their abuser repeatedly followed and monitored them while at work.

**60%**

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survivors revealed of those who experienced work loss were bothered at work by their abuser (either in person or over the phone).



## Citations

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<sup>13</sup> Leemis R.W., Friar N., Khatiwada S., Chen M.S., Kresnow M., Smith S.G., Caslin, S., & Basile, K.C. (2022). *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2016/2017 Report on Intimate Partner Violence*. Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. [https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/nisvs/NISVSReportonIPV\\_2022.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/nisvs/NISVSReportonIPV_2022.pdf).

<sup>14</sup> The statistics related to women's experience of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and harassment are from *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2016/2017 Report on Intimate Partner Violence*, Leemis R.W., Friar N., Khatiwada S., Chen M.S., Kresnow M., Smith S.G., Caslin, S., & Basile, K.C. , National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2022). The statistics related to men's experience of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and harassment are from *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2016/2017 Report on Sexual Identity*, Leemis R.W., Friar N., Khatiwada S., Chen M.S., Kresnow M., Smith S.G., Caslin, S., & Basile, K.C., National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2022).

<sup>15</sup> *Dreams Deferred: A Survey on the Impact of Intimate Partner Violence on Survivors' Education, Careers, and Economic Security*, Hess, C., Del Rosario, A. Institute for Women's Policy Research, 2018.

<sup>16</sup> "Prevalence and Consequences of Intimate Partner Violence Intrusion in the Workplace", Blodgett, C., & Lanigan, J. *The Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma*, 27\*(1), 15–34 (2018).

<sup>17</sup> *The Legal Response to the Employment Needs of Domestic Violence Victims*, Robin R. Runge, 37-SUM Hum. Rts. 13 (2010).

<sup>18</sup> \*Id.\*

<sup>19</sup> *Prevalence and Consequences of Intimate Partner Violence Intrusion in the Workplace*, Blodgett, C., & Lanigan, J. *The Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma*, 27\*(1), 15–34 (2018).

<sup>20</sup> *Work Harassment and Resource Loss Among (Ex)partner Stalking Victims*, Logan, T., & Showalter, K. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 38(1-2), 1060–1087 (2022)

<sup>21</sup> \*Id.\*

<sup>22</sup> \*Id.\*

<sup>23</sup> *Domestic Violence and the Workplace: The Explosion of State Legislation and the Need for a Comprehensive Strategy*, Widiss, D., 35 Fla. St. U. L. Rev. 669 (2008).

<sup>24</sup> *Economic Abuse Within Intimate Partner Violence: A Review of the Literature*, Stylianou, A. M. *Violence and Victims*, 33(1), 3–22 (2018).

<sup>25</sup> These examples were shared by Robin Runge and are drawn from her decades of an experience as an attorney representing survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking. Robin is a core collaborator on this report with Workplaces Respond.

<sup>26</sup> *The Impact of State Workplace Protections on Socioeconomic Outcomes of IPV Survivors*, Marçal, K. E., Showalter, K., & Maguire-Jack, K. J. *Fam. Viol.* 39, 1135–1143 (2024).

# Specific State Employment Laws Exist To Protect Employees Experiencing Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault and Stalking

All employees, including those who experience domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking, have access to local, state, and federal employment protections. These protections include laws addressing workplace discrimination and harassment, family medical leave, workplace safety, wage and hour protections, immigration, and crime victim rights. Beginning in the 1990s, advocates for survivors and workers have worked together to pass state laws that explicitly address the challenges survivors face in maintaining stable employment.<sup>27</sup>

These state employment laws protect employees based on their status as victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking. All information about the survivor-specific state employment protections available to employees in each state is current as of the date of this report.

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## States With Laws Prohibiting Employers from Discriminating Against an Employee Based on Their Survivor Status

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Attorneys who represent survivors in employment matters report survivors losing their job after their employer learns about their status as a survivor. One survivor's employer told her, "I am really sorry you are going through this ... I don't want you to have to stay working here while you are dealing with this." On another occasion, an employee disclosed she was a survivor of domestic violence and her boss said he could no longer rely on her judgment since she should know better than to stay with her perpetrator.<sup>28</sup>

Anti-discrimination employment laws protect employees experiencing domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking from being fired, treated differently, or punished by their employers when this adverse employment actions are based on their status as a survivor. Crucially, survivors looking to access this employment protection must prove their employer knew the employee was a survivor whose experience of victimization was protected by their state law.

As of the date of this report, eight states and territories prohibit employment discrimination based on an employee's status as a survivor of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking. These states and territories are: California,<sup>29</sup> Delaware,<sup>30</sup> District of Columbia,<sup>31</sup> Illinois,<sup>32</sup> New Hampshire,<sup>33</sup> Oregon,<sup>34</sup> Puerto Rico,<sup>35</sup> and Washington.<sup>36</sup>

Connecticut<sup>37</sup> and Hawaii<sup>38</sup> prohibit a covered employer from discriminating against an employee based on their status as a survivor of domestic violence or sexual assault, but do not explicitly extend this protection to survivors of stalking.

In Nevada, it is unlawful for an employer to terminate, discipline, withhold promotions, or otherwise discriminate against an employee for reasons related to domestic violence or sexual assault.<sup>39</sup>

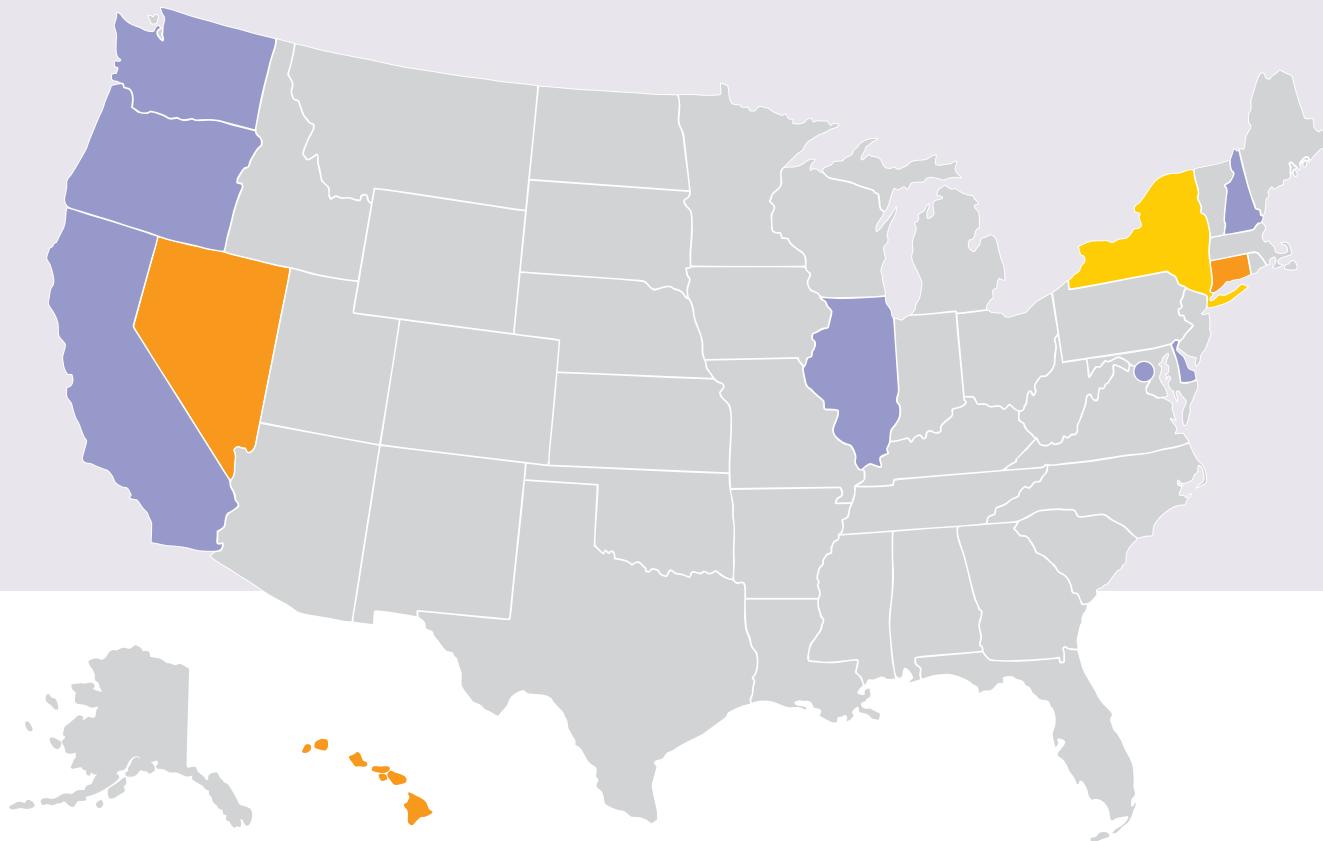
New York<sup>40</sup> state prohibits a covered employer from discriminating against an employee based on their status as a survivor of domestic violence.

In Vermont, employers are prohibited from discriminating against an employee because they are a victim of crime, which is defined to include obtaining a civil protection order due to domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking.<sup>41</sup>

Other states have limited anti-discrimination employment protections for employees that prohibit a covered employer from discriminating against an employee who takes time off work for legal, medical, or safety needs related to domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking.



## States with Survivor Specific Employment Discrimination Laws



Guam



Northern Mariana Islands



American Samoa



United States Virgin Islands



Puerto Rico



States prohibiting employment discrimination based on an employee's status as a survivor of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking



States prohibiting employment discrimination based on an employee's status as a survivor of domestic violence or sexual assault



States prohibiting employment discrimination based on an employee's status as a survivor of domestic violence



## States with Survivor-Specific Workplace Accommodation Laws

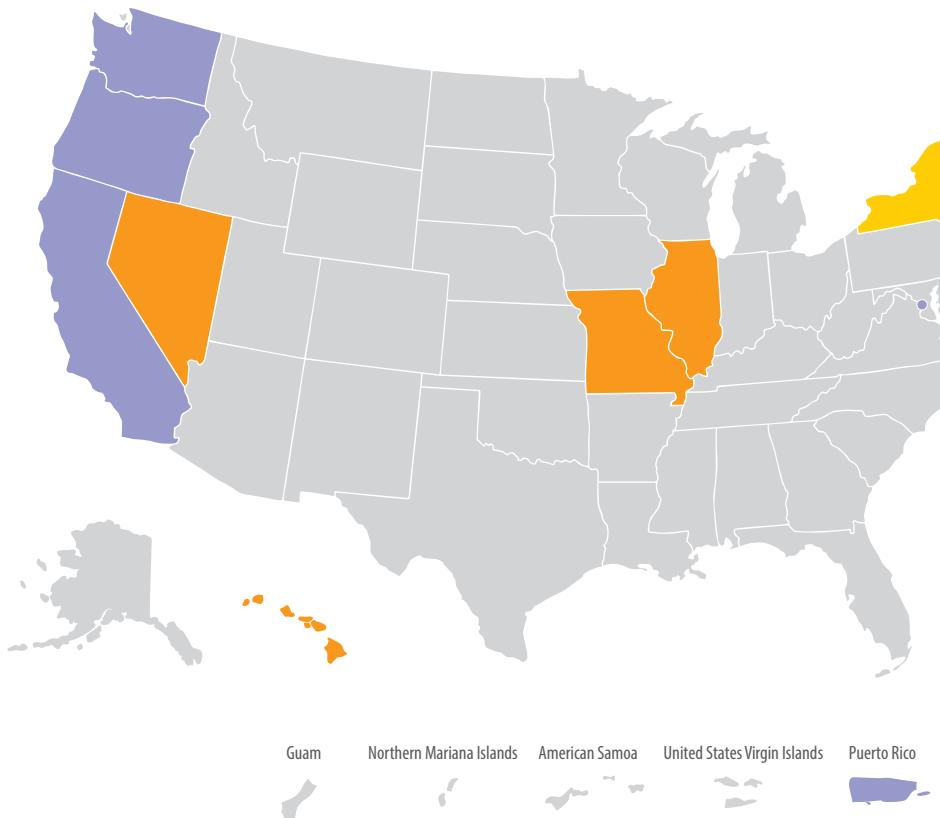
Survivors often need to request changes to their work schedule to address childcare needs, meet with professionals, or appear at legal proceedings. They may need certain modifications made to a physical workplace to stay safe from an abuser. Survivors need to be able to request these accommodations<sup>42</sup> without fear of their employer firing them or punishing them for making the request.

At the time of this report, six states and territories require a covered employer to provide employees experiencing domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking workplace accommodations. These states are California,<sup>43</sup> Delaware,<sup>44</sup> District of Columbia,<sup>45</sup> Oregon,<sup>46</sup> Puerto Rico,<sup>47</sup> and Washington.<sup>48</sup>

Hawaii,<sup>49</sup> Illinois (which also covers survivors of gender violence),<sup>50</sup> Missouri,<sup>51</sup> and Nevada<sup>52</sup> require covered employers to provide survivor-specific accommodations to employees surviving domestic violence and sexual assault but do not explicitly extend this protection to employees experiencing stalking.

New York state requires covered employers to provide reasonable time off as an accommodation to employees experiencing domestic violence.<sup>53</sup>





**State law requires covered employers provide survivor-specific workplace accommodations to domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking survivors**



**State law requires covered employers provide survivor-specific workplace accommodations to domestic violence and sexual assault survivors**



**State law requires covered employers to provide reasonable time off as an accommodation to employees experiencing domestic violence**



## States with Safe Leave Laws Related To Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault, or Stalking

Survivors may need time off work to go to court, to heal from injuries, or attend counseling. They may need to relocate or enroll their children in a new school or childcare program. Each step to safety typically involves accessing systems and services only available during traditional work hours. Survivors therefore need access to job-protected time off work. Many states and territories have enacted laws that address this need.

In three states - Illinois,<sup>54</sup> Maine,<sup>55</sup> and Nevada<sup>56</sup> - employees accrue paid time off that can be used for any purpose, including leave to stay safe or obtain services related to domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking. In these states, a survivor does not need to disclose they are a survivor or are using this time off to address the impacts of their victimization when they take this general time off.

Thirteen states require most private employers provide their employees with some amount of paid time off to address the impacts of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking. These states are Alaska,<sup>57</sup> Arizona,<sup>58</sup> California,<sup>59</sup> District of Columbia, Maryland, Minnesota, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York,<sup>60</sup> Oregon,<sup>61</sup> Rhode Island,<sup>62</sup> Vermont,<sup>63</sup> and Washington.<sup>64</sup>

Three states - Colorado,<sup>70</sup> Connecticut,<sup>71</sup> and Michigan<sup>72</sup> - require most private employers to provide paid leave for employees experiencing domestic violence and sexual assault, but do not explicitly extend this protection to employees experiencing stalking.

Massachusetts<sup>73</sup> requires most private employers in their states to provide paid leave for employees experiencing domestic violence.

Three states and territories have laws that require covered employers to provide employees unpaid time off to address the employee's experience of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking. Those states and territories are Delaware,<sup>74</sup> Guam,<sup>75</sup> and Puerto Rico.<sup>76</sup>

Five states and territories have laws requiring covered employers to provide unpaid time off to employees experiencing domestic violence or sexual assault but not stalking. These states are Florida,<sup>77</sup> Hawaii,<sup>78</sup> Kansas,<sup>79</sup> Missouri,<sup>80</sup> and the U.S. Virgin Islands.<sup>81</sup>

In North Carolina, employees seeking a protective order due to domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking are entitled to unpaid time off work to get this order.

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 **Laws Stating Otherwise Eligible Survivors of  
Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault or Stalking  
Can Get Unemployment Insurance Benefits**

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If a survivor must leave their job, they need access to the same financial support other unemployed workers have when they become unemployed through no fault of their own. Unemployment insurance benefits are a weekly monetary benefit that a worker who has been separated from their job (whether they quit or were fired) can apply for through a state agency.

State laws determine if a worker has a qualifying reason for being unemployed. Most state unemployment insurance laws explicitly recognize that an employee who has separated from work because of domestic violence has lost their job through no fault of their own. Some states extend this eligibility to workers whose job separation is due to sexual assault or stalking.

Six states clarify that otherwise eligible workers who must leave their work due to domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking can receive unemployment insurance benefits. These states are Minnesota,<sup>83</sup> Montana,<sup>84</sup> North Carolina,<sup>85</sup> North Dakota,<sup>86</sup> Oregon,<sup>87</sup> and Texas.<sup>88</sup>

Washington clarifies that otherwise eligible workers who must leave work due to domestic violence or stalking, but not sexual assault, can receive unemployment insurance benefits.<sup>89</sup>

Four states clarify that otherwise eligible employees who must leave their work due to domestic violence or sexual assault, but not stalking, can receive unemployment insurance benefits. These states are Connecticut,<sup>90</sup> Hawaii,<sup>91</sup> Nevada,<sup>92</sup> and Vermont.<sup>93</sup>

Thirty-two states clarify that otherwise eligible survivors who must leave work due to domestic violence can receive unemployment insurance benefits. These states are: Alaska,<sup>94</sup> Arizona,<sup>95</sup> Arkansas,<sup>96</sup> California,<sup>97</sup> Colorado,<sup>98</sup> Delaware,<sup>99</sup> District of Columbia,<sup>100</sup> Florida,<sup>101</sup> Georgia,<sup>102</sup> Idaho,<sup>103</sup> Illinois,<sup>104</sup>

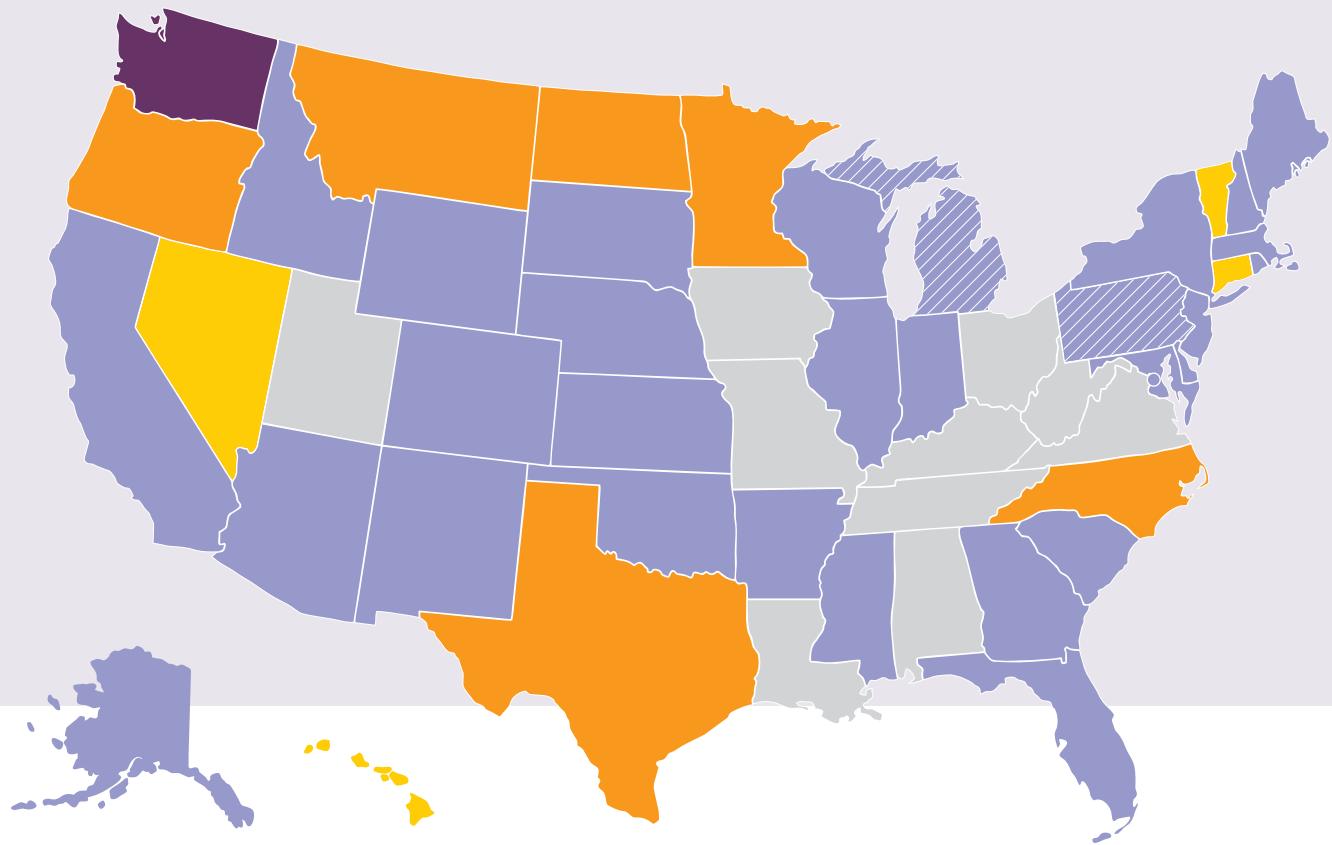
Indiana,<sup>105</sup> Kansas,<sup>106</sup> Maine,<sup>107</sup> Maryland,<sup>108</sup> Massachusetts,<sup>109</sup> Mississippi,<sup>110</sup> Nebraska,<sup>111</sup> New Hampshire,<sup>112</sup> New Jersey,<sup>113</sup> New Mexico,<sup>114</sup> New York,<sup>115</sup> Oklahoma,<sup>116</sup> Puerto Rico,<sup>117</sup> Rhode Island,<sup>118</sup> South Carolina,<sup>119</sup> South Dakota,<sup>120</sup> Virgin Islands,<sup>121</sup> Wisconsin,<sup>122</sup> and Wyoming.<sup>123</sup>

In 2026, Michigan and Pennsylvania's laws will be updated to say otherwise eligible workers who must leave their job due to domestic violence can receive unemployment insurance benefits.<sup>124</sup>

All five states where Workplaces Respond held interest holder conversations offered unemployment insurance to workers whose job separation was due to domestic violence. New Mexico's unemployment statute covers survivors of both domestic violence and harassment, while Oregon's unemployment insurance statute allows survivors of domestic violence, stalking, and sexual assault to apply for unemployment insurance.



**SURVIVORS WHO MUST LEAVE THEIR JOB TO FIND  
SAFETY DESERVE THE SAME FINANCIAL SUPPORT AS  
ANY WORKER WHO BECOMES UNEMPLOYED THROUGH  
NO FAULT OF THEIR OWN.**



Guam



**State law requires clarifies survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking are eligible to benefits**

## Northern Mariana Islands



**State law clarifies survivors of domestic violence who must separate from work are eligible for benefits**

moa      United States Virgin Islands



**State law will soon clarify that survivors of domestic violence who must separate from work are eligible for benefits**

**State law clarifies survivors of domestic violence who must separate from work are eligible for benefits**



## State law clarifies survivors of domestic violence and stalking are eligible to benefits

## State law clarifies survivors of domestic violence and stalking are eligible to benefits





## Citations

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<sup>27</sup> *Domestic Violence and the Workplace: The Explosion of State Legislation and the Need for a Comprehensive Strategy*, Widiss, D., 35 Fla. St. U. L. Rev. 669 (2008).

<sup>28</sup> These examples were shared by Robin Runge. See footnote 25 *supra*.

<sup>29</sup> Cal. Lab. Code § 230 (2019).

<sup>30</sup> Del. Code Ann. tit. 19, § 711(i) (2022).

<sup>31</sup> D.C. Code § 2-1402.11(c-1) (2023).

<sup>32</sup> 820 ILCS 180 (2024).

<sup>33</sup> N.H. Rev. Stat. § 275:71 (2021).

<sup>34</sup> Or. Rev. Stat. § 659A.290 (2013).

<sup>35</sup> 29 L.P.R.A. § 146 (2024).

<sup>36</sup> Wash. Rev. Code § 49.76.115 (2018).

<sup>37</sup> Conn. Gen. Stat. § 46a-60(b)(1) (2022).

<sup>38</sup> Haw. Rev. Stat. § 378-2 (2020).

<sup>39</sup> Nev. Rev. Stat. § 613.223 (2023).

<sup>40</sup> N. Y. Exec. Law § 296 (2019).

<sup>41</sup> 21 V.S.A. §495 (2023).

<sup>42</sup> The state laws requiring employers to provide "reasonable accommodations" to survivors of DVSAS are distinct from the reasonable accommodation process under the ADA. Employees with qualifying disabilities may also be experiencing DVSAS, so these employees may have access to reasonable accommodations based on their disability under state and federal laws including the Americans with Disabilities Act. 42 U.S.C. § 12111 et. seq. (2008)

<sup>43</sup> Cal. Gov. Code § 12945.8(e) (2025).

<sup>44</sup> Del. Code. Ann. tit. 19, §§ 710- 711(2022).

<sup>45</sup> D.C. Code § 2-1402.11(c-1) (2023).

<sup>46</sup> Or. Rev. Stat. § 659A.290(2)(c) (2013).

<sup>47</sup> 29 L.P.R.A. § 509 (2019).

<sup>48</sup> Wash. Rev. Code § 49.76.115 (2025).

<sup>49</sup> HI Rev Stat § 378-81 (2024).

<sup>50</sup> 820 ILCS 180 (2024).

<sup>51</sup> Mo. Rev. Stat. § 285.650 (2021).

<sup>52</sup> Nev. Rev. Stat. § 613.222 (2023).

<sup>53</sup> N.Y. Exec. Law 296(1)(a) (2019).

<sup>54</sup> 820 Ill. Comp. Stat. 192/1 - 192/99 (2024).

<sup>55</sup> 26 ME Rev. Stat § 637 (2019).

<sup>56</sup> NV Rev. Stat. § 608.0197 (2019).

<sup>57</sup> AS § 23.10.066 (2024).

<sup>58</sup> AZ Rev. Stat. § 23-373 (2022).

<sup>59</sup> CA Gov't Code § 12945.8 (2024).

<sup>60</sup> D.C. Code § 2-1402.11(c-1) (2023).

<sup>61</sup> MD LABOR & EMPLY § 3-1305 (2018).

<sup>62</sup> Minn. Stat. § 181.9447 (2023).

<sup>63</sup> NJS 34:11D-1 (2018).

<sup>64</sup> NM Stat. Ann. § 50-17-3 (2022).

<sup>65</sup> N.Y. Exec. Law § 196-b (2019).

<sup>66</sup> Or. Rev. Stat. § 659A.290 (2013).

<sup>67</sup> R.I. Gen. Laws § 28-57-6 (2017).

<sup>68</sup> 21 V.S.A. § 483 (2024).

<sup>69</sup> RCW 49.76.030 (2025).

<sup>70</sup> Colo. Rev. Stat. § 8-13.3-404 (2023).

<sup>71</sup> Conn. Gen. Stat. § 31-57t. (2025).

<sup>72</sup> MCL § 408.964 (2025).

<sup>73</sup> Mass. Gen. Laws ch. 149, § 148(c) (2015).

<sup>74</sup> 19 DE Code § 711 (i) (2024).

<sup>75</sup> 22 GCA Ch.3, Art. 4 § 3401 (2010).

<sup>76</sup> 29 L.P.R.A. § 509 (2019).

<sup>77</sup> Fla. Stat. § 741.313 (2023).

<sup>78</sup> Haw. Rev. Stat. § 378-2 (2023).

<sup>79</sup> KRS 44-1132 (2007).

<sup>80</sup> MSR 285.630 (2021).

<sup>81</sup> V.I. Code tit. 16, § 99c (2019).

<sup>82</sup> N.C.G.S. § 95-270 (2004).

<sup>83</sup> Minn. Stat. Sec. 268.095 (2022).

<sup>84</sup> Mont. Code Ann. § 39-51-2111 (2015).

<sup>85</sup> N.C.G.S. § 96-14.8 (2013).

<sup>86</sup> N.D. Cent. Code § 52-06-02 (2021).

<sup>87</sup> Or. Rev. Stat. § 657.176 (2021).

<sup>88</sup> Tax. Lab. Code Ann. § 207-046 (2021).

<sup>89</sup> Wash. Rev. Code § 50.20.050 (2023).

<sup>90</sup> Conn. Gen. Stat. § 31-236 (2024); Conn. Gen. Stat. § Sec. 17b-112a (2024).

<sup>91</sup> Haw. Rev. Stat. § 383-7.6 (2011).

<sup>92</sup> Nev. Rev. Stat. § 612.3755 (2017).

<sup>93</sup> 21 V.S.A. § 1253 (2017).

<sup>94</sup> 8 A.A.C. 85.095(c)(6) (2010).

<sup>95</sup> A.R.S. § 23-771 (2024).

<sup>96</sup> A.C.A. § 11-10-513 (2023).

<sup>97</sup> Cal. UIC Code § 1256 (2011).

<sup>98</sup> Colo. Rev. Stat. § 8-73-108 (2024).

<sup>99</sup> 19 DE Code 3314 (2020).

<sup>100</sup> D.C. Code 51-131(a) (2010).

<sup>101</sup> Fla. Stat. § 443.101 (2021).

<sup>102</sup> Ga. Comp. R. & Regs. 300-2-9.10 (2015).

<sup>103</sup> Idaho Code § 72-1366(5) (2024).

<sup>104</sup> 820 Ill. Comp. Stat. 405/601 (2015).

<sup>105</sup> Ind. Code § 22-4-15-1(1)(c)(8) (2017).

<sup>106</sup> Kan. Stat. Ann. § 44-706(a)(12) (2024).

<sup>107</sup> Me. Stat. tit. 26 § 1193(1)(A)(4) (2021).

<sup>108</sup> Md. Code Ann. Lab. and Emp. § 8-1001(3) (2013).

<sup>109</sup> Mass. Gen. Laws. ch. 151A § 25 (2018).

<sup>110</sup> 20 Miss. Code. R. § 101-300-309.01 (2017).

<sup>111</sup> Neb. Rev. Stat. § 48-628.13 (2021).

<sup>112</sup> N.H. Rev. Stat. Ann. § 282-A:32 (2020).

<sup>113</sup> N.J. Stat. Ann. § 43:21-5 (2023).

<sup>114</sup> N.M. Stat. Ann. § 51-1-7 (2023).

<sup>115</sup> N.Y. Lab. Code § 31-18-593 (2025).

<sup>116</sup> Okla. Stat. Tit. 40 § 2-210 (2023).

<sup>117</sup> PR Laws tit. 1, § 704 (2020).

<sup>118</sup> R.I. Gen. Laws § 28-44-17.1 (2023).

<sup>119</sup> S.C. Code Ann. § 41-35-125 (2023).

<sup>120</sup> S.D. Codified Laws § 61-6-9.1 (2017).

<sup>121</sup> V.I. Code tit. 24 § 304 (b)(12) (2019).

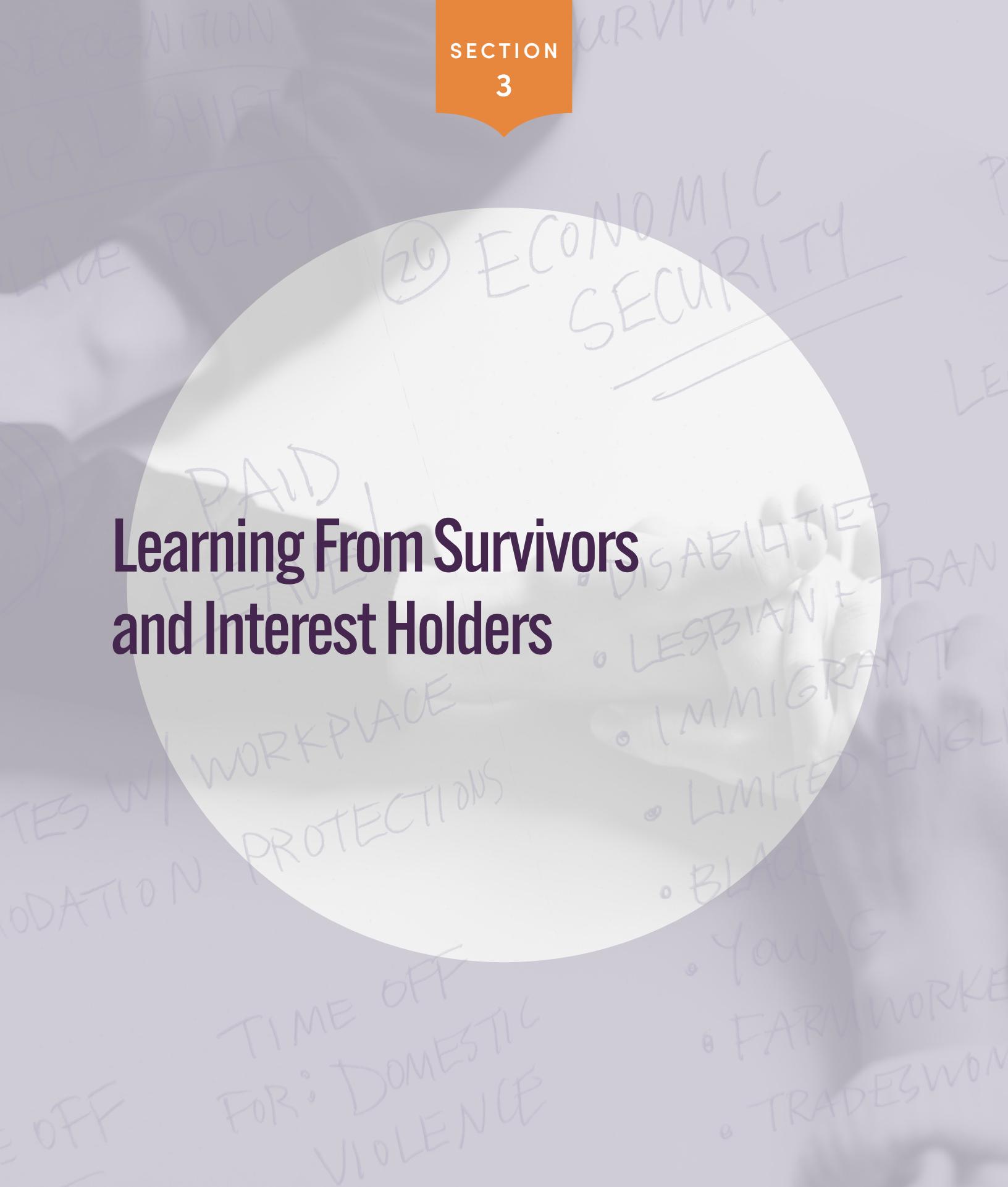
<sup>122</sup> Wyo. Stat. Ann. § 27-3-311 (2023).

<sup>123</sup> Wyo. Stat. Ann. § 27-3-311 (2023).

<sup>124</sup> MCL 421.29a (2025); 43 P.S. § 802.7 (2025).

# Learning From Survivors and Interest Holders

(26)

ECONOMIC  
SECURITY

There is almost no information about whether survivors are accessing these state employment protections, which are specifically tailored to address their unique needs. There is also no information about how effective these protections are for survivors who do attempt to use them.

Considering these informational gaps, Workplaces Respond held a series of conversations with interest holders and survivors in California, Illinois, New Mexico, New York, and Oregon over six months.

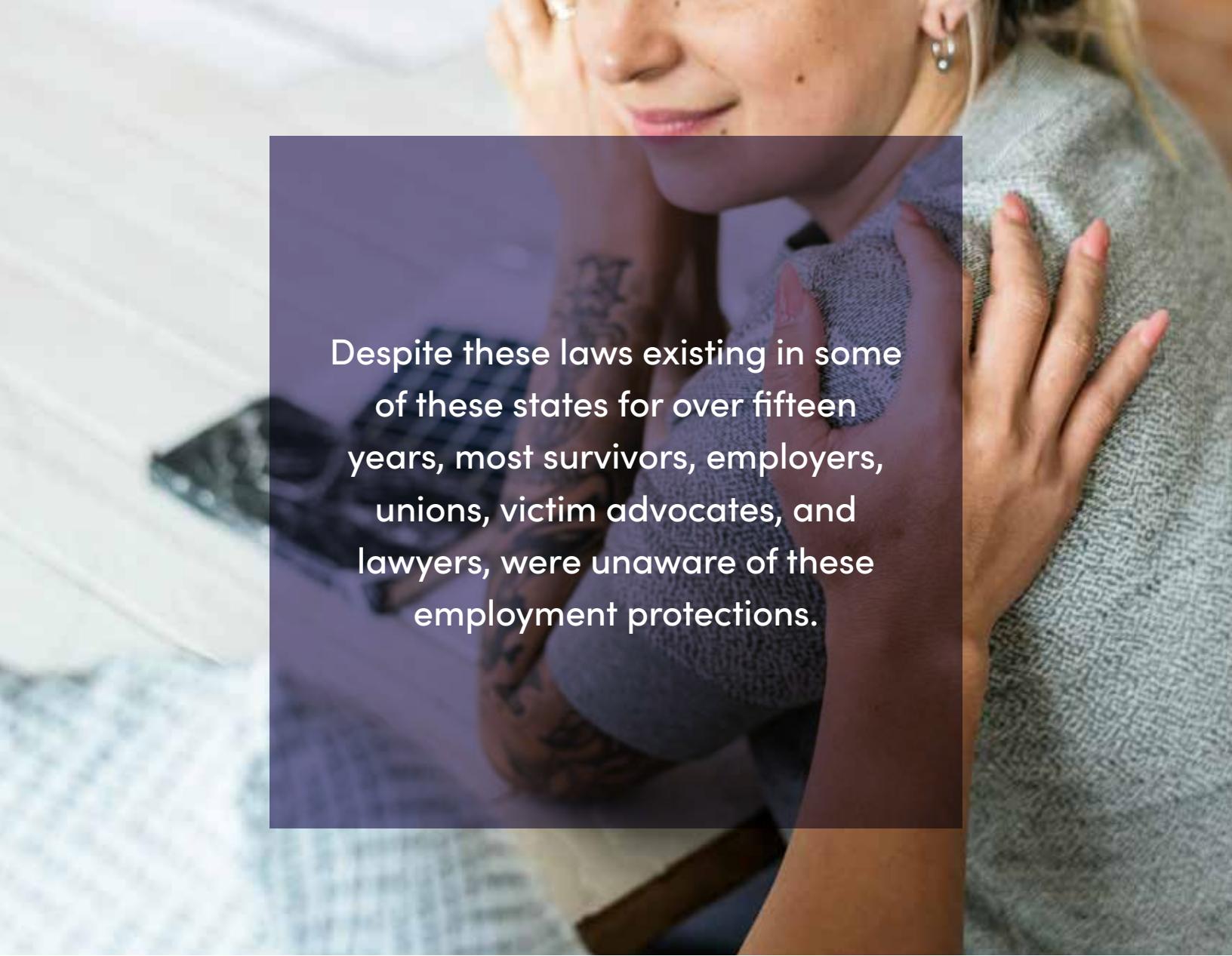
Conversations were held with victim advocates, state coalitions against domestic and sexual violence, culturally specific organizations that provide advocacy for victims, attorneys at legal services organizations providing free legal representation to victims, and private employment attorneys.

As part of these conversations, Workplaces Respond met with survivors with disabilities, lesbian and transgender survivors, immigrant survivors, survivors with limited English proficiency, Black survivors, young survivors, farmworkers, and tradeswomen.

Most of these conversations took place virtually in small groups, with a few taking place in person. During these conversations, Workplaces Respond described the protections contained in the laws and asked participants about their experience accessing these protections. After nearly 100 meetings with national organizations, state coalitions, and survivor roundtables, Workplaces Respond learned that most organizations, advocates, and survivors do not know these laws exist.



# Identified Gaps and Implementation Challenges



**Despite these laws existing in some of these states for over fifteen years, most survivors, employers, unions, victim advocates, and lawyers, were unaware of these employment protections.**

Several key themes emerged from these conversations. First, despite these laws existing in some of these states for over thirty years, most survivors, employers, unions, victim advocates, and lawyers, were unaware of these employment protections. Second, people welcomed information about these protections and often wanted support to integrate these employment protections into their work with survivors, in their workplaces, or in their union contracts.

Workplaces Respond also learned more about the specific challenges that advocates and employers faced in trying to use these employment protections.



## Lack of Awareness of Employment Protections

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Most survivors of domestic violence specifically shared that neither their employers nor union representatives proactively provided information about these laws. As a result, many survivors did not ask for, or were denied, leave from work when this leave was legally available.

**Survivors who lost their jobs because of their status as victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking did not know they could qualify for unemployment insurance benefits as they looked for new work.**

Some domestic violence survivors shared they were fired when their employer learned they were experiencing domestic violence. Direct service providers shared that they wished they would have known about these state protections so they could have advised their clients of their rights.

The lack of awareness about these laws and how to use them unnecessarily increases the stress, uncertainty, and financial precarity that a survivor experiences as they seek safety.

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## Gaps in Legal Coverage

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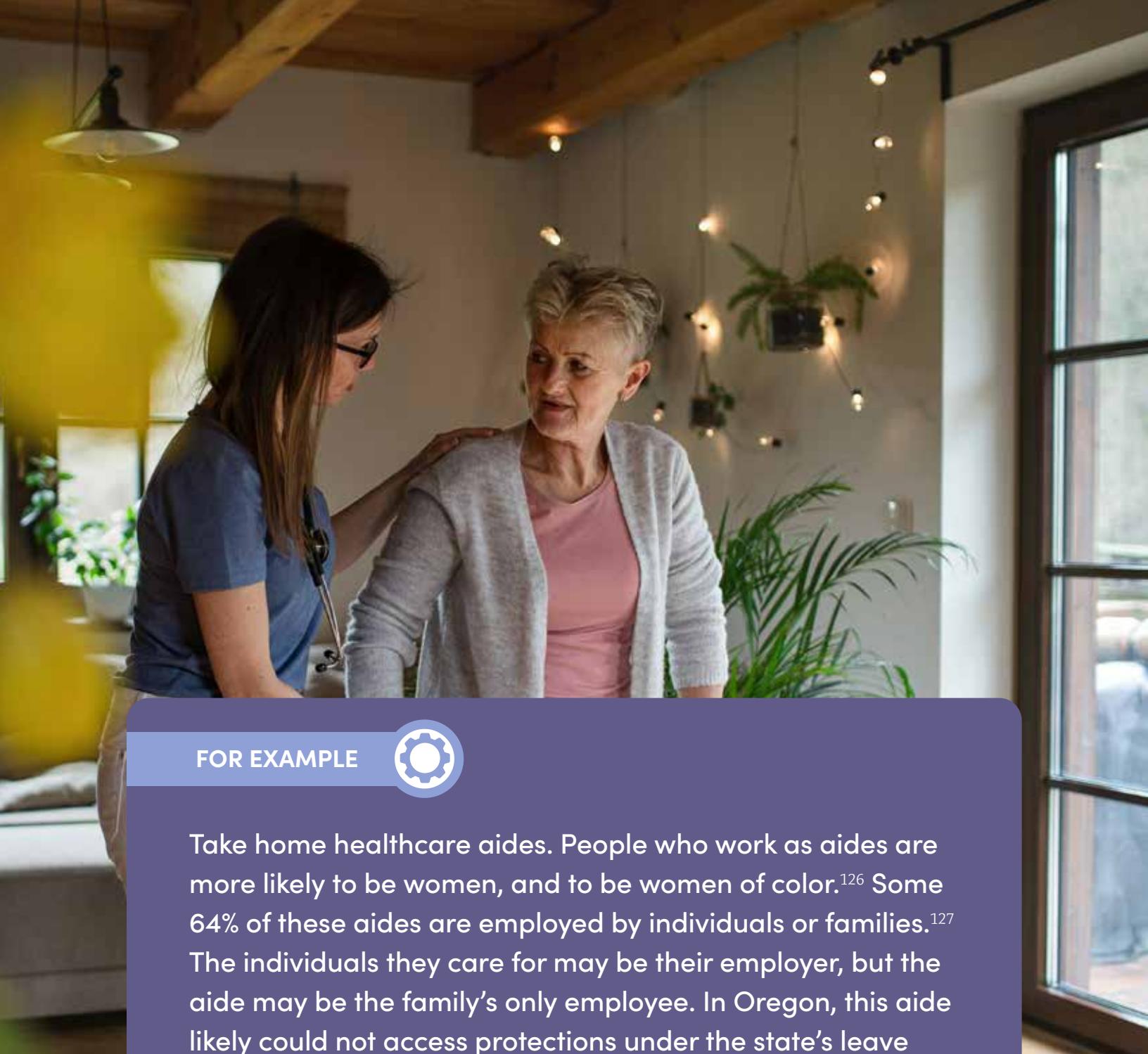
Direct service providers shared that many people they assisted, including Black survivors, transgender survivors, immigrant survivors, and/or survivors with disabilities were excluded from these laws' protections because they worked for small employers. This is important because the number of employees an employer has determines what laws they have to follow.

### FOR EXAMPLE



Oregon's state leave law, "Protections Because of Domestic Violence, Harassment, Sexual Assault, Bias or Stalking" defines a covered employer as an entity that "employs six or more individuals" and an "eligible employee" as "an employee who is a victim of domestic violence, harassment, sexual assault, bias, or stalking."<sup>125</sup> This means that someone working for an employer with less than six employees does not have access to these protections, even if they are a victim of one of the forms of sexual violence the law protects against.

When employment laws require an employer to have a certain number of employees before that employer can be held liable for violating the law, a gap in legal coverage is created. These gaps may disproportionately affect workers of color who are more likely to work for smaller employers.



**FOR EXAMPLE**



Take home healthcare aides. People who work as aides are more likely to be women, and to be women of color.<sup>126</sup> Some 64% of these aides are employed by individuals or families.<sup>127</sup> The individuals they care for may be their employer, but the aide may be the family's only employee. In Oregon, this aide likely could not access protections under the state's leave law because they are the employer's only employee. If this home healthcare aide worked in a state with a law that applies to employers with one or more employees, they would have this protection.

During Workplaces Respond's conversations, we learned that some workers who cleaned houses for a living, worked for a ride-hailing service, or delivered groceries were not considered employees, and therefore could not access these laws' protections.

Employment laws, by definition, apply to employers and employees. How an employee is defined in state law can create another gap in legal coverage. The focus on "employees" excludes other types of workers, such as independent contractors. Someone who works as an independent contractor (which can include janitorial staff, hair stylists, cleaners, and people who work for delivery services) may fall outside of the law's protections. Even though these workers are experiencing domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking, they cannot access these protections because they are not employees.

As a result, state laws intended to protect survivors by prohibiting employment discrimination against survivors or mandating survivor-specific workplace accommodations or leave from work exclude workers who need these protections but fall outside of a state's definition of an "employee."

#### *Citations*

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<sup>125</sup> ORS 659A.270 (2023).

<sup>126</sup> "Distribution of home care workers in the U.S. in 2023, by race and ethnicity," Statista (2025).

<sup>127</sup> "Home Health and Personal Care Aides," Occupational Outlook Handbook, Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor (2025).

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## Risking Disclosure

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As discussed, survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking may need to attend court proceedings, relocate, find childcare, and heal from injuries without fear of loss of pay or employment. These needs are best addressed by access to paid, job-guaranteed leave and anti-discrimination and retaliation protections.

Survivor specific employment laws require the employee disclose they are victims of these domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking. For some survivors and advocates, this disclosure requirement meant they would not access these protections because of concerns about confidentiality, workplace gossip, or being treated differently because of their status as a survivor.

Survivors expressed fear of being fired or retaliated against for trying to use these protections regardless of their legal rights. Immigrant survivors said they would not have exercised their employment protections under these laws, even if they had known about them.

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## The Need for Guidance and Training

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**Employer representatives shared that it is important for survivors to know they have these protections, including that they cannot be fired because they are survivors.**

Survivors, advocates, and employer representatives who were aware of the state protections shared they had limited information on how to access them. Many had questions, such as:

- Are employers obligated to provide information about these employment laws in their workplace policies?
- How does a survivor ask for leave from work?
- Can a survivor be fired from their job for asking for leave or filing a complaint about discrimination based on their status as a victim?
- What counts as evidence of employment discrimination based on being a survivor of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking?
- What kinds of accommodation are available to a survivor?
- How can a victim service provider or allied organization effectively help survivors access these rights?
- How can employers ensure survivors feel comfortable disclosing their need for these protections?
- Does a survivor need an attorney to advocate for their employment rights?

Finally, employer representatives identified that including information about these protections in onboarding materials for all employees would be helpful. Employer representatives also shared the need for ongoing education and training for supervisors on how best to support an employee who discloses their victimization.

**Survivors were concerned about confidentiality, becoming the target of workplace gossip, or having their co-workers and supervisors treat them differently because of their status as a survivor.**

# Examples of Effective State Implementation

- DISABILITIES
- LESBIAN + TRAN
- IMMIGRANT
- LIMITED
- BLACK
- YOUNG
- FARMWORKER
- TRADESWOMAN

“

We have integrated information about employment rights into our information packets for survivors. When we meet them in the hospital after an assault, we have sample letters we can use to ask for leave from work and we frequently hear from survivors that they are able to take the leave that they need to heal from injuries from the assault and it is extremely helpful for them not to worry about losing their jobs.”

— Maritza Carvajal,  
An Advocate for Survivors of Sexual Assault in Illinois

During Workplaces Respond's conversations, it became clear that very few victim advocates, lawyers, and employers knew about the employment laws described in this report. A small, but passionate and dedicated, group of survivors, advocates, and attorneys in these states had a deeper understanding of the available protections and had successfully used them.

Advocates were able to help survivors obtain the protection they needed. Employers more effectively supported their workers. Survivors reported obtaining leave from work, being reinstated to a job, or accessing unemployment insurance benefits.

**A survivor's success in accessing these protections increased when an attorney or advocate assisted them or when an employer proactively provided information to their employees about these laws.**

Innovative and effective efforts are being undertaken in California, Illinois, New Mexico, New York, and Oregon to help survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking access these employment rights. Uplifting their tools and collaborative approaches is critical to increase knowledge of, and meaningful access to, these state-level employment protections.

Legal Aid at Work in San Francisco, California provides free legal assistance to workers in California experiencing domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking. Along with a network of employment law clinics and litigation, Legal Aid at Work has developed resources and a toolkit to help survivors and their advocates access safe leave from work.<sup>128</sup>

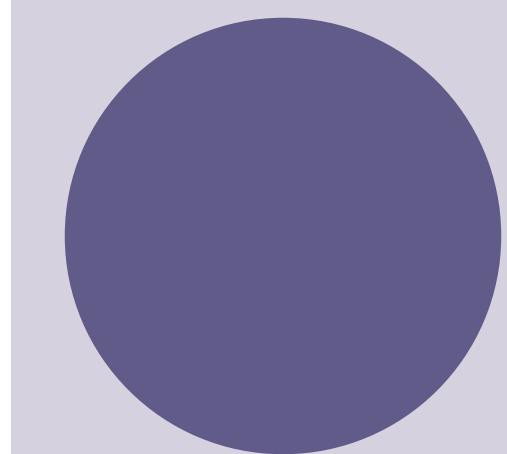
In New Mexico, the Southwest Women's Law Center provides crucial free legal assistance to survivors regarding employment issues, and have developed a pamphlet, "Your Right to Domestic Abuse Leave in New Mexico."<sup>129</sup> The Illinois

Coalition Against Sexual Assault and the Illinois ACLU have both developed helpful “know your rights” materials about the state employment law protections for survivors, which are available on their websites. These materials include a Victim Economic Security and Safety Act (“VESSA”) Manual for victim advocates.<sup>130</sup>

Service providers in Illinois have developed model letters survivors can use to remind employers of the survivor’s employment protections.<sup>131</sup> Several service provider agencies conduct “in-service” training for their staff on how to ask survivors about employment law needs.

For some of these states, the state agency charged with enforcing these laws have incorporated information about how survivors can use these laws into their publicly available materials. Specifically naming how survivors can benefit from these laws is key to raising awareness about these employment protections.

The Oregon Employment Department focuses on supporting workers and employers in accessing the state paid leave program. Oregon has developed a comprehensive website that lays out who is eligible for this leave, a basic overview of how paid leave can be accessed, and examples of why an employee may choose to take leave. This website is available in eight different languages.<sup>132</sup> Oregon’s paid family and medical leave law, and its paid sick days law,<sup>133</sup> have materials that specifically mention survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking.



In New York, the New York Crime Victims Unit, the New York State Division of Human Rights, and Department of Labor have developed online materials for survivors about their employment rights<sup>134</sup> and unemployment insurance.<sup>135</sup> The New York State Division of Human Rights also includes information on how to file a complaint with their agency if an employer does not comply with their legal obligation.



<sup>128</sup> "Sample Letter: Request for Paid Sick Leave," Legal Aid at Work (2024).

<sup>129</sup> "Your Rights to Domestic Abuse Leave in New Mexico," The Southwest Women's Law Center (2018).

<sup>130</sup> "Employment Rights," Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault (2024); Know Your Rights – Domestic, Sexual, & Gender Violence Survivors At Work, American Civil Liberties Union of Illinois (2019).

<sup>131</sup> "Request time off work due to domestic violence," Illinois Legal Aid Online (2025).

<sup>132</sup> Paid Leave Oregon, Oregon Employment Department (2025).

<sup>133</sup> "Domestic Violence Protections for Workers," Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries (2025).

<sup>134</sup> Employment Rights for Victims of Domestic Violence, New York State Division of Human Rights (2022).

<sup>135</sup> Employment Protections for Domestic Violence Victims, NY Crime Victims Legal Help (2025).

<sup>136</sup> Domestic Violence and UI Benefits Frequently Asked Questions, New York State, Department of Labor (2021); Unemployment Insurance and Domestic Violence, New York State, Department of Labor (2021).

# Recommendations

Based on the information and expertise shared by survivors and interest holders throughout these conversations, Workplaces Respond has the following recommendations so information about these employment protections is integrated into the ways different organizations already support and empower survivors.

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## State Coalitions and Local Victim Services Organizations

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-  Incorporate information about existing state employment protections for survivors into staff training so advocates can confidentially ask about the employment needs of their clients and identify opportunities for advocacy.
-  Partner with local legal service providers and community organizations to develop resources and materials about the employment protections that exist for survivors in their state.
  - These employment-law related resources and materials should be tailored for specific communities to reflect their specific needs and experiences and created in accessible formats and multiple languages.
-  When appropriate, partner with local unions, employers, and allied organizations to ensure there is a diverse community of interest holders available to support survivors in maintaining stable employment.
-  Engage with the state agencies that enforce these state laws and invite them to provide in-service training for the organization.



Provide training to state enforcement agencies on the needs of survivors and how to conduct trauma-informed interviews and investigations with survivors.

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## Legal Services Organization

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Collaborate with victim service organizations and state coalitions to deliver ongoing training for attorneys at your organization, regardless of their area of specialization so that attorneys can identify when these laws can be used to holistically serve survivors.



With victim service organizations and state coalitions, co-develop trauma-informed and survivor-centered trainings on these survivor-specific employment protections for allied organizations and state agencies that support survivors.



Deliver survivor-facing “Know Your Rights” trainings about these employment protections in collaboration with local victim service providers and community partners.



Partner with your state domestic violence and sexual assault coalitions to develop impactful short-term pro bono opportunities for private attorneys and law students. Examples of such pro bono opportunities may include:

- Drafting letters that service providers can submit to support a survivor’s application for unemployment insurance; or
- Drafting survivor-specific reasonable accommodation request letters that incorporate the workplace into a survivor’s pre-existing safety plan.



## Employment Law Attorneys and Local Bar Associations

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Provide continuing legal education on employment protections for survivors and on how attorneys can work with survivors in a trauma-informed way.



In collaboration with victim service organizations and state coalitions, create programming on how to best advocate on behalf of survivors in the workplace.

Partner with your local legal services organizations and state coalitions to develop impactful short-term pro bono opportunities for private attorneys of such pro bono opportunities may include:

- Drafting letters that service providers can submit to support a survivor's application for unemployment insurance; or
- Drafting survivor-specific reasonable accommodation request letters that incorporate the workplace into a survivor's pre-existing safety plan.

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## State Enforcement and Workforce Development Agencies

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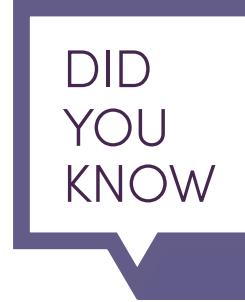


In collaboration with victim service organizations, legal aid organizations, and state coalitions, develop and provide ongoing training to staff who enforce these state laws. Trainings should include survivor-centered and trauma-informed practices for working with survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking.

- Collect data on the ongoing utilization of these legal protections and share it with survivor-serving organizations and researchers.
- Ensure state agency websites and materials include information about these protections. Make this information accessible in multiple languages and formats.
- Collaborate with victim service organizations and community organizations to ensure that those working directly with survivors know about these legal protections and can identify potential barriers to access.
- Update programs and materials targeting pre-apprenticeship programs and workforce development systems for youth, adults, and unions to inform survivors in these programs about the state-specific protections available to them.

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## Employers and Human Resource Professionals



### DID YOU KNOW

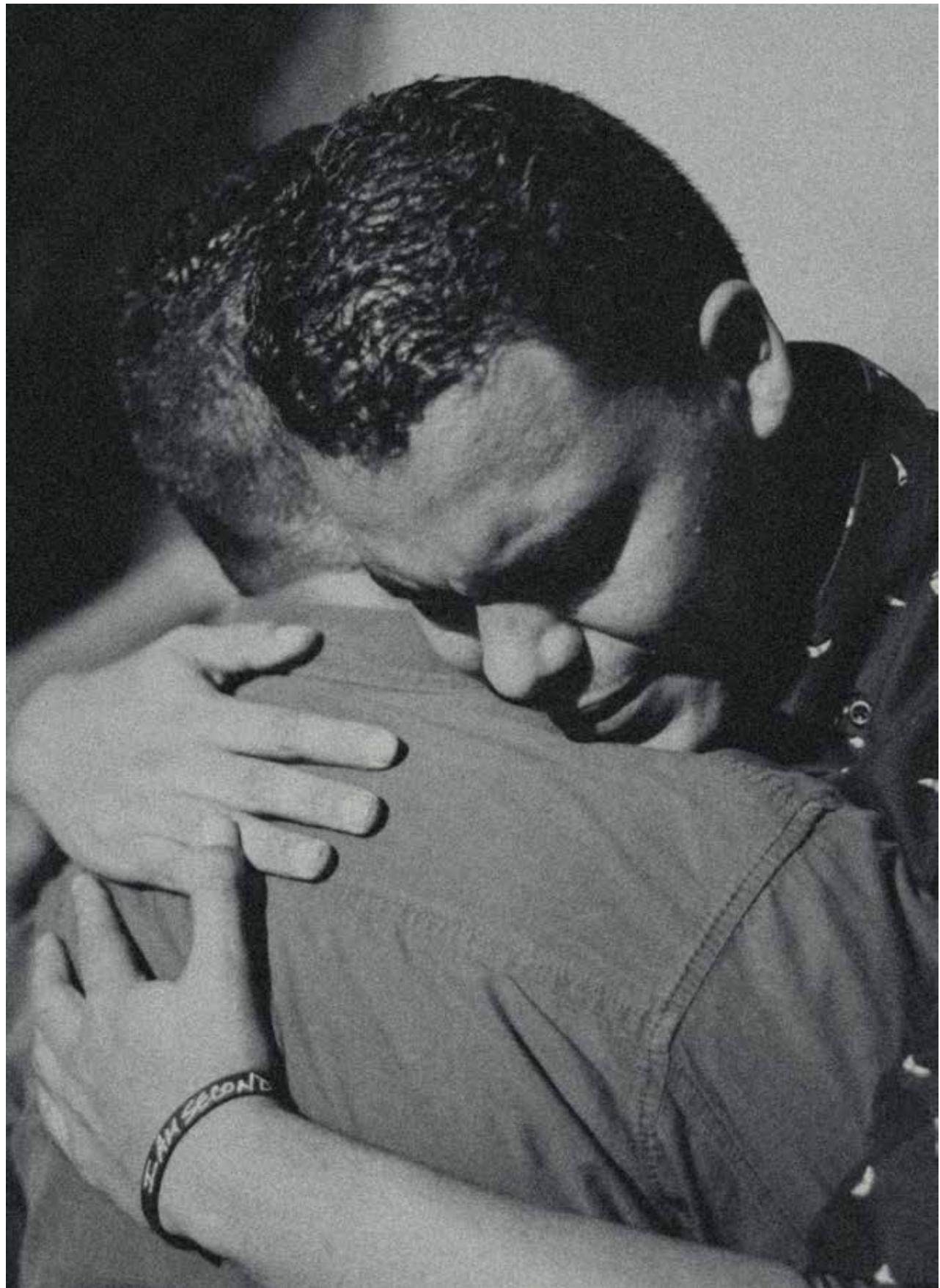
State and federal laws establish what employers are legally required to provide to their employees, but employers can always build upon these laws to better meet the needs of their workforce.

- Provide mandatory and regular training for all employees on how domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking can show up in the workplace, and what supports within the workplace are available to survivors.
- Post the applicable state laws in communal spaces in your workplace so that all employees can access and review this information as needed.

- ✓ Workplace policies that address these forms of violence should ensure a survivor's information will be treated confidentially. Communicate this confidentiality requirement to everyone in the organization.
- ✓ Incorporate information about the state-specific employment rights of survivors into all onboarding processes.
- ✓ Incorporate information about qualifying for unemployment insurance if an employed survivor must quit their job due to domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking in all off-boarding materials.
- ✓ Collaborate with local shelters in your area and place resources about survivor-serving organizations in communal areas of your workplace.

These recommendations are offered with the understanding that survivors, and the people who directly serve them, are experts on the needs of their community. FUTURES' Workplaces Respond is ready to partner with state and local service providers, unions, and employers to implement these recommendations and considerations.

## Conclusion





WITHOUT MEANINGFUL ACCESS TO  
THESE PROTECTIONS, SURVIVORS  
FACE ADDITIONAL AND POTENTIALLY  
UNNECESSARY CHALLENGES TO  
REACHING SAFETY.

Right now, across the country, employees surviving domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking have access to laws that can support their ability to maintain stable employment and economic security. Without meaningful access to these protections, survivors face additional and potentially unnecessary challenges to reaching safety. There is a strong community of interest holders and survivors across the country eager to build up both workplaces and communities that empower survivors' ability to maintain economic independence.

Workplaces Respond stands ready to work with state and local service providers, with employers, with unions, and with impacted workers to increase awareness of these state-level protections, support survivors in their ability to access these laws, and collaborate to ensure that workplaces can support survivors. We look forward to continuing to work alongside survivors and this dedicated community of interest holders so these employment protections realize their potential to provide survivors with safety and stability.

## Acknowledgments

Thank you to Robin Runge and Kate Miceli for developing this project, for their commitment to survivors, and for organizing and conducting the conversations that serve as the basis for this report. Workplaces Respond also extends its deep appreciation to the individual survivors, advocates, farmworkers, tradeswomen, employers, attorneys, state agency representatives, and union and apprenticeship program staff members who took the time to speak about their experiences.

Workplaces Respond is committed to ensuring that the experiences and expertise of survivors and those working to assist them drive the development of its interventions, resources, and investments. Those who disproportionately experience these forms of violence know best how to develop systems to prevent and address the harms they experience. Workplaces Respond maintains the confidentiality of all the survivors who shared their wisdom with us. With permission, the list below includes some of the organizations that participated in this important project.

Alianza Nacional de Campesinas, Inc.	Legal Aid Chicago
American Bar Association Commission on Domestic and Sexual Violence	Legal Aid at Work
Ascend Justice	Legal Momentum
Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence	National Alliance to End Partner Violence
Beth W. Mora, Esq.	The National Domestic Violence Hotline
California Partnership to End Domestic Violence	National LGBTQ Institute on Intimate Partner Violence
Center for American Progress	National Network to End Domestic Violence
Chicago Alliance Against Sexual Exploitation	New Mexico Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs
Disability Rights California	The Network Advocating Against Domestic Violence
Esperanza United	Oregon Law Center
Gender Equality Law Center	RAINN
ILR, Worker Institute, Cornell University	San Francisco Domestic Violence Consortium
Just Solutions	TransLatin@ Coalition
Katharine & George Alexander Community Law Center	Valor
KWH Law Center for Social Justice and Change	Victim Rights Law Center
	Women Employed

## Appendix: State Law Employment Protections for Survivors in California, Illinois, New Mexico, New York, and Oregon (2022-2023)

The state protections that were in place as of 2022-2023 (the time of Workplaces Respond convened these conversations) are described below.

**The laws in these states may have since changed.**

→ Does state employment anti-discrimination law explicitly prohibit survivor-status discrimination?

**CA** Yes, employed survivors of **domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking** are protected from discrimination and retaliation at work based on their survivor status.

**IL** Yes, employed survivors of **domestic violence, sexual violence, and/or gender violence** are protected from discrimination and retaliation at work based on their survivor status.

**NM** No, the state employment anti-discrimination law does not explicitly protect survivors of **domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking or dating violence**.

**NY** Yes, employed survivors of **domestic violence** are protected from discrimination and retaliation at work based on their survivor status.

**OR** Yes, employed survivors of **domestic violence, stalking, harassment, and sexual assault** are protected from discrimination and retaliation at work based on their survivor status.



→ Does state law mandate most employers provide survivor-specific workplace accommodations?

CA

Yes, employed survivors of **domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking** may be entitled to survivor-specific reasonable accommodations from their employer.

IL

Yes, employed survivors of **domestic violence, sexual violence, and/or gender violence** may be entitled to survivor-specific reasonable accommodations from their employer.

NM

No, state law does not explicitly entitle employees to survivor-specific reasonable accommodations from their employer.

NY

Yes, but the only survivor-specific reasonable accommodation employed **domestic violence** survivors have access to is time off of work.

OR

Yes, employed survivors of **domestic violence, stalking, harassment, and sexual assault** may be entitled to survivor-specific reasonable accommodations from their employer.

→ Does state law mandate most employers provide leave from work for survivors?

CA

**Yes**, employed survivors of **domestic violence, sexual assault, or stalking** can take legally protected UNPAID leave from work based on their survivor status. The law prohibits employers from retaliating against survivors for using this leave. Note this law has changed.

IL

**Yes**, employed survivors of **domestic violence, sexual violence, and gender violence** can take legally protected PAID and UNPAID leave from work based on their survivor status. The law prohibits employers from retaliating against survivors for using this leave.

NM

**Yes**, employed survivors of **domestic abuse, sexual assault, or stalking** can take legally protected PAID and UNPAID leave from work based on their survivor status. The law prohibits employers from retaliating against survivors for using this leave.

NY

**Yes**, employed survivors of **domestic violence, a family offense, sexual offense, stalking, or human trafficking** can take legally protected PAID and UNPAID leave from work based on their survivor status. The law prohibits employers from retaliating against survivors for using this leave.

OR

**Yes**, employed survivors of **domestic violence, sexual assault, harassment, or stalking** can take legally protected PAID leave from work based on their survivor status. The law prohibits employers from retaliating against survivors for using this leave.

If a survivor is not entitled to paid leave from work, they can qualify for PAID state-provided medical leave based on their survivor status.

→ Does state law clarify that survivors can obtain unemployment insurance benefits if they leave work due to their victimization?

CA

**Yes**, survivors who are otherwise eligible for unemployment insurance benefits can obtain benefits if their job loss is due to domestic violence abuse.

IL

**Yes**, survivors who are otherwise eligible for unemployment insurance benefits can obtain benefits if their job loss is due to domestic violence.

NM

**Yes**, survivors who are otherwise eligible for unemployment insurance benefits can obtain benefits if their job loss is due to **domestic abuse, including domestic violence and harassment**.

NY

**Yes**, survivors who are otherwise eligible for unemployment insurance benefits can obtain benefits if their job loss is due to **domestic violence**.

OR

**Yes**, survivors who are otherwise eligible for unemployment insurance benefits can obtain benefits if their job loss is due to **domestic violence, stalking, or sexual assault**.



**Work without Fear:**  
How Improving Access to  
Employment Laws Prevents and  
Addresses Domestic Violence,  
Sexual Assault, and Stalking  
in the Workplace



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