

# *Work Interrupted:* How Violence Undermines Economic Security for Survivors in the Workplace

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FEBRUARY 18, 2026

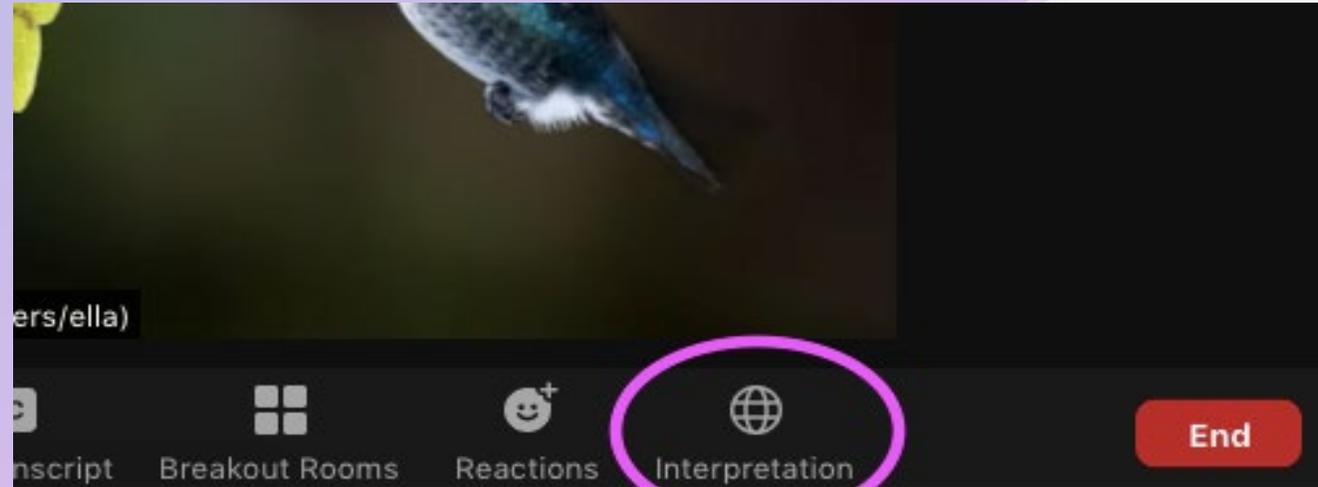
FUTURES WITHOUT VIOLENCE

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# How To Access Language Interpretation on Zoom

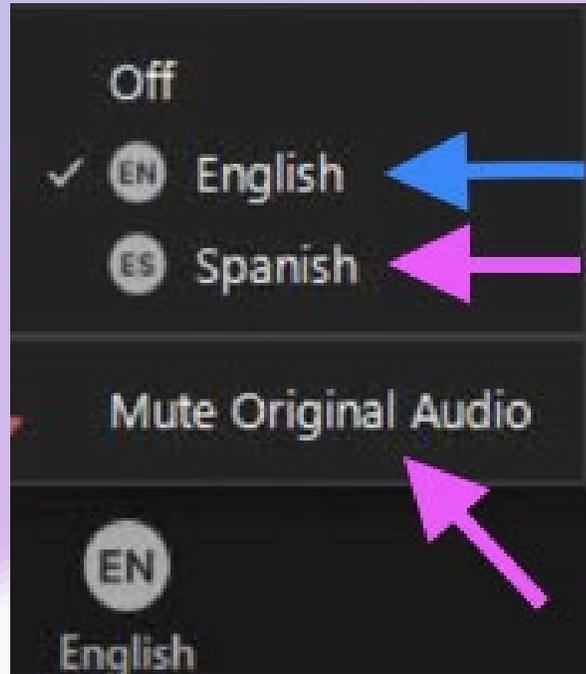
Cómo Activar la  
Interpretación  
de Idiomas en Zoom

On your computer, find the Interpretation Globe Icon at the bottom of your screen

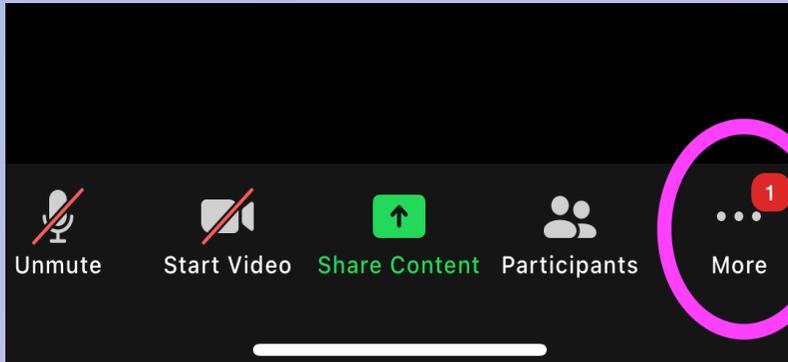


En su computadora, busque el globo terráqueo que dice Interpretación en la parte inferior de su pantalla.

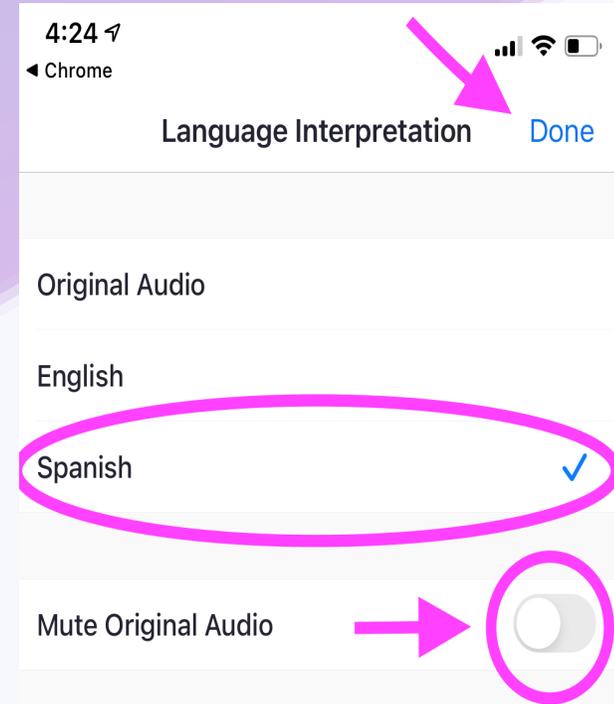
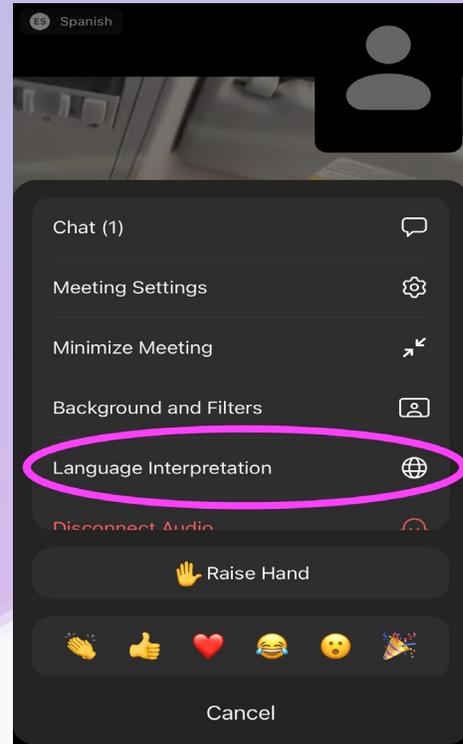
Choose English as your language. Make sure to NOT mute original audio so that you can hear the main room



Seleccione Español.  
Asegúrese de  
Silenciar Audio Original, si  
solo desea escuchar al  
intérprete



If you are on a smart device, look for the three dot menu and choose Language Interpretation. Then, select English.



Desde un dispositivo inteligente, busque el menú de tres puntos y elija Interpretación. Después, escoja “Español” y silencie el audio original.

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# Zoom Webinar Logistics



Engage with us and each other in the chat and use reactions



Put questions in the Q&A box



Resources will be shared with registrants via email



American Sign Language interpreters and closed captions available



English channel and Spanish channel



# FUTURES WITHOUT VIOLENCE

Our vision is a future without violence that provides education, safety, justice, and hope.

<https://www.futureswithoutviolence.org/>

This project is supported by Grant No. 15JOVW-24-GK-06128-NRCW awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions, findings, conclusions, and recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women.



Arianna  
Sessoms



Bella Book



Carolyne Ouya



Nina  
Kanakarajavelu



Jordyn Battle



Mary Beth

# Facilitators



Anna Nasset,  
Trainer & Author  
ANasset Consulting & Training



Stephanie Holt, Esq.  
Deputy Director  
Victim Rights Law Center

# Guest Speakers

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# Agenda

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1. Introducing Futures & Facilitators
2. Key Terms
3. Fictional Survivor Journey
4. Scenario Reflections with Speaker Panel
5. Workplace Interventions
6. National Resource Center
7. Closing



National Domestic Violence Hotline  
[www.thehotline.org/](http://www.thehotline.org/)  
1-800-799-SAFE (7233)

National Sexual Assault Hotline  
[www.rainn.org/](http://www.rainn.org/)  
1-800-656-HOPE (4673)

## Domestic Violence

A pattern of abusive behavior in any relationship used by one partner to gain or maintain power and control over another

## Dating Violence

Violence committed by a person who is/has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim

## Sexual Assault

Any nonconsensual sexual act proscribed by federal, tribal, or state law, including when the victim lacks capacity to consent

## Stalking

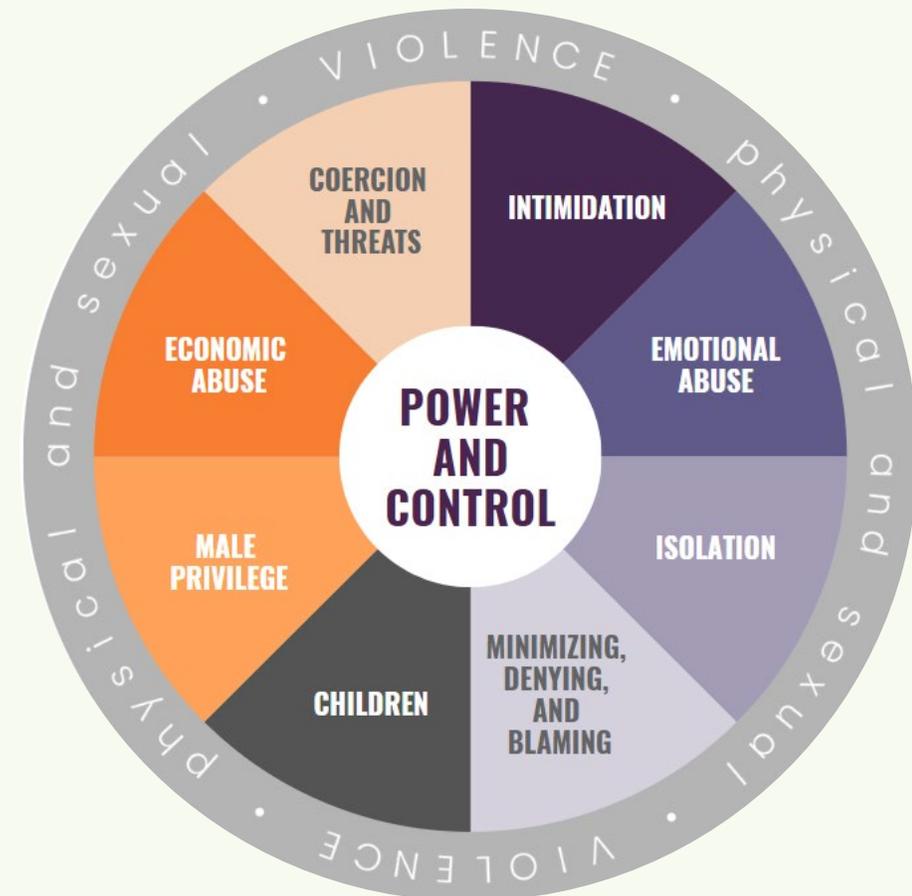
A course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to fear for their or others' safety or suffer substantial emotional distress

## Sexual Harassment

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical harassment of a sexual nature

# Understanding Economic Abuse

- A powerful tool of control that destabilizes survivors and can profoundly compromise their ability earn, save, and maintain financial stability.
- Nearly all survivors experience some type of economic abuse, but economic abuse is less often recognized as a form of domestic violence.
- Without economic independence, most survivors cannot achieve or maintain safety.



# Following a Fictional Survivor's Journey through Economic Insecurity

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“RITA’S” STORY

## Meet “Rita”

- 5 years at a regional marketing firm
- Strong client relationships, positive performance reviews
- Top candidate for promotion: \$15,000 salary increase



### Starting Financial Snapshot:

Salary

**\$57,200**

Checking

**\$8,900**

Savings

**\$4,500**

Credit Score

**717**

# Workplace Culture

- Supportive
- Lacks comprehensive policies addressing domestic violence and workplace safety
- Supervisor is untrained in recognizing or responding to domestic violence in the workplace



Stable

Annual Salary

**\$57,200**

Joint Checking

**\$8,900**

Savings

**\$4,500**

Credit Score

**717**

# Financial Control

- Rita's partner Mike moved in with her
- Combined annual income = \$121,672
- Mike lost his job; became controlling
  - Accusations of infidelity
  - Demands access to work emails
  - Aggression
  - Monitors spending
  - Demands Rita's paychecks go into their joint checking account

**Rita breaks up with Mike.**

# 1 Month After Breakup

## Declining

Salary

**\$57,200**

Joint Checking

**\$6,740**

Savings

**\$4,500**

Credit Score

**717**



- Rita temporarily moves in with a friend one hour away
- Mike demands Rita cover utilities and rent for shared apartment

## 2 Months After Breakup

- Mike begins stalking Rita at work
  - Watches her
  - Calls main office line
  - Shows up in lobby
  - Security escorts him out
- Rita contacts accounting to reroute paychecks from shared checking account
- No response from accounting department
- Mike sends threatening emails

***“I can see when you read these emails. I know your schedule better than you think.”***

# A Survivor's Journey: Economic Abuse in the Workplace



## Career Promise

Rita is thriving at work and in line for a big promotion.



## Employment Sabotage

Her now ex-partner stalks and threatens her at work; damaging her focus and reputation.

1

3

2

## Financial Sabotage

Her partner refuses to pay bills and leaves Rita covering expenses from her savings.



## Reflections



## 2 Months After Breakup

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- Rita experiences
  - Struggle concentrating
  - Heart races at new emails
  - Sleep deprivation
  - Missed deadline
  - Weakened attention to detail

# 2 Months After Breakup

- Rita discloses abuse to supervisor

***"I'm so sorry you're going through this. You should connect with HR. And don't worry about work pressure right now, you have too much on your plate to be thinking about that promotion anyway."***

- Rita does not receive promotion

Declining

Salary

**\$57,200**

Joint Checking

**\$6,740**

Savings

**\$4,500**

Credit Score

**717**

# A Survivor's Journey: Economic Abuse in the Workplace



**Career Promise**  
Rita is thriving at work and in line for a big promotion.



**Employment Sabotage**  
Her now ex-partner stalks and threatens her at work; damaging her focus and reputation.



**Promotion Lost**  
Rita is passed over for a promotion due to the disruption and stress impacting her work.

**Financial Sabotage**  
Her partner refuses to pay bills and leaves Rita covering expenses from her savings.



## Reflections



## 3 Months After Breakup

- Rita goes to Human Resources (HR) for support
- Rita's direct deposit information hasn't been updated
- HR is limited by policies written without domestic violence in mind
- Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
  - doesn't help with workplace safety planning;
  - counselor doesn't specialize in domestic violence
- HR suggests unpaid leave

**Critical**

Salary

**\$55,660**

Joint Checking

**\$2,120**

Savings

**\$2,960**

Credit Score

**717**

# 3 Months After Breakup

- Rita takes 2 weeks unpaid leave
  - Dips into her savings
  - Friend connects her to an attorney
  - \$300 consultation fee
  - Lawyer won't help Rita because there's been no physical violence

# A Survivor's Journey: Economic Abuse in the Workplace



**Career Promise**  
Rita is thriving at work and in line for a big promotion.

1



**Employment Sabotage**  
Her now ex-partner stalks and threatens her at work; damaging her focus and reputation.

3



**Promotion Lost**  
Rita is passed over for a promotion due to the disruption and stress impacting her work.

4

**Financial Sabotage**  
Her partner refuses to pay bills and leaves Rita covering expenses from her savings.

2



**Limited HR Support**  
When she asks for help, HR only offers unpaid leave and unspecific counseling referrals.



5

## Reflections

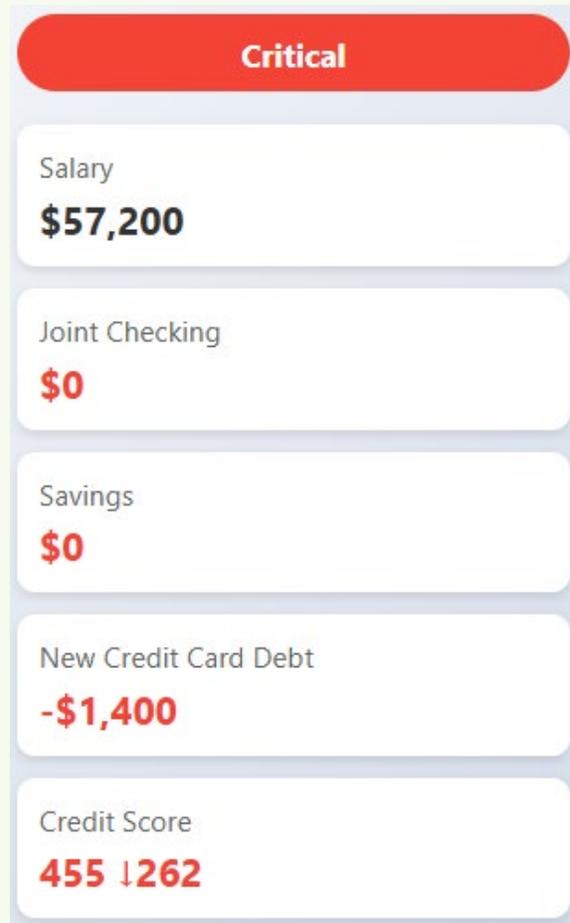
# 4 Months After Breakup

***“I’m really sorry,” the landlord says, “we can’t accept someone with your credit score.”***



- Mike pocketed the money Rita gave him for rent and utilities
- 3 months late on rent

# 4 Months After Breakup



- Rita cannot get that money back because it's in a joint checking account
- Rita puts rent, utilities, and fees on her credit card

# A Survivor's Journey: Economic Abuse in the Workplace



**Career Promise**  
Rita is thriving at work and in line for a big promotion.



**Employment Sabotage**  
Her now ex-partner stalks and threatens her at work; damaging her focus and reputation.



**Promotion Lost**  
Rita is passed over for a promotion due to the disruption and stress impacting her work.



**Housing Sabotage**  
Rita's ex takes money meant for rent & bills; forcing her into debt and risks eviction.



**Financial Sabotage**  
Her partner refuses to pay bills and leaves Rita covering expenses from her savings.



**Limited HR Support**  
When she asks for help, HR only offers unpaid leave and unspecific counseling referrals.

## Reflections

## Month 5: Job Loss

Crisis

Salary

**\$0**

Joint Checking

**\$0**

Savings

**\$0**

Credit Card Debt

**-\$1,400**

Credit Score

**430 ↓287**

# 5 Months After Breakup

- Mike won't stop harassing Rita at work

*Do I wait to be fired?*

*Do I go back to Mike and hope the harassment and sabotage will stop?*

*If I quit, I won't have to say I was fired.*

Rita decides to resign.

# After Resignation

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- Rita faces an immediate housing crisis
- Rita gets loan to move back in with family three states away
- Rita forced to leave her social circle, professional network, and the career momentum she has built
- Mike threatens Rita and her family
- Rita starts rebuilding her life



# A Survivor's Journey: Economic Abuse in the Workplace



**Career Promise**  
Rita is thriving at work and in line for a big promotion.



**Employment Sabotage**  
Her now ex-partner stalks and threatens her at work; damaging her focus and reputation.



**Promotion Lost**  
Rita is passed over for a promotion due to the disruption and stress impacting her work.



**Housing Sabotage**  
Rita's ex takes money meant for rent & bills; forcing her into debt and risks eviction.

**Job Loss**  
With no workplace protections, Rita has to quit her job and move.



**Lasting Consequences**  
Rita loses her housing, financial stability, and the career gains she had worked so hard for.

**Financial Sabotage**  
Her partner refuses to pay bills and leaves Rita covering expenses from her savings.



**Limited HR Support**  
When she asks for help, HR only offers unpaid leave and unspecific counseling referrals.



# Scenario Discussion & Reflections

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WITH STEPHANIE HOLT & ANNA NASSET

# Workplace Interventions

- Trauma-informed supervision training
- Comprehensive policies to address domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and sexual harassment
- Workplace safety planning and accommodation policies
- Educate staff on paid leave options and unemployment insurance
- Accessible and comprehensive support services (EAP, community agency, etc.)
- IT security measures for workplace harassment



# Powering Up: Equipping Workplaces to Respond to Tech-Facilitated Abuse

April 14, 2026

10:00am PT / 11:00am MT / 12:00pm CT / 1:00pm ET



Register here!

In this webinar, employers and survivor advocates will learn:

- how to identify technology-facilitated abuse,
- how employers can support their employees who are being targeted, and
- how to mitigate the risks that lead to this harm in the workplace.

Featuring leading victims' rights attorneys Carrie Goldberg and Naomi Leeds of C.A. Goldberg, PLLC.

# National Resource Center

**WORKPLACES RESPOND**  
TO DOMESTIC & SEXUAL VIOLENCE  
A NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER

THE PROBLEM ▾

OUR APPROACH ▾

RESOURCE LIBRARY

CONNECT



SEARCH

ESPAÑOL

## WORKPLACES RESPOND TO DOMESTIC & SEXUAL VIOLENCE

The National Resource Center offers free resources, training, and technical assistance to employers, workers, and advocates to prevent and respond to domestic violence, sexual harassment and violence, and stalking impacting the workplace.





# Evaluation

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[forms.office.com/r/yMqubZHsTk](https://forms.office.com/r/yMqubZHsTk)



## NEED TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE?

The Workplace Resource Center (Workplaces Respond) works in partnership with employers, labor organizations, workers, and survivors to create workplaces free from gender-based violence and harassment. Workplaces Respond provides free resources, consultation, and training curricula to prevent and respond to the impacts of domestic and dating violence, sexual violence, sexual harassment, and stalking in the world of work through culture change aimed at eradicating root causes and risk factors and promoting safety, equity, and trauma-informed policy and practice.

CONNECT WITH US

## SIGN UP FOR UPDATES

Sign up for periodic updates including new resources, education opportunities, and events.

First Name	Last Name
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Email *	
<input type="text"/>	
Organization	Topic
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

CONNECT

# Thank you!

Workplaces Respond  
National Resource Center:  
[www.workplacesrespond.org](http://www.workplacesrespond.org)

