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## Help workers who are victims of violence

T&T Chamber to employers:

Camille Hunte 16 hrs ago

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Camille Hunte



**EMPLOYERS** have a responsibility to assist their employees who may be victims of domestic violence.

So said ANSA McAL group human resources director Teresa White yesterday as she spoke during the launch of a Domestic Violence In The Workplace Policy at the Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Industry and Commerce in Westmoorings.

The policy is an initiative of the Crime and Justice Committee in partnership with the Trinidad and Tobago Coalition Against Domestic Violence (CADV) and the T&T Chamber of Industry and Commerce.

It seeks to address the effects of domestic violence in the workplace which include reduced productivity and low morale.

The policy states: “Abused persons may be late to work, have excessive and unaccustomed absences, seem stressed out and may be unable to concentrate or work productively. These behaviours can make it seem like the victim is an unsatisfactory team member when the person is experiencing the effects of an abusive relationship. Similarly, persons who are perpetrating domestic violence may also demonstrate signs (such as aggression, distraction, and emotional volatility) which may negatively affect their work performance.”

Speaking during the launch yesterday, White said ANSA McAL has already signed on to implement the policy.

“These are your people, you have to do something,” she said.

“You don’t look at people who you give an iota of concern about and leave them in a situation like that.”

CADV president Roberta Clarke said domestic violence continues to be a problem in T&T with some 9,000 women filing applications for protective orders each year. She said this results in disruption to the workplace.

However, she said if employees know they will have the support of their employers it would lead to greater protection, prevention and increased productivity.

The policy requires employers to render immediate assistance and support to victims of violence, such as information and referrals to support resources, institutionalise responsive policies and procedures to assist employees who are impacted by violence. The policy also calls on employers to aid employees who are perpetrators of violence and act to hold them accountable for their violent behaviour.

Supervisors and leaders in organisations are also to receive training on how to identify traits of abuse and take the necessary action.

A number of leading companies have already signed on to adopt the policy in their organisations, including ANSA McAL, Imjin Security Ltd, Massy Group, Amalgamated Security and Scotiabank.

Imjin director Imshah Mohammed invited other companies to come on board and said he hoped it would lead to the development of a national policy.