



# Can Domestic Violence Accusations Mean Discipline at Work?

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Jennifer Sandberg's article "Can Domestic Violence Accusations Mean Discipline at Work?" was featured on *Easy Small Business HR* on October 20, 2014.

Domestic violence is wrong. So are many other actions such as driving while intoxicated, check fraud, soliciting for sex, speeding, public drunkenness, etc. Of course, we have criminal laws against such actions in order to maintain the type of society that we deem to be acceptable. Enforcement of our laws requires that the applicable criminal justice system "prove" that wrongful conduct occurred before an individual is punished.

But what about those criminal laws in the context of the workplace? Does an employer have a say in the matter when its employee is accused of a crime?

In the article, Jennifer outlines the process in which employers typically use to determine whether or not an employee should be disciplined at work, after learning of criminal accusations against the individual.

- Employers obtain knowledge in many ways – news coverage for a high profile individual or particularly scandalous accusations, the local newspaper that prints arrest information, mug shot websites searched by co-workers, posts on social media sites, the employee calling in to report that he or she is in jail, etc.
- Employer tends to react by evaluating how the accusations reflect on the business and impact its other employees and customers.
- Employer typically will determine whether it can manage the impact of the accusations or whether it needs or wants to disassociate itself with the individual accused.

Jennifer states that an employee who is accused of assault is likely to be met with disdain by his or her employer because of the natural reaction to assume that if the employee can hurt person X, the employee can hurt others. In most states, in most circumstances, an employer is totally within its rights to make the determination that removing the employee from the workplace is the best option.

To read the full article, please visit [\*Easy Small Business HR\*](#).

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