

## Employee Leaves: New Rights, Recurring Challenges

**Question from Seattle Employment Law Breakfast, Wednesday, September 24, 2008**

Under the Washington Domestic Violence Leave statute, what is the definition of "domestic violence"? Could it include abuse that does not include physical injury?

**Answer:**

The definition of "domestic violence" relies on the definition in RCW 26.50.010, the statute that permits a victim to file a claim against the abuser. RCW 26.50.010 provides the following definition:

(1) "Domestic violence" means: (a) Physical harm, bodily injury, assault, or the infliction of fear of imminent physical harm, bodily injury or assault, between family or household members; (b) sexual assault of one family or household member by another; or (c) stalking as defined in RCW [9A.46.110](#) of one family or household member by another family or household member.