

Managing the Workplace

2010 Labour & Employment Seminar Series



TEMPLATE FOR WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION POLICY

A. POLICY STATEMENT

[**Organization name**] ("Company") is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace free from actual, attempted or threatened violence. The Company recognizes that workplace violence is a health and safety and human resources issue and will take reasonable precautions to prevent workplace violence and to protect employees at the workplace.

B. PURPOSE OF WORKPLACE VIOLENCE POLICY

This policy is intended to:

1. Create and foster a work environment free from workplace violence;
2. Provide a definition of workplace violence;
3. Establish and detail the responsibilities of all persons in Company workplace(s) to maintain a workplace free of actual, attempted or threatened violence;
4. Ensure that incidents of workplace violence are reported to Company management and/or law enforcement as appropriate;
5. Ensure that complaints of workplace violence are handled in a timely and equitable manner by the Company.

C. SCOPE AND APPLICATION OF POLICY

This policy applies to all Company employees regardless of position, classification or union membership. This policy also applies to all persons who attend a Company workplace including, but not limited to, all visitors, contractors, vendors and delivery persons.

For the purposes of this policy, a Company workplace includes all places where Company business occurs and includes all:

- Company buildings (whether owned or leased) and surrounding perimeter including parking lots, sidewalks, and driveways ("Company Grounds");
- Company vehicles;
- Off-site locations where Company business occurs;
- Company-sponsored functions and recreational or social events, whether taking place on Company Grounds or elsewhere; and
- Travel for Company business.



D. WORKPLACE VIOLENCE DEFINED

In this policy, workplace violence includes but is not limited to the following:

1. The use of physical force against or by a worker that causes or could cause physical injury. This includes, but is not limited to, physical acts such as punching, hitting, kicking, pushing, damaging property or throwing objects;
2. The attempted use of physical force against or by a worker that could have caused physical injury;
3. An action or statement (or series of actions or statements) reasonably believed to be a threat of physical harm or as a threat to safety or security in the workplace; and
4. Bringing a weapon of any kind to a Company workplace or possessing a weapon of any kind while carrying out Company business, or threatening to bring a weapon to a company workplace.

This is the companion policy to the Company's **[identify workplace harassment policy]** which addresses harassment, including conduct that is not covered by the definition of workplace violence but that demeans, embarrasses, humiliates or is known, or ought to be known to be unwelcome.

E. ZERO TOLERANCE

The Company values the health and safety of its employees and expects that its workplace(s) will be free of workplace violence. The Company will not tolerate incidents of workplace violence perpetrated against or by any employee, customer, vendor, contractor, visitor or any other person at a Company workplace or involved in Company business.

Every person at a Company workplace is responsible for acting in compliance with this policy.

With respect to acts of workplace violence, as defined in this policy, the Company may, where appropriate:

- Remove the perpetrator from a Company workplace by security or the police;
- Discipline any employee, up to and including dismissal, and/or report the conduct to the police; and
- Report the conduct of any other person to their employer, supervisor and/or principal and/or to the police.

All physical assaults involving an employee or occurring at a Company workplace will be reported to police. All other incidents or threats of workplace violence will be reported to police as appropriate.



F. RESPONSIBILITIES AND OBLIGATIONS

It is the responsibility of:

1. The Company

- To take reasonable preventative measures to protect employees and others in Company workplaces from workplace violence;
- To ensure that a workplace violence assessment is conducted;
- To develop procedures to address the workplace violence risks identified in the violence assessment;
- To ensure that all employees are trained in this policy;
- To post this policy in a conspicuous place in the workplace;
- To ensure that this policy is communicated to contractors and other persons who attend Company workplaces;
- To establish a process for reporting and responding to incidents of workplace violence;
- To ensure the process for reporting and responding to incidents of workplace violence is communicated, maintained and followed; and
- To ensure that this policy is reviewed at least annually.

2. Managers and Supervisors

- To understand and abide by the requirements of this policy;
- To communicate and review this policy with the employees they supervise or manage;
- To verify that all contractors and others who attend Company workplaces are aware of this policy;
- To adequately train employees in Company procedures that address the workplace violence risk(s) applicable to the employee;
- To encourage employees to report complaints or incidents of workplace violence;
- To respond to all complaints or incidents of workplace violence in a professional manner appropriate for the circumstances of the complaint or incident;
- To promptly report all complaints or incidents of workplace violence they receive or witness to **[insert person, position or department to whom reports to be made]**



3. Employees (Including Managers and Supervisors)

- To comply with this policy at all times to protect themselves and others in the workplace from workplace violence;
- To immediately notify their supervisor or other designated person of any incident of workplace violence whether the notifying worker is the victim or not. In the case of an extreme or imminent threat of physical harm to themselves or any person from workplace violence, the worker should contact the police;
- To participate in training regarding this policy and Company procedures directed at workplace violence risks in the workplace; and
- To fully cooperate in any investigation of complaints or incidents of workplace violence or breaches of this policy.

G. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Any employee experiencing violence outside of the workplace (i.e. domestic violence) that may create a risk of danger to themselves or others in the workplace is encouraged to report such violence so that the Company can take reasonable preventive steps.

H. REPORTING AND INVESTIGATING WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

1. Reporting threats of workplace violence:

- All incidents of workplace violence or reprisal must be immediately reported to management or the Human Resources Department;
- Any person subjected to workplace violence should, where appropriate, go to a safe location at the workplace and report the incident to their supervisor, a Company supervisor or manager, the Human Resources Department, or through the Employee Assistance Program so that the incident can be investigated and addressed;
- All complaints and incidents are to be recorded in writing by the reporting person/employee, the supervisor or manager receiving the report and the Human Resources Department. The date, time, location, potential witnesses and nature of the incident should be documented;
- If the police have not previously been summoned, management or the Human Resources Department will report all physical assaults to police. All other incidents or threats of workplace violence will be reported to the police as appropriate;
- If an incident of workplace violence involves a person who is not an employee of the Company, Company management or the Human Resources Department will report the incident to that person's employer and/or such other person as the Company determines is appropriate in the circumstances.



2. Investigation:

- All complaints or incidents of workplace violence or reprisal will be promptly investigated by management or the Human Resources Department. Where the perpetrator is a Company employee, the investigation will be conducted as quickly and confidentially as possible in the circumstances. Complete confidentiality is not possible in all circumstances and cannot be guaranteed;
- The management or Human Resources investigation will include:
 - (a) A documented interview with the complainant and/or victim;
 - (b) A documented interview with the alleged perpetrator(s);
 - (c) A documented interview with any witnesses with relevant information to provide; and
 - (d) Any other step the investigator(s) deems necessary to fully and fairly investigate the complaint or incident;
- At the conclusion of the investigation into an incident or complaint, Management or Human Resources will prepare a written report of the findings of fact and – after evaluating existing policies, procedures, physical premises and devices, employee training – any suggestions to prevent a recurrence;
- Where the perpetrator is a Company employee, the supervisor of the perpetrator, in consultation with management and/or the Human Resources Department, will take any necessary disciplinary action. The severity of any disciplinary action, which may include dismissal from employment, will be consistent with the seriousness of the conduct at issue such that more significant discipline will follow more serious conduct or repeated violations of this policy.

I. NO REPRISAL

Workplace violence and this policy are serious matters. This policy prohibits reprisals against employees who have made good faith complaints or provided information regarding a complaint or incident of workplace violence. Employees who engage in reprisals or threats of reprisals may be disciplined up to and including dismissal from employment.

Reprisal includes:

- Any act of retaliation that occurs because a person has complained of or provided information about an incident of workplace violence;
- Intentionally pressuring a person to ignore or not report an incident of workplace violence; and
- Intentionally pressuring a person to lie or provide less than full cooperation with an investigation of a complaint or incident of workplace violence.

An employee who makes a false complaint or otherwise abuses this policy may be disciplined up to and including dismissal from employment. Such discipline is not a reprisal or breach of this policy.

J. POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed at least annually.

