

Workplace Violence and Harassment Policy



WORKPLACE VIOLENCE AND PREVENTION

Organizational Commitment

The Corporation of the Township of Matachewan (“the Business”) is committed to providing a working environment that is safe, secure, and free from threats, intimidation and violence. We maintain a zero-tolerance approach to workplace violence. As such, the Business will not tolerate violent behaviour and will take all reasonable and practical measures to prevent workplace violence and to protect workers from acts of violence.

Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to:

1. Ensure that no worker is exposed to violence in the workplace; and
2. Ensure that appropriate disciplinary measures are taken against any worker found to have committed violence against another worker up to and including immediate dismissal for cause.

Application

This policy applies to all of the Business’s workers, including full-time, temporary and contract staff, as well as to any volunteers, students, interns and apprentices. This policy applies to every level of our organization and to every aspect of the workplace environment, including events that occur outside of the physical workplace, such as during business trips and staff events, and where applicable, to digital work environments.

Every worker is responsible for taking measures to prevent workplace violence and must promptly report any acts of violence that threaten, or are perceived to threaten, a safe working environment.

All reported incidents will be taken seriously and investigated in accordance with the investigation procedure set out in the Violence and Harassment Investigation Process.

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy:

“Workplace violence” occurs when a person is abused, threatened, intimidated or assaulted in the course of employment. Workplace violence includes threatening behaviour, verbal or written threats, verbal abuse and physical attacks and includes domestic violence. Examples of workplace violence include, but are not limited to:

- Expressions of intent to inflict harm;
- Threatening activity, such as waving a fist;
- Using, or attempting to use, physical force against another person;
- Shoving;
- Pushing;
- Hitting; and

- Verbal abuse.

“Domestic violence” is a pattern of behaviour used by one person to gain power and control over another person with whom he or she has, or has had, an intimate relationship with. This pattern of behaviour may include, but is not limited to, physical violence, sexual, emotional, and psychological intimidation, verbal abuse, stalking, and using electronic devices to harass and control.

Reporting Procedures for Workers

Any worker who believes that they are the victim of workplace violence by another worker should immediately report the incident to management using **Form A**. Any worker who believes that they are the victim of workplace violence by a supervisor or a manager should report the incident to a third party (designated by the business) using **Form A**.

Similarly, anyone who has good reason to believe that workplace violence is occurring or has occurred should immediately report the matter to management by using **Form A**.

A report of workplace violence must include details about the alleged incident(s), including the date(s), time(s) and location(s), what happened, who was involved and the names of any witnesses.

If an emergency exists and the situation is one of immediate danger, then it should be reported to the police by dialling “9-1-1” as soon as it is safe to do so. A person in a situation of immediate danger must at the same time take whatever steps are necessary to ensure their own safety and to protect themselves from harm or injury. Once a worker is safe, he or she can then report the matter to management.

Workers must notify management if a restraining order is in effect, or if a potentially violent non-work-related situation, such as domestic violence, exists and could result in violence in the workplace.

Duties of Management and Supervisors

Managers and supervisors must act immediately if they observe or are presented with allegations of a potentially dangerous situation, including domestic violence. Managers and supervisors are responsible for addressing potential problems immediately and before they become serious. The business must have an objective third party investigate if allegations of violence or harassment name the owner or manager, as no one who reports to the accused person can perform an investigation into their conduct.

Investigation

All reports and incidents of workplace violence or domestic violence (including incidents that are observed but not formally reported) will be taken seriously and will be investigated promptly and thoroughly in accordance with the investigation procedures set out in the Violence and Harassment Investigation Process.

Potentially dangerous situations and any necessary precautionary measures will be promptly communicated to individuals who could be affected. Furthermore, the applicable investigation

protocol set out the Violence and Harassment Investigation Process may be altered if it is determined that it is necessary to do so, such as where there is a reasonable and imminent threat to a worker's safety.

Reporting to the Police

All physical assaults will be reported to the police, as will any other behaviour that requires police intervention or follow-up, such as a situation of immediate or serious danger.

Intervention

The Business will intervene as appropriate if there is any indication of a violent or potentially violent situation.

If a worker is considered to be at risk of violence either from within or outside of the workplace, a plan will be developed to minimize the risk and respond to any potential emergency situation.

Should the Business become aware of a potential incident of domestic violence, every reasonable precaution will be taken in the circumstances to protect the affected worker.

Corrective Action and Discipline

If the Business determines that a worker has engaged in workplace violence, appropriate corrective action will be taken, up to and including immediate dismissal for cause.

In addition, the Business may require that a worker participate in an anger management program or other form of counselling, either voluntarily or as a condition of continued employment.

If the violent behaviour is that of a non-employee, then the Business will take appropriate action in an effort to ensure that such behaviour is not repeated, and if necessary, take measures to prevent the person from returning to the workplace.

However, not every complaint will warrant corrective action. Rather, corrective action will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Risk Reduction Measures

The following measures are in place to minimize the potential for violence in the workplace:

Exterior Entrances

All exterior entrances to a workplace are to be locked at all times except for the main entrance. No exterior doors are to be propped open. The main entrance will be open during normal business hours, unless the Business determines that the main entrance should be locked at all times for safety or operational purposes.

In the event that a worker has reason to believe that an individual may be violent or is exhibiting potentially violent behaviour at any entry point to the workplace, he or she must notify management immediately and take any protective action that is reasonably necessary in the circumstances.

Screening

All new workers, including students and apprentices, may be subject to appropriate security checks by management to ensure that they do not pose a risk of harm in the workplace.

Orientation

All new workers will be oriented to this policy, to any risks of violence relating to their employment and to procedures for managing potentially violent situations.

Training

As part of its general training protocols, the Business will provide all of its workers with training regarding violence prevention as appropriate and as required by law.

Annual Risk Assessments, Reviews and Inspections

The Business shall conduct regular and **annual** reviews of this policy, and any other applicable policies, programs and procedures, and conduct regular and **annual** inspections of its workplace(s) in order to assess hazards related to workplace violence and make any amendments to this policy, and any other applicable policies, programs and procedures, as may be necessary based on the results of its reviews. The Business will also ensure that appropriate corrective action is taken to reduce risks.

The results of any assessment will be reported to the health and safety representative or joint health and safety committee, as the case may be (if applicable).

If there is no health and safety representative or committee in place, then workers will be directly advised of any assessment. If the assessment is in writing, then workers will be provided with a copy on request or told how they might obtain a copy.

Incident Management

In the event of a significant incident of workplace violence, the Business will immediately assess the situation and arrange for the following interventions as appropriate:

- Facilitation of medical attention;
- If necessary, report the matter to the police;
- Individual debriefing; and
- If necessary, and if possible, arrange for the provision of counselling services to affected workers.

The Business will investigate the incident(s), and if necessary, the Business will conduct a review of its workplace(s) and reassess the risk of workplace violence having regard for the circumstances that gave rise to the incident(s) in question.

The results of any assessment will be reported to the health and safety representative or joint health and safety committee, as the case may be (if applicable).

WORKPLACE HARASSMENT AND SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The Business is committed to providing an environment free of harassment of any kind in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity.

Workplace harassment of any kind, sexual or otherwise, will not be tolerated, condoned, or ignored. If a claim of harassment is proven, disciplinary measures will be applied against the offending worker(s), up to and including immediate dismissal for cause.

Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to:

1. Ensure that all workers and visitors are aware that workplace harassment and sexual harassment is unacceptable and incompatible with the Business's standards, as well as being a violation of the law; and
2. Set out the types of behaviour that may be considered offensive and are prohibited by this policy.

This policy is intended to promote appropriate standards of conduct at all times.

Application

The right to freedom from workplace harassment extends to all workers, including full-time, part-time, temporary and contract staff, as well as volunteers, interns and apprentices.

It is unacceptable for workers or contractors working on the Business's behalf to engage in harassing behaviour in the workplace or when interacting with clients and others with whom they have professional dealings, such as suppliers, service providers and potential clients.

This policy applies to every level of our organization and to every aspect of the workplace environment, including events that occur outside of the physical workplace, such as during business trips and staff events, and where applicable, to digital work environments.

Definitions of Prohibited Behaviour

For the purposes of this policy:

"Harassment" and "workplace harassment" means:

- A course of comments or actions that are known, or ought reasonably to be known, to be unwelcome. It can involve words or actions that are known or should be known to be offensive, embarrassing, humiliating, demeaning, or unwelcome;
- Engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct against a worker in a workplace that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome;
- Psychological harassment or personal harassment, such as prolonged and repeated verbal abuse, teasing or hostile commentary; and/or
- Workplace sexual harassment.

“Workplace sexual harassment” means:

- Engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct against a worker in a workplace because of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, where the course of comment or conduct is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome; and/or
- Making a sexual solicitation or advance where the person making the solicitation or advance is in a position to confer, grant or deny a benefit or advancement to the worker and the person knows or ought reasonably to know that the solicitation or advance is unwelcome.

Examples of Prohibited Behaviour

Examples of the type of behaviour prohibited by this policy include, but are not limited to:

- Any form of sexual harassment, including touching, petting, pinching, kissing, unwelcome sexual flirtations, advances, requests, or invitations and leering or other suggestive gestures;
- Rough or vulgar humour or language related to sexuality, sexual orientation or gender;
- Invading personal space;
- Demanding hugs, dates or sexual favours;
- Asking questions, talking or writing about sexual activities;
- Leering or inappropriate staring;
- Unnecessary physical contact;
- Threatening to penalize or otherwise punish a worker if they refuse a sexual advance;
- The display of visual sexual material that is offensive, or which one ought to know, is offensive;
- Bullying;
- Demeaning and/or belittling comments;
- Offensive nicknames, remarks, jokes or innuendos;
- Obscene remarks or gestures;
- Display or circulation of offensive pictures, graffiti or materials, whether in print form or via e-mail or other electronic means;
- Singling out an individual for humiliating or demeaning teasing or jokes;

- Comments ridiculing an individual; and
- Creating a poisoned work environment through comments or conduct (including comments or conduct that are condoned or allowed to continue when brought to the attention of management). The comments or conduct may not be directed at a specific individual, and may be from any individual, regardless of position or status. A single comment or action, if sufficiently serious may create a poisoned environment.

Examples of What is Not Workplace Harassment

Reasonable action or conduct by a manager, supervisor or worker that is part of his or her normal work function will not normally be considered harassing. This is the case even if there are sometimes unpleasant consequences for a worker. Examples include:

- Changes in work assignments;
- Scheduling;
- Job assessments and evaluations;
- Workplace inspections;
- The implementation and enforcement of dress codes; and
- Counselling or disciplinary action.

Differences of opinion or minor disagreements between co-workers will also not generally be considered to be workplace harassment.

Reporting Procedures for Workers

Anyone who believes that they are the victim of workplace harassment should immediately report the incident to management by using **Form A**. Workers who believe they are the victim of workplace harassment by a supervisor or management should report the incident to a third party (designated by the business) using **Form A**.

A report of workplace harassment must include details about the alleged incident(s), including the date(s), time(s) and location(s), what happened, who was involved and the names of any witnesses.

Anyone who has good reason to believe that workplace harassment is occurring or has occurred must immediately report the matter to management.

If an emergency exists and the situation is one of immediate danger, then it should be immediately reported to the police by dialing "9-1-1" as soon as it is safe to do so. A person in situation of immediate danger must, at the same time, take whatever steps are necessary to ensure their own safety and to protect themselves against harm or injury. Once a worker is safe, he or she can then report the matter to management.

Duties of Management and Supervisors

Managers and supervisors have the additional duty to act immediately on observations or allegations of workplace harassment. Managers and supervisors are responsible for addressing potential problems immediately and before they become serious. The business must have an objective third party investigator if allegations or violence or harassment name the owner or manager, as no one who reports to the accused person can perform an investigation into their conduct.

Investigation

All reports and incidents of workplace harassment will be taken seriously and will be investigated promptly and thoroughly in accordance with the investigation procedures set out in the Violence and Harassment Investigation Process.

Potentially dangerous situations and precautionary measures will be communicated to individuals who could be affected.

Furthermore, the applicable investigation protocol may be altered if it is determined that it is necessary to do so, such as where there is a reasonable and imminent threat to a worker's safety.

Reporting to the Police

Any incident involving workplace harassment will be reported to the police if the Business deems it to be serious enough to require police intervention.

Intervention

If a worker is considered to be at risk of harassment in the workplace, a plan will be developed to minimize the risk and respond to any potential emergency situation.

Should the Business become aware of an actual or potential incident of workplace harassment, every reasonable precaution will be taken in the circumstances to protect the affected worker.

Corrective Action and Discipline

If the Business determines that a worker has engaged in workplace harassment, then appropriate corrective action will be taken, up to and including immediate dismissal for cause.

In addition, the Business may require that a worker participate in an anger management program or other form of counselling, either voluntarily or as a condition of continued employment.

If the harassing behaviour is that of a non-employee, the Business will take appropriate action in an effort to ensure that such behaviour is not repeated, and if necessary, take measures to prevent the person from returning to the workplace.

However, not every complaint will warrant corrective action. Rather, corrective action will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

Incident Management

In the event of a significant incident of workplace harassment, the Business will assess the situation and arrange for the following interventions as appropriate:

- Facilitation of medical attention;
- If necessary, report the matter to the police;
- Individual debriefing; and
- If necessary, and if possible, arrange for the provision of counselling services to affected workers.

The Business will investigate the incident(s), and if necessary, the Business will conduct a review of its workplace(s) and reassess the risk of workplace harassment having regard for the circumstances that gave rise to the incident(s) in question.

The results of any assessment will be reported to the health and safety representative or joint health and safety committee, as the case may be (if applicable).

Risk Assessments

At least annually and minimally after each and every incidence of workplace harassment, the Business shall complete an evaluation to determine whether a risk of workplace harassment exists due to the nature of the work or work environment.

Where workplace harassment risks are identified, the Business will implement any corrective measures that are required to reduce or eliminate the identified risks.

The results of any assessment will be reported to the health and safety representative or joint health and safety committee, as the case may be (if applicable).

If there is no health and safety representative or committee in place, then workers will be directly advised of any assessment. If the assessment is in writing, then workers will be provided with a copy on request or told how they might obtain a copy.

Form A

Workplace Violence and Harassment Reporting Form

INCIDENT REPORTING DETAILS

Report date (dd/mm/yyyy)	Incident date (dd/mm/yyyy)
Name of person reporting the incident	Location of the incident
Time of the incident (hh:mm)	Reporting person's phone number
Alleged victim's name	Reporting person's contact information
Names of witness Witness #1:	Witness phone number/email address
Witness #2:	
Witness #3:	
Witness #4:	
Witness #5:	
Provide a detailed description of the incident.	

Form A

Workplace Violence and Harassment Reporting Form

(Explain what you personally witnessed and heard. Do **not** provide opinion or speculate).

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Was any property damaged?

Yes

No

Don't know

Form A

Workplace Violence and Harassment Reporting Form

If "yes", then please provide a detailed description of the damage:

Did the alleged victim suffer an injury?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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If "yes", please provide details of the injury(ies) suffered:

Did the alleged victim receive medical or first aid treatment?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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If "yes", please provide details of the treatment received:

Did the alleged victim miss any time from work?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>
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If "yes", please provide details, including the dates on which the alleged victim was absent from work:

DECLARATIONS

Name of reporting person	Signature	Date (dd/mm/yyyy)

I confirm that the information in this report is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Name of person accepting the report	Signature	Date (dd/mm/yyyy)