

Category: Human Resources

Workplace Violence Prevention Policy

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Administered by: Human Resources

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1. Background	2
2. Purpose	2
3. Application and Scope	2
4. Outcomes	2
5. Principles	3
6. Policy Statements	3
7. Roles and Responsibilities	4
8. Monitoring and Compliance	7
9. Definitions	8
10. References and Resources	10
11. Revision History	12

1. Background

The City is committed to creating a work environment where everyone plays a vital role in ensuring a safe and healthy Workplace by preventing Workplace Violence.

This Policy is supported by the accompanying Preventing and Addressing Workplace Violence Standard Operating Procedure. This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Occupational Health and Safety Policy, Respectful Workplace Policy, and the Employee Code of Conduct – which is about our values, principles, and standards of behaviour that govern our actions.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this Council Policy is to:

- 2.1 Adopt a proactive approach to preventing Workplace Violence;
- 2.2 Outline the requirements of acceptable behaviours for those who have a role in dealing with Workplace Violence; and,
- 2.3 Comply with the City's legislative responsibilities under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* respecting Workplace Violence.

3. Application and Scope

This Council Policy applies to:

- 3.1 Workers (including but not limited to employees, service contractors, students, and volunteers);
- 3.2 Members of Council;
- 3.3 Vendors and suppliers; and,
- 3.4 Members of the Public (including citizen members of committees)

4. Outcomes

- 4.1 Establish, foster, and maintain a physically and psychologically safe and healthy work environment free from Workplace Violence for all individuals.
- 4.2 Workplaces where all individuals are treated with respect, Civility, and dignity, in an inclusive, diverse, and safe work environment.
- 4.3 The City and Workers will comply with the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* respecting Workplace Violence.

5. Principles

5.1 Violence Free Workplace

- 5.1.1 All individuals have the right to work or access services in a safe environment free from perceived, actual, attempted, or threatened Workplace Violence.
- 5.1.2 Workplace Violence is a serious matter and the City will take every reasonable precaution to prevent it.

5.2 Shared Responsibility

- 5.2.1 It is a shared responsibility between all individuals to create an environment where everyone is able to work without potential or actual threat of Workplace Violence. All individuals should be prepared to actively work together to address Workplace Violence.

5.3 Zero Tolerance

- 5.3.1 Violent behaviour in the Workplace is unacceptable from anyone. Workplace Violence from any individual will not be tolerated, condoned, or ignored.

6. Policy Statements

- 6.1 The City is committed to working in collaboration with its Workplace Parties and Members of the Public to create a Workplace free from Workplace Violence. This is achieved by complying with the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, and:

- 6.1.1 Establishing and communicating expectations and behaviours considered appropriate and inappropriate in City Workplaces and in the delivery of / or access to City services;
- 6.1.2 Proactively preventing Workplace Violence through assessing the risk of Workplace violence;
- 6.1.3 Training and informing Workers when there is a potential or actual risk of violence from all possible sources, including but not limited to customers, clients, Supervisors, Workers, and Domestic Violence; and,
- 6.1.4 Investigating incidents, implementing corrective actions, and supporting Workers who are victims of violence, as necessary.

- 6.2 The City will not tolerate, ignore, or condone any form of Workplace Violence of any of its Workers in the Workplace by anyone, including other Workers,

members of Council, Members of the Public, customers / clients, volunteers, vendors and suppliers.

- 6.3 Confidentiality will be maintained wherever possible. Out of respect for all Workplace Parties involved, the Workplace Parties involved in an incident or investigation must maintain confidentiality throughout the process. Information may need to be disclosed to protect Workers, investigate the incident, take corrective action, or otherwise as required by law.
- 6.4 All individuals have the right to report or act as a witness in good faith, incidents of Workplace Violence without fear of Reprisal, and/or further violence. Where it is confirmed that an incident of Workplace Violence has occurred, corrective action taken will not be considered a Reprisal.
- 6.5 The City recognizes that involvement in Workplace Violence incidents may be stressful and emotionally upsetting. All affected individuals are encouraged to seek counselling or rehabilitation from the following support systems:
 - 6.5.1 Employee Assistance Program; and,
 - 6.5.2 Peer Support Network, where available.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

- 7.1 Senior Leaders (Supervisor, Worker Roles and Responsibilities also apply)
 - 7.1.1 Ensure a Workplace Violence Prevention Policy is in place and reviewed at least once, annually, and a program is in place to implement this Policy.
- 7.2 Supervisors (Worker Roles and Responsibilities also apply)
 - 7.2.1 Lead by creating and maintaining a safe and healthy workplace free of Workplace Violence while being a role model for others;
 - 7.2.2 Understand and comply with this Policy and accompanying program;
 - 7.2.3 Post this Policy in a visible location in the Workplace and ensure Workers can locate this Policy in the Workplace and its digital location;
 - 7.2.4 Post the Statement of Commitment in areas that are accessible to Members of the Public;
 - 7.2.5 Hold Workers accountable for their behaviour and for following measures and procedures;
 - 7.2.6 Ensure Worker awareness of training, and monitor and enforce compliance with this Policy and accompanying program;
 - 7.2.7 Require Workers to review this Policy at least once annually;

- 7.2.8 Conduct Risk Assessments and address hazards of Workplace Violence with corrective actions;
- 7.2.9 Advise Workers of the risk of Workplace Violence from a person with a history of violent behaviour they may encounter where physical injury is likely;
- 7.2.10 Advise Workers to report their concerns to their Supervisor, Human Resources or any member of management if they fear that Domestic Violence may enter the workplace;
- 7.2.11 Inform Workers of how to summon immediate assistance in the case of an extreme or imminent threat of Workplace Violence;
- 7.2.12 Advise Workers to report concerns, and incidents of Workplace Violence to their Supervisor, Human Resources, or any member of management;
- 7.2.13 Act immediately on incidents of Workplace Violence;
- 7.2.14 Document incidents reported by Workers, or incidents that are known or witnessed;
- 7.2.15 Report incidents to Human Resources who will provide support for the intake, tracking, and processing of inquiries, complaints, and investigations;
- 7.2.16 Address incidents, and depending on the nature of the incident or complaint, collaborate with Human Resources to determine who will investigate further;
- 7.2.17 In collaboration with Human Resources, determine appropriate corrective action(s) to address the incident;
- 7.2.18 Notify Human Resources immediately if a critical injury or fatality occurs in their Workplace as a result of an incident of Workplace Violence; and,
- 7.2.19 Notify Human Resources as soon as possible if a Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development Inspector attends their Workplace as a result of an incident of Workplace Violence.

7.3 Workers

- 7.3.1 Understand and comply with this Policy and accompanying program and participate in training;
- 7.3.2 Review this Policy at least once annually;

- 7.3.3 Summon immediate assistance by contacting Corporate Security, and in the case of extreme or imminent threat of physical harm to themselves or any individual from Workplace Violence, summon the Police;
- 7.3.4 Raise any concerns about Workplace Violence to their Supervisor or Human Resources;
- 7.3.5 Report incidents of Workplace Violence experienced, witnessed, or having knowledge of to their Supervisor, Human Resources, or any member of management; and co-operate fully in investigations of incidents of Workplace Violence.

7.4 Human Resources

- 7.4.1 Prepare, maintain, and facilitate the review of this Policy at least once, annually;
- 7.4.2 Develop and maintain a program to implement this Policy in consultation with Workplace Parties, and review the program as often as necessary;
- 7.4.3 Receive all incidents of Workplace Violence, and support the appropriate party to address and / or investigate;
- 7.4.4 Provide support and guidance to Supervisors and Workers to ensure compliance with this Policy and accompanying program;
- 7.4.5 In collaboration with the Supervisor, establish an Incident Assessment Team;
- 7.4.6 Participate in Risk Assessments for Workplace Violence, as part of the Risk Assessment Team, if needed;
- 7.4.7 Make available a copy of the Risk Assessment results to the Joint Health and Safety Committees;
- 7.4.8 Facilitate interactions with Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development Inspectors as a result of incidents of Workplace Violence;
- 7.4.9 Facilitate informal resolutions, mediations, and investigations, as required;
- 7.4.10 Engage the Incident Assessment Team, to assist in the investigation and ensure corrective actions are consistent in the resolution of incidents of Workplace Violence;

7.4.11 Report any fatal or critical injury as a result of Workplace Violence to the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development; and,

7.4.12 Offer Workplace Violence Prevention Program training and other requisite training programs (e.g., Workplace investigations) as required by the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*.

7.5 Joint Health and Safety Committee

7.5.1 Assist in reviewing the program to implement the Workplace Violence Prevention Policy;

7.5.2 Should JHSC become aware of a contravention of this Policy, follow reporting procedures; and,

7.5.3 Request reports to conduct periodic reviews of essential health and safety training to monitor compliance.

8. Monitoring and Compliance

8.1 Supervisors must monitor their Workers' compliance with this Policy on an ongoing basis.

8.2 Operating departments must keep Records to verify compliance with this Policy in case of periodic reviews by Human Resources.

8.3 The Policy must be reviewed at least once, annually by Senior Leaders to ensure its effectiveness and to comply with legislation.

8.4 Consequences of non-compliance

8.4.1 Failure to follow this Council Policy, including making a report of violence that is false, frivolous, or made in bad faith, may result in:

- a) regulatory action and/or criminal charges; and/or,
- b) immediate corrective action which may include:
 - i. Prohibition from City property;
 - ii. Having the incident reported to the Police;
 - iii. Discipline up to and including termination of employment, and/or,
 - iv. Other action as appropriate.

8.4.2 Members of the Public, visitors to City facilities, or individuals conducting business with the City, are expected to adhere to this Policy. This includes refraining from inappropriate behaviour towards Workers, Members of Council, and persons acting on behalf of the City. If inappropriate behaviour occurs, the City will take appropriate action to ensure a Workplace free from violence. This could include

barring the person from facilities, reporting the incident to Police, or other action with vendors or suppliers.

9. Definitions

9.1 **‘Civility’** means the act of showing regard for others, being considerate in your interactions, and recognizing the inherent value of each individual in the Workplace. Workers can demonstrate Civility by:

- promoting positive communication;
- encouraging fair and respectful treatment;
- acknowledging and rewarding polite, courteous and considerate conduct;
- promoting collaboration, teamwork and active listening; and,
- supporting the sharing of opinions and ideas in an open-minded, understanding manner.

9.2 **‘Critical Injury’** means an injury which:

9.2.1 places life in jeopardy

9.2.2 produces unconsciousness

9.2.3 results in substantial loss of blood

9.2.4 involves the fracture of a leg or arm, including a wrist, hand, ankle, or foot

9.2.5 involves amputation of a leg, arm, hand, foot, or multiple fingers or toes

9.2.6 consists of burns to a major portion of the body

9.2.7 causes the loss of sight in an eye

9.3 **‘Domestic Violence’** means a person who has a personal relationship with a Worker – such as a spouse or former spouse, current or former intimate partner, or a family member – who may physically harm, or attempt or threaten to physically harm that Worker at work.

9.4 **‘Incident Assessment Team’** is comprised of but not limited to: the relevant Supervisor, relevant operating Department Head if required, Human Resources Business Partner, Labour Relations Advisor, Director, Human Resources if required, and Chief Administrative Officer if required, Facility Management, Corporate Security, Legal Services, Law Enforcement, and Employee Assistance Program provider to determine the appropriate corrective action.

- 9.5 **‘Joint Health and Safety Committee’** means a committee of worker and supervisory representatives who are mutually committed to improving health and safety conditions in the workplace. Committees meet on a regular basis to identify potential health and safety issues and bring them to the employer’s attention and conduct workplace inspections monthly.
- 9.6 **“Member of Council”** refers to any elected or appointed official on Council, including the Mayor.
- 9.7 **‘Member of the Public’** refers to a member of the general population, not a worker or Member of Council.
- 9.8 **‘Record’** includes documented business transactions, decisions, and activities, such as notes, memos, agendas, minutes, training records, etc.
- 9.9 **‘Reprisal’** means an action, or threat, that is intended as retaliation for claiming or enforcing a right under the Occupational Health and Safety Act. Retaliation may be either direct or indirect. Retaliation can include creating a hostile work environment, harassment, demotion, or dismissal.
- 9.10 **‘Risk Assessment’** means a process that assesses the risk of Workplace Violence, from a prevention perspective, that may arise from the nature of the Workplace, the type of work, or the conditions of work. It identifies hazards, evaluates the risk of harm from those hazards, and implements measures to eliminate or control those hazards.
- 9.11 **‘Risk Assessment Team’** The purpose of this team is to evaluate the potential for workplace violence through a risk assessment. The team is comprised of, but is not limited to, a worker(s) performing or having knowledge of the job / task(s), and a supervisor / manager responsible for the position or work location.
- 9.12 **‘Senior Leader’** means the Chief Administrative Officer, Commissioners, and Department Heads.
- 9.13 **‘Supervisor’** means a person who has charge of a workplace or authority over a Worker and can include, but is not limited to, Members of Council, Senior Leaders, Directors, Managers, Supervisors, and Forepersons.
- 9.14 **‘Volunteer’** means a person who performs tasks and/or services without compensation or expectation of compensation.
- 9.15 **‘Worker’** means a person who performs work (also known as employee) or supplies services for monetary compensation (as defined under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* (OHSA)). It also includes all secondary or post-secondary students who perform work or supply services for no monetary compensation under a work experience program operated by or approved by a secondary or post-secondary institution.

9.16 **‘Workplace’** means any land, premises, location, or thing at, upon, in, or near which a worker works, and may include but is not limited to:

9.16.1 physical and virtual work environments (including vehicles);

9.16.2 locations visited by Workers while travelling on City-related business; or,

9.16.3 locations of work-based social gatherings, training, and conference or travel.

9.17 **‘Workplace Parties’** means Supervisors, Workers, Joint Health and Safety Committees, unions and associations, service contractors, students, and volunteers.

9.18 **‘Workplace Violence’** means:

9.18.1 The exercise of physical force by a person against a Worker, in a workplace, that causes or could cause physical injury to the Worker;

9.18.2 An attempt to exercise physical force against a Worker, in a Workplace, that could cause physical injury to the Worker; and,

9.18.3 A statement or behaviour that is reasonable for a Worker to interpret as a threat to exercise physical force against the Worker, in a Workplace, that could cause physical injury to the Worker.

10. References and Resources

This Council Policy should be read and applied in conjunction with the following references and resources as updated from time to time. Please note that some of the following documents may not be publicly available.

10.1 External references

- [Occupational Health and Safety Act](#)

10.2 References to related bylaws, Council policies, and administrative directives

- [Council Handbook](#)
- [Code of Conduct for Members of Council](#)
- [Council-Staff Relations Policy](#)
- [Occupational Health and Safety Policy](#)
- [Respectful Workplace Policy](#)

10.3 References to related corporate-wide procedures, forms, and resources

- [Fire Workplace Injury/Illness Agilepoint Form](#)

- [Preventing and Addressing Workplace Violence Standard Operating Procedure](#)
- [Supervisor's Report of Employee Accident Form](#)
- [Multi-Workplace Joint Health and Safety Committee Terms of Reference](#)
- [Workplace Incident Report Agilepoint Form](#)

11. Revision History

Date	Description
2018/05/30	Approved; Replaces Workplace Violence Prevention (12.9.1)
2019/11/20	Amended by Council Resolution CW470-2019
2021/03/24	Scheduled Review. Administrative amendments were made to the policy. Amendments approved by Council Resolution No. C082-2021
2022/05/23	Scheduled Review. Administrative amendments made to the Policy. Amendments approved by Committee of Council Resolution CW271-2022. Inclusion of Statement of Commitment consistent with Respectful Workplace Policy. Workplace definition to reflect physical and virtual work environments. Expanded Reprisal definition. Links reviewed and updated.
2023/09/13	Scheduled Review. Administrative amendments made to the Policy. Updated Ministry name to Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training, Skills and Development. Amendments approved by Council Resolution No. CW293-2023
2024/10/23	Scheduled Review. Administrative amendments made to the Policy. Amendments approved by Council Resolution No. CW382-2024
2025/10/23	Next Scheduled Review