



Title:	VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE
Adopted:	November 2, 2010
Reviewed:	October 2013, September 2022
Revised:	January 2018, June 2023, October 2023
Authorization:	Occupational Health and Safety Act (Section 32)
Related:	Occupational Health and Safety Policy (HR.002) Workplace Harassment Policy (HR.001) Code of Conduct Policy (SHSM.003) Respectful Workplace Policy (HR.003) Bullying Prevention and Intervention (SHSM.004)

Policy

It is the policy of the Bloorview School Authority to address workplace violence towards workers from all possible sources (students, co-workers, trustees, visitors such as parents and community members, volunteers, permit holders, contractors and workers of other organizations who work on or are invited onto Authority property). Violent behaviour towards workers in the workplace is unacceptable.

Guiding Principles

1. Bloorview School Authority believes in the prevention of workplace violence and promotes a violence-free workplace in which all people respect one another and work together to achieve common goals. Any act of workplace violence is unacceptable conduct. Workplace violence in any form erodes the mutual trust and confidence that are essential to the well-being of our staff.
2. Definitions from the Occupational Health and Safety Act:
 - a) Workplace: land, premises, location or thing at, upon, in or near which a worker works
 - b) Worker: a person who performs work or supplies services for monetary compensation
 - c) Supervisor: a person who has charge of a workplace or authority over a worker
 - d) Workplace Violence:
 - the exercise of physical force by a person against a worker, in a workplace, that causes or could cause physical injury to the worker;
 - an attempt to exercise physical force against a worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to a worker;

- a statement or behaviour that is reasonable for a worker to interpret as a threat to exercise physical force against a worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to a worker.

3. According to Section 264 of the Criminal Code of Canada, verbal assault is legally described as "Uttering a Threat". The Code states that "[e]very one commits an [assault] offence who, in any manner, knowingly utters, conveys or causes any person to receive a threat
 - (a) to cause death or bodily harm to any person;
 - (b) to burn, destroy or damage real or personal property; or
 - (c) to kill, poison or injure an animal or bird that is the property of any person."
4. The Authority and its workers recognize that, wherever possible, the best way to protect workers from exposure to violence is to reduce the threat of violence or to reduce the risk involved
5. There is a shared responsibility for the prevention of workplace violence. Every Authority worker regardless of job title has direct responsibility and accountability for violence prevention as an essential part of the job.
6. The working environment is any place where workers perform work or work-related duties or functions and includes Authority sanctioned social events.
7. The Supervisory Officer shall develop and maintain a workplace violence program that implements this Policy. The program shall include the following:
 - (a) measures and procedures to assess risk and to protect workers from workplace violence
 - (b) means of summoning immediate assistance
 - (c) a protocol for workers to report workplace violence
8. There are several types of workplace violence:
 - (a) External perpetrators (vandalism, assaults by a person with no relationship to the workplace),
 - (b) Client/customer (physical or verbal) assault or the threat of such and assault on a worker by a client/family member or student,
 - (c) Worker to worker (physical or verbal assault from worker or former worker: includes harassment, stalking and bullying),
 - (d) Sexual harassment or abuse of any kind
 - (e) Domestic Violence (personal relationship).
9. This policy and the following procedures should be reviewed annually

PROCEDURES

10. The Authority shall investigate and deal with all incidents, complaints, or threats of workplace violence in a timely, fair, and equitable manner. The Authority shall take every precaution reasonable for the protection of workers by developing a safety plan that may include limited disclosure of information pertaining to individuals with a his-

tory of violent behavior. The privacy of all concerned shall be respected to the extent possible as per applicable legislation.

11. The Authority is committed to the implementation of measures and procedures for the reduction of violent incidents through the assessment of risk, by providing workers information related to risk of workplace violence of a person with a history of workplace violence and instruction on how to report, and how the Authority will investigate.
12. In conjunction with its responsibilities and duties as outlined in the Occupational Health and Safety Act, the Authority will take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances for the protection of a worker.
13. Workers shall report all incidents of workplace violence to the Principal using the Workplace Violence Incident Report (Appendix A), including disclosures of domestic violence pertaining to workers, to their immediate supervisor.
14. A copy of the policy and procedure shall be posted in a prominent location where workers are likely to see it.
15. Workers will be provided with information about appropriate Student Support Plans and/or Safety Plans.
16. Instruction or training about this policy and the following procedures should occur annually. Such training should, at least, include a review of these materials and may include reference to an on-line module.
17. Adequate arrangements must be made to investigate cases where violence and assaults against workers have occurred. Such arrangements should take into account:
 - a) any medical needs of the victim
 - b) adequate time to thoroughly acquire all relevant details
 - c) participation of the Health and Safety committee reps
 - d) any recommended follow up activities or changes to procedure.
18. The Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committees will review the effectiveness of anti-violence policies.
19. Regarding the disclosure of Students' Personal Information
 - a) Given their obligation to respond to serious student incidents and all inappropriate and disrespectful student behaviour that is likely to have a negative impact on the school climate, Workers who work directly with students may need to know, for any particular student, those behaviour(s) that may present a potential risk of physical harm to school staff or students.
 - b) Principals are only permitted to share information documented in the OSR with workers who do not have access to the OSR, if disclosure is necessary, so that workers can carry out their duties, including their duty to respond to inappropriate and disrespectful student behaviour. In such cases, principals may share only the necessary information pertaining to behaviour that may present risk of physical harm. The Authority has policies in place for workers regarding the confidentiality of information. Prior to disclosure, the Principal will remind work-

ers that they must treat any information disclosed about a student or incident as confidential.

20. In cases where a risk of violence to a worker has been clearly identified, the Authority shall establish and maintain measures and procedures to reduce the likelihood of incidents.

It is understood that the measures and procedures are in addition to and not a replacement for any particular training program about dealing with violence.

In developing measures and procedures to prevent violence, options such as job redesign and staffing assignments will be considered along with the need for personal protective equipment or alarms.

21. A worker will report to the Principal, Vice- Principal or HR Manager any incident where the worker is subjected to, witnesses or has knowledge of workplace violence or has reason to believe that workplace violence (including domestic violence) may occur.

22. In the event that the worker(s) identifies a safety risk the worker shall:

- a) Immediately bring the matter to the attention of the Principal, Vice-Principal or HR Manager.
- b) Meet with the Principal or designate to assess the degree of risk and jointly develop a plan to ensure the safety of the worker while in the performance of the worker's duties, a copy of plan will be provided to the Worker.

23. Such a plan shall include, but not be limited to:

- a) A worker's rights under the Occupational Health and Safety Act
- b) The recognition that each child/situation is different and that no one generic plan serves the needs of all.
- c) An identification of the risks to the worker.
- d) An identification of the triggers to a particular situation or signals that the likelihood of a possible situation has increased
- e) A debriefing with worker(s) to take place within 24 hours of incident
- f) Transfer to a different class or exclusion of the student
- g) Consultation with the hospital if the incident involved an in-patient or hospital staff.
- h) The need for additional staff support (e.g., Social Work or CYW from the Hospital)
- i) Temporary reassignment of worker or workers involved in the violent incident
- j) Referral to crisis related counseling
- k) Provisions for transportation and accompaniment (if necessary) to the hospital and/or home at the Authority's expense.
- l) If appropriate, provisions to minimize the situations in which the worker is working alone and/or provisions for such a worker to seek immediate assistance (e.g., buzzer, walkie-talkie, maintain eye contact with another etc).
- m) If appropriate, the presence of an adequate level of trained workers.

- n) Consideration as to whether training is needed (e.g., Behaviour Management Systems, CPI, seizures)
24. The Authority shall ensure that all forms required under the Occupational Health and Safety Act, and the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act are completed.
 25. The Authority and the Union recognize that where preventative measures have failed to prevent violent incidents, counselling, and support (e.g., EAP program) must be available to help victims recover from such incidents.
 26. The Authority will assist a worker(s) who is threatened or assaulted at work to consult with police regarding possible charges against the assailant.
 27. Compensation for damage, repair and/or replacement resulting from a confirmed act of workplace violence may be provided for items worn or carried by the worker for actual costs incurred upon provision of a receipt.
 28. The Authority agrees that in all cases where there is an agreed upon need for personal safety the Authority shall provide alarms, paging systems or communication devices that will be effective in summoning immediate aid. The Authority administration will be responsible for the routine maintenance, repair and periodic testing of the alarm or paging system.
 29. All workers shall receive training about the use and reasonable care of such systems.
 30. The Authority agrees that there shall be no discrimination exercised or practiced with respect to any worker who is the victim of a violent incident arising while in the performance of the worker's assigned work.
 31. A Workplace Risk Assessment (see sample – Appendix B) will be completed and reviewed annually in consultation with the Joint Occupational Health and Safety committee to assess the risks of workplace violence that may arise from the nature of the workplace, the type of work or the conditions of work.

Report of a Workplace Violence Incident

Part A: Personal Information

Victim/Complainant Name: _____

Date of Occurrence: _____ Time: _____

Incident Details

Type of Violent Incident:

- Exercise of Physical Force
- Attempt to Exercise Physical Force
- Threat to Exercise Physical Force
- Sexual abuse / Sexual harassment
- Domestic violence
- Written/Verbal/Cyber abuse

Location of Incident:

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------|
| Classroom: | Gym: |
| Hallway: | Parking lot |
| Library | Stairs: |
| Washroom: | Elevator: |
| Playground: | |
| Other (specify): _____ | |

Witness (es): _____

Assailant(s): _____

Was there a weapon involved (if yes, describe): _____

Are there other victims/complainants (if yes, identify): _____

Were you injured? (if yes, describe): _____

Did you seek medical attention? Yes No

Was this a lost time injury? Yes No

Describe the nature of the injury and provide Doctor's contact information if available.

Authorities & Notifications

Authorities Contacted:

Principal/Vice –Principal: _____

Police Officer (name and badge number): _____

Union: _____

Agencies: _____

Part E: Specifics of Incident

Describe clearly how the incident occurred. (Do not include name(s) of students)

Name of person who completed this form, if other than the victim:

Date: _____

Signature: _____

I authorize BSA to give a copy of this form to the local union steward.

I DO NOT authorize BSA to give a copy of this form to the local union steward