


Policy Name:	WORKPLACE VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT		
Policy Number:	OHS-303	Formerly	OHS-17
 West Elgin Community Health Centre	Creation Date: September 2005	Reviewed Date: November 2015	Approved by: Executive Director

POLICY STATEMENT

The West Elgin Community Health Centre (the “Centre”) is committed to providing a working environment which is safe, secure, and free from harassment, threats, intimidation and violence. The Centre will not tolerate violent behaviour and will take all reasonable and practical measures to prevent violence and harassment and to protect employees from acts of violence and harassment.

All employees and others engaged in business with the Centre are responsible for preventing violence and harassment and reporting acts of violence or harassment that threaten or are perceived to threaten a safe working environment. The Centre will make every reasonable effort to ensure that no employee is exposed to violence or harassment in the workplace and will take appropriate disciplinary measures against any employee of the Centre committing violence against or harassing another employee up to and including dismissal. All employees and others engaged in business with the Centre are responsible for promptly reporting any incidents that they believe to constitute violence or harassment. All reported incidents will be taken seriously and dealt with appropriately.

Harassment is in no way to be construed as properly discharged management responsibilities including the delegation of work assignments, the assessment of discipline or any conduct that does not undermine the dignity of the individual. Neither is this policy meant to inhibit free speech or interfere with normal social relations.

APPLICATION

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, students, clients, visitors and persons engaged in business with the Centre. This policy is applicable at all workplace settings and at work-related business and social events that take place off-site. The Workplace Violence & Harassment Reporting Form will be used to record and report incidents or threats of violence.

DEFINITIONS

“WORKPLACE VIOLENCE” means (a) the exercise of physical force by a person against a worker in a workplace that causes, or could cause, physical injury to the worker; and/or (b) an attempt to exercise physical force against a worker in a workplace that could cause physical injury to the worker.

“WORKPLACE HARASSMENT” means 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.

Policy Name:	WORKPLACE VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT		
Policy Number:	OHS-303	Formerly	OHS-17

“DOMESTIC VIOLENCE” is understood to be a pattern of behaviour used by one person to gain power and control over another person who, he/ she has or has had an intimate relationship. This pattern of behaviour may include physical violence, sexual, emotional, and psychological intimidation, verbal abuse, stalking, and using electronic devices to harass and control.

PROCEDURES:

REPORTING PROCEDURES

All employees of the Centre, who observe or become aware of an incident of harassment or a potentially dangerous situation or domestic violence, will immediately notify their manager or an alternate manager and complete the Violence & Harassment Reporting Form. Employees should also notify their manager if a restraining order is in effect or if a potentially violent or harassing non-work related situation exists that could result in violence or harassment in the workplace.

INVESTIGATION

All reports of workplace violence or harassment or domestic violence will be taken seriously and will be investigated promptly and thoroughly. The extent of the investigation shall be determined by the facts that are presented. All parties involved in a report of workplace violence or harassment will be interviewed as deemed appropriate. Potentially dangerous situations and precautionary measures will be communicated to employees who may be at risk.

CONFIDENTIALITY

To the extent practical, the Centre will maintain the confidentiality of those involved in the investigation.

REPORTING TO POLICE

All physical assaults will be reported to the police, as will any behaviour or threat of violence or harassment requiring police intervention or follow-up.

INTERVENTION

In the event that an employee is considered to be at risk of violence or harassment because of the nature of his/her job or because of threats from outside the workplace, including potential incidents of domestic violence a plan will be developed to minimize the risk and respond to any potential emergency situation.

NO REPRISAL

Reprisals or threats of reprisals are considered a serious violation of an employee’s rights, and will be dealt with accordingly. The employer shall not discharge, suspend, intimidate or impose any other penalty on, or otherwise discriminate against a person, because that person has made a complaint or given evidence or assisted in any way in the investigation and resolution of a complaint.

CORRECTIVE ACTION AND DISCIPLINE

If the Centre determines that an employee has engaged in workplace violence or harassment, appropriate corrective action will be taken, up to and including termination. If the violent or harassing behaviour is that of a non-employee, the Centre will take

Policy Name:	WORKPLACE VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT		
Policy Number:	OHS-303	Formerly	OHS-17

appropriate action in an effort to ensure that such behaviour is not repeated. However, not every complaint will warrant corrective action. Rather, corrective action will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

RISK MANAGEMENT

The Centre maintains protocols to ensure that appropriate individuals are informed of potential risks of violence or harassing behavior associated with clients and advised on precautionary measures.

INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

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

- Facilitation of medical attention
- Individual debriefing
- Counseling for employees affected
- Reporting to Police
- Team debriefing

RECORDS

All records of reports and investigations of workplace violence or harassment are kept as per legislative requirements.

RESPONSIBILITIES

CENTRE

- Provide support for this policy through resources, training and education initiatives and appropriate control measures.
- Review all reports and investigations of incidents of workplace violence or harassment in a prompt, objective and sensitive manner.
- Take immediate measures to respond appropriately to all reported incidents of workplace violence or harassment or reports or suspicion of domestic violence.
- Facilitate medical attention and appropriate support for individuals directly or indirectly involved.
- Take appropriate corrective and disciplinary action to prevent recurrences.

EMPLOYER

Review all reports of workplace violence or harassment and ensure appropriate actions have been taken.

MANAGEMENT/SUPERVISORY STAFF

- Ensure awareness, enforcement and compliance with respect to this policy.
- Assess hazards related to the conditions and circumstances of jobs being performed and provide an updated assessment as changes occur in job responsibilities and working conditions.
- Consult with staff, the Occupational Health and Safety Committee and external authorities on practical steps to minimize or eliminate risks of violence or harassment.
- Respond promptly to all reports of violence, harassment or domestic violence and address immediate threats to worker safety.

Policy Name:	WORKPLACE VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT		
Policy Number:	OHS-303	Formerly	OHS-17

- Investigate, document and debrief any incidents of violence or harassment.
- Take all reasonable and practical measures to protect employees, acting in good faith, who report workplace violence or harassment or act as witnesses, from reprisal or further violence.
- Take appropriate corrective action based on the nature of each incident and the actual or potential threat posed to worker safety.
- Identify exceptions that may apply to clients with developmental, cognitive or psychiatric disabilities; (exceptions must be communicated to staff and must not condone physical or other assaults against staff).
- Collaborate with team members, service partners and medical professionals in risk management protocols.
- Contact and consult with police as appropriate.
- Provide information including personal information to a worker about a person with “a history of violent or harassing behaviour” if the worker could be expected to encounter that person in the course of his/her work; and there is a risk of workplace violence or harassment likely to expose the worker to physical or other injury.

EMPLOYEES

- Have the right to refuse work in various circumstances where health and safety is in danger;
- Not engage in or ignore violent, threatening, intimidating or other disruptive behaviours;
- Promptly report to management any incident of workplace violence or harassment or suspicion of domestic violence which is experienced, witnessed, or known of, or there is reason to believe may occur;
- Participate in and comply with strategies to prevent and reduce risk of workplace violence or harassment;
- Understand and comply with risk management protocols.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

- Review hazards identified through workplace inspections, incident reports, and hazard assessments.
- Provide recommendations to management to reduce or eliminate the risk of violence or harassment.
- Participate in the investigation of critical injuries.
- Respond to employee concerns related to workplace violence or harassment; communicate the concerns to management.
- Review the effectiveness of this policy and recommend changes as appropriate.

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT COORDINATOR (EXECUTIVE/ HR ASSISTANT)

- Help to ensure that workplace violence, harassment and discrimination are not tolerated, ignored or condoned.

Policy Name:	WORKPLACE VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT		
Policy Number:	OHS-303	Formerly	OHS-17

- Ensure this policy and the supporting programs are implemented and maintained.
- Provide information and instruction to employees, students and volunteers as required.
- Collaborate with Managers, Coordinators and the OHS Committee on workplace violence risk assessments, the development and maintenance of Violence and Harassment-Free Workplace Programs and other preventative measures with respect to workplace violence and harassment.
- Provide employees, students and volunteers who have been subjected to workplace violence or harassment and their co-employees who witnessed the incident, with appropriate supports (EAP or other resources).
- Participate in the investigations of workplace violence and harassment.
- Work in collaboration with Manager and employee, student or volunteer to create a safety plan where appropriate.
- Ensure that employee, students and volunteers information related to workplace violence and harassment incidents are handled discreetly and confidentially respecting the privacy of all parties to the extent we are able to do so.