Workplace Violence Policy



This Model Policy on Workplace Violence is based on BC OHS laws but can be adapted for use in any part of Canada.

1. PURPOSE

ABC Company has adopted this Policy to ensure all workers are protected from acts and threats of violence in the workplace in accordance with the BC Workers Compensation Act ("Act"), the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation ("Regulation"), the ABC Company Occupational Health and Safety Program ("OHS Program"), and other applicable requirements and standards.

2. **DEFINITIONS**

For purposes of this Policy:

- "Administrative controls" means the provision, use, and scheduling of work activities and resources in the workplace, including planning, organizing, staffing, and coordinating, for the purpose of controlling risk;
- "Engineering controls" means the physical arrangement, design, or alteration of workstations, equipment, materials, production facilities, or other aspects of the physical work environment, for the purpose of controlling risk;
- "New worker" means any worker who is:
 - New to the workplace;
 - Returning to a workplace where the hazards in that workplace have changed during the worker's absence;

- •Affected by a change in the hazards of a workplace; or
- Relocated to a new workplace if the hazards in that workplace are different from the hazards in the worker's previous workplace;
- "Qualified" means being knowledgeable of the work, the hazards involved, and the means to control them by reason of education, training, and/or experience;
- "Violence" means the attempted or actual exercise by a person, other than a worker, of any physical force so as to cause injury to a worker, and includes any threatening statement or behaviour which gives a worker reasonable cause to believe that he/she is at risk of injury;
- "Young worker" means any worker under age 25.

3. POLICY STATEMENT

ABC Company recognizes the potential exists for violence or threats directed against workers by persons other workers, and has made every effort to identify and eliminate or minimize the sources of such acts or threats in accordance with this Policy. ABC Company will ensure that all workers are aware of the hazards and trained in the appropriate actions to take to protect against them. Workers must follow the safe work procedures implemented for their protection and immediately report all incidents of violence.

4. WORKERS THIS POLICY IS INTENDED TO PROTECT

The intent of this Policy is to ensure that **all workers** engaged to work at ABC Company work sites are protected from violence regardless of who pays or employs those workers, including:

- Full- or part-time workers employed by ABC Company;
- Temporary employees placed by an outside agency to work at the site;
- Contract labourers engaged to perform work at the site;

- Volunteers who work at the site for free; and
- Workers employed by prime contractors, contractors, and subcontractors to perform work at the site under a contract with ABC Company.

5. HAZARD ASSESSMENT

ABC Company will ensure that a violence hazard assessment is conducted by a qualified person in consultation with the workplace Joint Health and Safety Committee ("Safety Committee") or Health and Safety Representative ("Safety Representative"), or where no Safety Committee or Safety Representative exists, directly with the workers at the work site. The following risk factors will be considered in assessing violence hazards:

- Previous Experience: The history of violence in the particular workplace and the occupational experience in similar workplaces;
- Vulnerability of Workers: Which workers are at risk of violence based on personal characteristics such as gender, size, race, religion, etc., as well as duties, work location, etc.;
- Sources of Threat: What persons or groups of persons that workers come into contact with are likely to pose a threat of violence—members of the public, customers, clients, etc.;
- Work Processes: Whether the work involves an unusually high degree of risk, e.g., handling money or valuables, working with mentally unstable people, direct contact with irate customers, etc.;
- Work Conditions: Whether work conditions contribute to the danger of violence, e.g., working at night, working alone, working in dangerous neighbourhoods, etc.; and
- Workplace Characteristics: How physical conditions of the workplace affect the danger, e.g., are doors and windows secured, is security nearby, if workers deal with the public, are they in the open or behind secure

barriers, etc.

The following data will be used to assess violence hazards:

- Previous violence incident reports submitted by workers on the Section 04 -Violent Incident Report;
- Police reports of violence in the neighbourhood of the particular work site;
- Workers' perceptions of violence hazards as reflected in completed copies of the Section 04 -Violence Risk Assessment Questionnaire for Workers; and
- Safety Committee/Safety Representative meeting minutes and recommendations pertaining to violence hazards;

Violence hazard assessments will be re-done:

- At reasonably practicable intervals;
- When incidents of workplace violence occur;
- When a new work process involving risks of workplace violence is introduced;
- When a work process or operation changes in such a way as to create new violence risks; and
- Before construction of significant additions or alterations to the work site.

6. PREVENTION OF WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

6.1. Elimination or Minimization of Risk

Where the above hazard assessment identifies a hazard of violence to workers, ABC Company will:

- Establish procedures, policies, and work environment arrangements to completely eliminate the violence hazard if it is possible to do so; or
- Where total elimination of the hazard is not possible, establish procedures, policies, and work environment arrangements to minimize the risk to workers.

6.2. Control Measures

In eliminating or minimizing risks of violence to workers, ABC Company will consider the use of the following measures or combinations of measures:

- Practicable engineering controls, including but not limited to physical barriers, alarms, panic buttons, surveillance cameras, and lighting;
- Administrative controls, including but not limited to the development and implementation of safe work procedures for performing job tasks involving risks of violence, such as handling cash, working alone or in isolation, and dealing with irate customers; and
- Personal protective equipment ("PPE") and communications equipment.

6.3. System for Summoning Help

ABC Company will provide a system they can use to summon immediate assistance in case an incident of violence occurs.

6.4. System for Reporting Incidents or Threats of Violence

ABC Company will provide a system that workers can use to report acts or threats of violence anonymously (except to the extent disclosure of the worker's identity is necessary to investigate the complaint or required by law) and without suffering reprisals of any kind as soon as possible after the incident occurs.

6.5. System for Investigating Reports of Violence

ABC Company will develop and implement a system to ensure that reports of violence submitted by workers are taken seriously and investigated in a prompt, thorough, fair, and objective manner. Where required by law, incidents of violence will be reported to the BC Workers' Compensation Board ("Board").

6.6. Support for Workers Victimized by Violence

ABC Company will take appropriate steps to provide support and

counselling to workers who report incidents of violence and/or who suffer injuries or other adverse symptoms as a result of such incidents, including but not limited to advising such workers to consult a physician of the worker's choice for treatment or referral.

7. TRAINING, NOTIFICATION & INSTRUCTION

ABC Company will notify workers who may be exposed to the risk of violence of the nature and extent of the risk they face., including information about the risk of violence posed by persons with a history of violent behaviour whom the workers are likely to encounter in the course of their work.

ABC Company will provide violence prevention training to workers who may be exposed to the risk of violence, including instruction in:

The means for recognition of the potential for violence;

- The procedures, policies, and work environment arrangements in place to eliminate or minimize those risks, including but not limited to:
 - The safe work procedures for carrying out jobs involving risk of violence or responding to acts and threats of violence;
 - The method of summoning immediate help in case of violence;
- The procedures for reporting violent incidents;
- The procedures used to investigate and respond to reports of violent incidents; and
- The support available to workers who report or are victimized by violence.

New and young workers will receive training in violence in the workplace as part of their safety orientation training.

8. PRIME CONTRACTORS, CONTRACTORS & SUBCONTRACTORS

ABC Company will ensure that any prime contractors,

contractors, and subcontractors hired to perform work at its work sites which involves risk of violence are:

- Notified of the violence hazards posed to the workers performing the contract work;
- Notified of the terms of this Policy, applicable safe work procedures, and the controls in place to protect workers from risk of violence.

Prime contractors in charge of work at ABC Company work sites which involves risk of violence will ensure that workers engaged in the work receive protection from violence at least equivalent to that provided by this Policy and any ABC Company safe work procedures that apply to the work by either:

- Directly applying terms of this Policy and ABC Company safe work procedures applicable to the work; or
- Implementing alternative policies and procedures that meet the requirements of Part 4 of the Regulation and are coordinated with this Policy and applicable safe work procedures in carrying out the work.

9. ANNUAL REVIEW

ABC Company will, in consultation with the workplace Safety Committee or Safety Representative, review this Policy every year or more frequently in response to changes in work operations, incidents of violence, or other indications that cast doubt on the effectiveness of the Policy. Such review will consider the following records generated during the review period:

- Reports of violent incidents submitted by workers;
- Reports of investigations of violent incidents reported by workers;
- Recommendations related to violence submitted by the workplace Safety Committee or Safety Representative;
- Corrective actions undertaken to address problems with this Policy; and

•Illness/Injury reports submitted to the Board in connection with violence.

Legislation/Regulations/Standards

Workers Compensation Act, RSBC 1996, c 492

Occupational Health and Safety Regulation, BC Reg 296/97