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Introduction:
York University is committed to providing a safe learning and work environment and maintaining a workplace that is free of workplace violence as required by the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) and the University’s Occupational Health and Safety Policy and the Policy of Workplace Violence (see Appendix D). This document formally establishes this commitment as implemented through this program. This Program is not intended to extinguish rights, remedies and responsibilities under a collective agreement.

I. Objectives:

1. To assist faculty and staff in addressing workplace violence.

2. To provide guidelines on:
   - Conducting a workplace violence risk assessment
   - Developing preventative measures
   - Reporting and investigating workplace violence
   - Incident follow-up

3. To take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances to prevent workplace violence.

II. Standards and Legislation:

1. The Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA, Part III.0.1) was amended in 2009 with respect to violence and harassment in the workplace. It requires all employers to take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances to protect workers against the risk of workplace violence.

2. The Criminal Code of Canada makes it an offence for employers and those who direct work who fail to take reasonable steps to prevent bodily harm to an employee or any other person arising from work.

III. Definitions:

Workplace violence as defined by the Occupational Health and Safety Act 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.

(b) an attempt to exercise physical force against a worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker,
(c) a statement or behaviour that it 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.

Examples of workplace violence, under this definition, may include but are not limited to:

- Threatening behaviour – shaking fists in front of a worker, or pushing a worker.
- Verbal or written threats – any expression of intent to inflict physical force that could cause physical injury. For example, “You better watch your back, I am going to make you pay for what you did to me.”, “If you don’t leave me alone you will regret it.” Or involving body language or behaviours that leave little doubt in the mind of the recipient that the perpetrator intends to cause physical injury.
- Physical Attacks – hitting, shoving, pushing, kicking, biting, pinching or inciting an animal to attack.

IV. Roles and Responsibilities: Workplace Violence

Shared Responsibility

- Everyone involved with York University shares a responsibility for creating and maintaining an environment free of workplace violence.
- Every effort must be made to work toward the resolution of complaints by all those affected.
- Anyone who witnesses workplace violence is responsible for bringing it to the attention of their supervisor or manager and participate in the investigation of the complaint.

Divisional/Department Head or Delegate (President, Vice-President, Associate/Assistant Vice-President, Dean, Principal, Director, University Librarian)

- Promote a non-violent workplace.
- Assess specific risks for their Faculty/department and review/revise assessment as often as is necessary to ensure that the related policy and program continue to protect workers from workplace violence.
- Communicate this policy and program to employees within their Faculty/Department.
- Implement workplace arrangements and appropriate procedure(s) that minimize the risk of workplace violence (including domestic violence that may result in physical injury in the workplace if management becomes aware, or ought reasonably to be aware).
• Monitor the effectiveness of this program and applicable procedure(s) on an ongoing basis.
• Identify training needs for employees.
• Effect informal resolution as appropriate and/or implement any follow-up actions including referral to the AVP-HR as required by this program.
• Implement any actions resulting from an investigator’s findings.
• Keep detailed records of any incidents of workplace violence or investigations and forward a copy to the AVP HR/ER as required

Management Supervisor i.e. CPM Manager, Dean, Principal, University Librarian

• Promote a non-violent workplace.
• Provide input as requested to assess specific risks for their Faculty/department and review/revise assessment as often as is necessary to ensure that the related policy and program continue to protect workers from workplace violence.
• Communicate this policy and program to employees within their Faculty/Department.
• Identify training needs for employees.
• Effect informal resolution as appropriate, escalate to the next level manager as appropriate and/or implement any follow-up actions including completion of the Incident Recording Form as required by this program.
• Implement any actions resulting from an investigator’s findings.
• Keep detailed records of any incidents of workplace violence or investigations and forward a copy to the Department Head or Delegate as required

Local Contact (e.g. Associate Dean, Executive Officer, Administrative Officer, Director, HR Advisor, etc.)

• Promote a non-violent workplace.
• Assist Management Supervisor in complaint and informal resolution process
• Coordinate training to employees on workplace violence
• Participate in workplace violence investigations where required
• Provide support, education and counsel to managers with respect to dealing with workplace violence issues
• Provide information to employees on various support programs/mechanisms available to them (e.g. Employee Assistance Program).
Worker

- Promote a non-violent workplace.
- Provide input as requested to assess specific risks for their Faculty/department and review/revise assessment as often as is necessary to ensure that the related policy and program continue to protect workers from workplace violence.
- Cooperate with the employer in any investigation under the program. Abide by the requirements of this program and applicable procedure(s).
- Report any incidents of workplace violence that have been experienced or witnessed in accordance with the applicable procedure(s). This includes domestic violence of which they are aware that may result in physical injury in the workplace.
- Participate in training as required under this program.

Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committees and Health and Safety Representatives

- Participate and play a consultative role in the development and periodic review of this program.
- Receive the results of the workplace violence risk assessments.
- Be notified in the event of any work refusal and/or critical injury due to workplace violence.

Union

- Provide representation to workers in accordance with the collective agreement and legislative requirements
- Promote a non-violent workplace.
- Provide input through the Joint Health and Safety Committees

Department of Human Resources

- Participate in the development, implementation and ongoing management/coordination of this program.
- Provide training to employees on workplace violence.
- Participate in workplace violence investigations as required.
- Provide support, education and counsel to managers with respect to dealing with workplace violence issues.
- Designate a person to act as a workplace coordinator with respect to workplace violence.
- Provide information to employees on various support programs/mechanisms available to them (e.g. Employee Assistance Program)
Department of Faculty Relations

- Participate in the development, implementation and ongoing management/coordination of this program.
- Provide advice on workplace violence investigations as required.
- Provide support, education and counsel to managers with respect to dealing with workplace violence issues.

Occupational Health and Safety

- Participate in the development, implementation and ongoing management/coordination of this program.
- Liaise with relevant external governmental agencies (e.g. Ontario Ministry of Labour) where required.
- Participate in workplace violence investigations as required.
- Provide advice to workplace parties during a work refusal under sec.43 of the OHSA.
- Conduct an annual review of the workplace violence program and make revisions where needed.
- Provide results of workplace violence risk assessments to the applicable JHSC.
- Provide notices to the JHSC as required by the OHSA.

Security Services, Department of Campus Services and Business Operations

- Coordinate response to reports of workplace violence where there is a risk of physical force that could cause physical injury or whenever 911 is called.
- Liaise with Toronto Police Services where required.
- Provide security assessments where requested and advice regarding available procedures/measures for summoning immediate assistance.
- Provide training to employees in areas where there is a high risk of workplace violence.
- Provide assistance or advice for workers working alone.
- Record and track all reported incidents concerning workplace violence.
- Provide safety tips for employees about risks associated with working late, work related travel, dealing with obscene and harassing communication (see Appendix B).
- Inform OHS of any reported incidents of workplace violence resulting in critical injuries.
- Conduct Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) audits upon request.
V. Identifying Risk Factors for Workplace Violence

All workplaces must be assessed by the Department Head or Designate for risk factors pertaining to workplace violence. Certain types of work or conditions can put workers at higher risk from workplace violence, generally from strangers, clients, students or customers. The list below identifies some of the risk factors for workplace violence:

- working with unstable or volatile persons
- handling money or valuables
- mobile workplaces - transporting passengers and/or goods
- direct contact with clients/students/customers with the likelihood of dealing with irate persons
- working alone or in small numbers

Training initiatives and resource documents relative to the above-noted risks are contained later in the document.

Sources of Information relevant to identifying risks of workplace violence

1. Solicit input from workers
   Hold meetings with managers and workers in various jobs and locations to seek their input. This will assist to:
   - identify risks that workers perceive and their sense of personal safety in the workplace
   - consider workers’ experiences of violence and whether the situations involved strangers, clients, co-workers, students, estranged partners or family members
   - identify jobs or locations in which workplace violence is a concern; and
   - gather opinions about the effectiveness of the controls currently in place.

2. Examine other internal documentation
   Consider what other internal documents might identify risks of workplace violence, such as:
   - workplace inspection/safety audit reports
   - reports about emergencies, incidents and accidents
   - grievances

3. Consider circumstances that would be common to similar workplaces
   A specific workplace may not have experienced a violent incident, but may share risks of workplace violence with similar workplaces.
VI. Conducting a Workplace Violence Risk Assessment

Having identified the risks of workplace violence the next step is for the Department Head or Delegate to assess the risks of workplace violence associated with the nature of the workplace, the type of work or the conditions of work. It also takes into account the policies, programs, training, education and control factors that are in place in the workplace.

Results of Assessment

Assessment of the risks of workplace violence should involve workers, managers and a review of the workplace inspection reports. The OHSA requires that the JHSC and Health and Safety Representative be advised of the results of the assessment.

Reassessment

The OHSA requires that the risks of workplace violence be reassessed as often as is necessary to ensure that the related policy and program continue to protect workers from workplace violence. For example, a reassessment should be undertaken if:

- The workplace moves or the existing workplace is renovated or reconfigured;
- There are significant changes in the type of work (e.g., more expensive items are being sold);
- There are significant changes in the conditions of work (e.g., closing at a later hour);
- There is new information on the risks of workplace violence; or,
- A violent incident indicates a risk related to the nature of the workplace, type of work, or conditions of work were not identified during an earlier assessment.

Assessment Process:

Step 1 - Summarize the information gathered during the identification stage.

This will assist in determining whether there are jobs or locations in which violent incidents have already occurred, how your workers perceive their safety at work, and whether there are higher risks of workplace violence in your workplace because of the type of operation, the work activities or the conditions of work. This information should also help to determine whether different jobs require separate assessments.

Step 2 - Complete the Workplace Violence Assessment document (Appendix A).

The Assessment is divided into two parts:
- the first part is a general assessment that should be completed by all workplaces;
the second part is a table to help you identify the specific risks associated with work activities or the conditions of work and to rate the risks. Only those assessments relevant to the workplace or to specific jobs or locations need to be completed.

Step 3 - Control the Risks of Workplace Violence

The Workplace Violence Prevention Program is a measure intended to control the risks of workplace violence. The OHSA requires that measures and procedures be adopted to control risks associated with workplace violence. For example the measures and procedures should control risks associated with:
- the physical aspects of the workplace (e.g. doors that remain locked or the use of security cameras)
- specific jobs (e.g. front-line service workers);
- specific situations (e.g. working alone, or dealing with clients); and
- specific activities (e.g. closing or banking procedures).

Implement appropriate control measures (e.g., engineering or administrative controls, provision of communication devices or equipment, training, etc.) for the risks identified in the risk assessment to mitigate/reduce risks.

Step 4 - Monitoring and Evaluating the Risks of Workplace Violence

The workplace policy and program will be reviewed as often as is necessary and at least annually.

If there has been a violent incident, the workplace reassessment should analyze the need for measures and procedures to:
- prevent similar incidents from occurring in the future
- protect workers from such incidents; and
- improve the workplace response to similar incidents.

The ongoing monitoring and evaluation should involve the participation from workers, managers and the JHSCs.

VII. Training and Prevention for Workplace Violence

Proposed Approach

Information Brochure:
  a) All workers shall be provided with a copy of the “York University Workplace Violence Prevention Policy and Program” brochure (http://www.yorku.ca/dohs/documents/Violence_Prevention_Brochure.pdf)

  b) Instructors and Management Supervisors should be aware of the Guidelines for Managing Students behavior in Academic Settings (http://vpap.info.yorku.ca/important-links/).

e-learning:

All workers shall attend the Workplace Violence Prevention Awareness e-learning (http://www.yorku.ca/dohs/training-workplaceviolence.html)

Safety Tips and Other Preventive Measures and Training:
Based on the Workplace Risk Assessment, units may determine that the potential exposure to workplace violence necessitates the need to develop specific skills and knowledge.

The Training and Prevention model (illustrated below) therefore reflects the need for workers to possess requisite skills and knowledge as the potential for risk increases.

Depending on the level of risk of workplace violence, worker training can range from reviewing relevant safety tips, posting of safety tips, (from the risk assessment in Appendix A) scheduling classroom training or arranging for specialized training by external professionals. In some cases, a written prevention procedure may need to be developed or the workplace’s physical design may need to be reviewed or assessed in regard to the specific risks for the task. A worker or groups of workers should enroll in the appropriate training course, based on the results of the risk assessment for their job.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prevention Measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Managers review relevant safety tips with employee groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source: Appendix B: Safety Tips for Specific Risk Factors of Workplace Violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Post safety tips (optional)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source: Appendix B</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Sustaining a Respectful Workplace Job Aids (download from the What’s New section http://www.yorku.ca/hr/hrlearn.html)
  Source: Learning and Development, Department of HR

• Taking the H.E.A.T. Job Aids (download from the What’s New section http://www.yorku.ca/hr/hrlearn.html)
  Source: Learning and Development HR

Other Resources:
  - Source: http://www.ccohs.ca/products/print.html
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk Level</th>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Delivery Method</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Mandatory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All (Low, Moderate, High)</td>
<td>Workplace Violence Prevention Awareness</td>
<td>Behaviours associated with workplace violence, causes of violent behaviour, risk groups, legislation</td>
<td>OHS Website <a href="http://www.yorku.ca/dohs/training-workplaceviolence.html">http://www.yorku.ca/dohs/training-workplaceviolence.html</a></td>
<td>e-learning</td>
<td>20 minutes</td>
<td>Yes, all employees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Workplace Harassment and Violence Prevention Program for Managers</td>
<td>Outlines four steps for preventing workplace violence. Alerts you to be aware of potential threatening behaviors. Understand the roles and responsibilities of the manager in preventing, investigating and reporting incidents</td>
<td>Learning &amp; Organizational Development <a href="http://www.yorku.ca/yelc/index.htm">http://www.yorku.ca/yelc/index.htm</a></td>
<td>workshop</td>
<td>2 hours</td>
<td>Yes, all managers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All (Low, Moderate, High)</td>
<td>Respect in a Workplace Workshop</td>
<td>An awareness of what it means to build a community where diverse views are valued. Promotes workplace of respect.</td>
<td>Learning &amp; Organizational Development <a href="http://www.yorku.ca/yelc/index.htm">http://www.yorku.ca/yelc/index.htm</a></td>
<td>Workshop</td>
<td>2 hours</td>
<td>Strongly recommended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Be Safe (Not Sorry) Preventing Violence in the Workplace</td>
<td>Helpful strategies to prevent workplace violence and steps to take to protect yourself and others.</td>
<td>Learning &amp; Organizational Development <a href="http://www.yorku.ca/yelc/index.htm">http://www.yorku.ca/yelc/index.htm</a></td>
<td>Workshop/Video</td>
<td>2 hours</td>
<td>Based on identified needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Diffusing Hostility through Customer Service</td>
<td>Learn communication skills to handle hostile customers.</td>
<td>Learning &amp; Organizational Development <a href="http://www.yorku.ca/yelc/index.htm">http://www.yorku.ca/yelc/index.htm</a></td>
<td>Workshop</td>
<td>2 hours</td>
<td>Based on identified needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Verbal Judo Workshop</td>
<td>How to handle verbal abuse in a professional manner; active listening; body language; the art of paraphrasing.</td>
<td>Security Services <a href="http://www.yorku.ca/security/verbaljudo.htm">http://www.yorku.ca/security/verbaljudo.htm</a></td>
<td>Workshop</td>
<td>Non-security staff (1) 8 hour or (2) 4 hour sessions. Security (2) eight hour sessions.</td>
<td>Based on identified needs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
VIII. No Reprisal

York University considers workplace violence a serious matter as well as the complaint procedure under this Program. This Program prohibits reprisals against workers who have made good faith complaints or provided information regarding a complaint or incident of workplace violence. Workers who engage in reprisals or threats of reprisals may be disciplined up to and including dismissal from employment.

Reprisal includes:

- Any act of retaliation that occurs because a worker has complained of or provided information about an incident of workplace violence;
- Intentionally pressuring a person to ignore or not report an incident of workplace violence; and
- Intentionally pressuring a person to lie or provide less than full cooperation with an investigation of a complaint or incident of workplace violence.

Although false and frivolous accusations of violence occur in rare instances, such false accusations are serious offences because they may have serious consequences for the accused. The insufficiency of evidence to prove a complaint does not mean that the complaint was submitted in bad faith. A malicious or bad faith complaint means that a person has made a complaint knowing that it was untrue. A worker who makes a false complaint or otherwise abuses this program may be disciplined up to and including dismissal from employment. Such discipline is not a reprisal or breach of this policy.

IX. Reporting a Complaint, Informal Resolution and Formal Investigation Procedure for Workplace Violence

*Note: All memoranda and reports made in the course of action taken pursuant to these procedures shall be considered to be confidential to the parties involved and to those who, in providing advice and carrying out duties contemplated in these procedures, are required to know of their existence and content. Documents must be maintained as part of the file.

a) Reporting

All workers have the obligation under the OHS Act to report incidents of Workplace Violence that are experienced or witnessed to their Management Supervisor. If the worker’s Management Supervisor is involved in the workplace violence, the worker shall contact the next level manager. In all cases, please follow the reporting procedures as outlined below.

If the complaint involves a student, the Management Supervisor should refer to the Guidelines for Managing Disruptive Student Behaviour in Academic Settings (http://vpap.info.yorku.ca/important-links/) and contact the Office of Student Conflict Resolution for advice.
If the complaint involves an employee of York University, appropriate measures will be taken to ensure that the complaint is addressed expeditiously and in a manner that protects the privacy of those involved in the complaint. Union representation will be made available as requested or required.

Complaints that Pose an Immediate Risk of Physical Injury

i) Depending on the situation, the Worker or the Management Supervisor shall immediately call 911 then contact Security Services at 416-736-5333 or ext. 33333 (Security Services may contact the Office of Emergency Preparedness for a serious incident or if the incident is in progress.) If the Worker initiates contact with Police and/or Security Services, the worker shall notify the Management Supervisor.

ii) The Management Supervisor shall arrange for a safe place that is as near as reasonably possible to the worker’s workstation. The affected employee(s) must remain in the safe place and available for investigation.

iii) In a situation where Security Services is contacted, no other investigation should proceed until Security Services completes its investigation. If police are involved (criminal act involved), the incident response team shall communicate and cooperate with the police, so as not to impede or compromise their investigation.

Complaints that do not pose an Immediate Risk of Physical Injury

i) A worker who experiences workplace violence (the Complainant) shall report to his or her Management Supervisor any incident or concerns regarding possible incidents of workplace violence.

ii) The Management Supervisor shall review the complaint and consider whether interim measures are required for the protection of the worker.

iii) The Management Supervisor considers whether an informal resolution to the complaint is possible.

iv) The Management Supervisor must complete Appendix C – Violence Incident Recording Form within 24 hours of the incident/concern being reported to them.

b) Informal Resolution

A Management Supervisor who receives a complaint of workplace violence which appears to be capable of resolution informally shall use reasonable efforts to assist the Complainant in effecting informal resolution.
i) Efforts at informal resolution should include a meeting with the appropriate parties who have been provided the details of the complaint and an opportunity to respond. Where required or desired, the parties at the meeting may include representatives of union(s) of which each of the complainant and respondent are members.

ii) At this stage, the Management Supervisor may also seek assistance from other managers, including the Executive Officer and/or the Administrative Officer and from Faculty Relations and/or Employee Relations.

iii) If the Department/Divisional head/Dean believes that informal resolution is not possible then he or she shall first consult with the AVP HR or Faculty Relations, as appropriate. If, following the consultation, the view remains that the matter cannot be resolved informally and the decision is to proceed with a formal investigation, then the Department/Divisional Head/Dean or central HR designate shall forward the complaint in Appendix C format to AVP-HR to initiate a formal investigation.

The Management Supervisor will (in consultation with other University officials/offices, including the AVP-HR and Faculty Relations) make a decision as to what remedial action, if any, should take place in the workplace while the investigation is taking place.

iv) Upon receipt of a Complaint, the AVP-HR shall initiate a formal investigation and/or as appropriate to the circumstance, appoint a response team.

Complaint Process Roles and Responsibilities:

Worker – a worker is required to report incidents of workplace violence to either the Police/Security where there is an immediate risk of physical injury and any other complaint of workplace violence to their Manager

Management Supervisor – is responsible to report incidents to either the Police/Security where there is an immediate risk of physical injury and for ensuring that complaints are appropriately addressed, either through informal resolution, or by referring the complaint to the Office of the AVP-HR for a formal investigation.

Witness – a person who is named as a witness to an incident of workplace violence may be called upon to provide details of the incident. To the extent possible, appropriate steps will be taken to ensure confidentiality and safety of all involved.
c) **Formal Investigation:**

1. As soon as a request for a formal workplace violence investigation is received by the AVP-HR shall appoint an investigator from a list of investigators, and the investigation shall proceed expeditiously and on a confidential basis.

2. The Investigator will responsible for establishing the facts.

3. The Complainant, Respondent and Witnesses may be called upon with minimal advance notice. Limited notice is essential to confidentiality and timeliness of the investigation process.

4. The Investigation will include interviews of the Complainant, the Respondent and any Witnesses. The Complainant, Respondent and Witnesses will be provided a copy of the information they provided during the course of the investigation. Union Representation will be provided as requested or required during the investigation process.

**Investigative Process:**

- The AVP-HR appoints a trained Investigator

- The Investigator interviews the Complainant(s)

- The Investigator interviews any Witnesses identified as having knowledge of the incident

- The Investigator interviews the Respondent(s), if any, to obtain the Respondent’s response to the allegations in the Complaint

- If required, the investigator will re-interview the Complainant(s), Respondent(s) or witnesses.

- The Investigator will prepare and submit a report summarizing the facts, and findings and conclude whether there is:
  1. sufficient evidence to substantiate a finding of violation of the policy/program,
  2. insufficient or lack of credible evidence to substantiate a finding of violation of the policy, or
  3. no credible evidence to substantiate a violation of the policy.

- Copies of the Investigator’s report will be distributed to the following recipients:
  1. the AVP-HR
  2. the Complainant(s)*
  3. the Respondent(s)*, if any
4. representatives of the union(s) of which the complainant and/or respondent are members,
5. Department Head or Delegate
6. Faculty Relations

- Based on the Investigator’s findings, the appropriate manager, in consultation with Faculty Relations, the AVP-HR in consultation with other University officials as relevant, shall determine whether further action is warranted (i.e. initiate corrective action) and advise the Complainant(s) and Respondent(s) in writing of the outcome. As applicable, a copy of the decision will be provided to the union(s) of which the Complainant and Respondent are members.

* Where a complaint is lodged by more than one complainant or is against more than one respondent, the complainant or respondent, as the case may be, shall receive only the portions of findings applicable to their specific complaint/response.

**Investigation Process Roles and Responsibilities:**

**Complainant** – must be able to provide details of the incident of workplace violence that shall be documented.

**Respondent** – will be required to respond to the allegations of the Complainant.

**Witness** – a person who is identified as having knowledge of the incident and who may be contacted during the Investigation to provide details of the incident, as required.

**Investigator** – The Investigator shall be a CPM employee, or an external investigator, trained to conduct investigations.

**X. Incident Follow-up**

a) Employee Support:

Employees who experience an incident of workplace violence that is a traumatic incident may require emotional support (e.g. critical incident stress management, post-traumatic incident counseling, and debriefing), job accommodations and/or medical treatment. The following York University resources may be contacted in the event that such services are required:

- Employee Assistance Program at 1-800-263-1401 (free hot-line, fee may apply for extended or group consultation).
- Employee Well Being Office (EWO)
- York University Psychology Clinic (http://www.yorku.ca/prtc/about.htm, fees apply)
Co-workers should be encouraged to talk about problems they may be experiencing and to be supportive of the affected employee. In some situations, a group debriefing, utilizing external qualified professionals, may be appropriate (contact EWO for assistance).

b) Remedial Action and Prevention Plan:

The Management Supervisor shall (in consultation with or involvement of the appropriate manager or Senior Officer(s)):

- Review the incident.
- Outline what corrective or remedial actions are necessary to prevent or minimize the impact of repeat occurrences.
- Identify new or previously undefined risks, reassess and amend Risk Assessment Form. Forward a copy to OHS for distribution to JHSC or Health and Safety Representative.
- Review worker training and education programs and determine if they should be revised or if additional training should be provided.

c) Notice of an Incident as a Result of Workplace Violence

The Management Supervisor shall inform OHS immediately in the event of an incident of workplace violence that results in:

- death,
- critical injury*,
- a person becoming disabled from performing his or her usual work or requiring medical attention

OHS shall inform the Ministry of Labour and JHSC of the occurrence as per the OHSA.

*The term critical injury, as used above, is as defined by the OHSA.

XI. Domestic Violence

The Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) requires employers to take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances to protect a worker from domestic violence that would likely expose a worker to physical injury may occur in the workplace.

In accordance with the OHSA, workers are also expected to report to their Management Supervisor upon becoming aware that domestic violence that would likely expose a worker to physical injury may occur in the workplace.

Once a Management Supervisor becomes aware or ought to be aware that domestic violence that would likely expose a worker to physical injury may occur in the workplace, the manager/ supervisor is required to take specific steps to protect the individual worker and co-workers.
There are several actions that the Management Supervisor can undertake to assist the individual worker, who may be experiencing domestic violence, including:

- provide information on available counseling resources (for example through the Employee Assistance Program)
- developing a personal safety plan for the worker
- requesting assistance from Security Services/Police; and
- accommodating alternative work arrangements (schedule flexibility, changes in hours, transfer of location, etc.)
- suggest the worker consult with the applicable Union

In fulfilling the duty to take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances to protect a worker from domestic violence may outweigh an individual’s expectation of privacy. The privacy of the individual must be balanced with ensuring the safety of others. The Management Supervisor should treat the situation with the utmost confidentiality and communicate only to those who are required to know and is required to protect the worker from physical injury.

A Manager may seek assistance from the Executive Officer, Human Resources, Faculty Relations, Security Services and the OHS in developing a response to a situation of domestic violence that would likely expose a worker to physical injury may occur in the workplace.

**XI. Disclosure of Persons with a Violent History**

Management Supervisors are required to provide information, including personal information, to a worker about a person with “a history of violent behaviour” if,

(a) the worker could be expected to encounter the person in the course of his/her work; and
(b) the risk of workplace violence likely to expose the worker to physical injury. Personal information shall only be disclosed as is reasonably necessary to protect the worker from physical injury.

A Management Supervisor must seek assistance from the Executive Officer, Human Resources or Faculty Relations before disclosing any information.
Appendix A Workplace Violence Risk Assessment

Note: This form is also available in electronic (fillable) format. Go to [http://www.yorku.ca/dohs/documents/Workplace_Violence_Risk_Assessment.pdf](http://www.yorku.ca/dohs/documents/Workplace_Violence_Risk_Assessment.pdf)

**Purpose:** This Workplace Violence Risk Assessment is designed to assist the University in assessing the hazard of workplace violence and identifying possible measures, procedures and controls that can be implemented to control the risk of violence in the workplace.

“Workplace violence” is defined as (*Occupational Health and Safety Act, sec.1(1)*):

(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,
(b) an attempt to exercise physical force against a worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker,
(c) a statement or behaviour that it 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.

**Instruction:**

The Dean/Department Head or designate shall review the content of the risk assessment and
(i) determine whose input is required within the area to complete the assessment; and
(ii) determine if there will be one set of assessments filled out for the entire workplace, or whether there will be separate assessments for different jobs, tasks, or locations with similar risks of violence. For a large workplace, one may wish to divide the operations into workplaces or tasks that have similar risks of violence. For example, a fee collection office may divide its staff into those that deal with customers personally and those who work in the office with no customer contact.
(iii) commence the assessment process immediately.
(iv) take into account, (a) circumstances that would be common to similar workplaces; (b) circumstances specific to the workplace or other related past assessment/audit reports.
(v) solicit input from employees to evaluate the potential risk of violence within the department or work areas.
(vi) send a copy of the completed assessment(s) to the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS). OHS shall review, advise the Joint Health and Safety Committees of the results of the assessment and provide the committees a copy of the Assessment Report.

**Ref.:**

Workplace Violence Risk Assessment – Worksheet

Part I General Assessment

1. Physical Environment

Do you or your employees have any concerns about risk of workplace violence pertaining to the physical environment? Ex. lighting, entry control and security system, public counters, interior design and hidden areas, workplace location (neighbourhood).

No ☐ Yes ☐

If yes, please indicate areas of concern:
____________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________

Examples of Controls (e.g., installed access card entry, increased lighting, rearranged work station, placed service request to install locks on doors etc.) taken:
____________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________________

2. Incident History

Evaluate the history of violence in your workplace or related workplace by reviewing internal documentation (e.g., reports about emergencies, incidents and accidents, Joint Health and Safety Committee inspection reports etc.):

(i) If there are any documented incidents of violent situations, are there particular occupational groups or individual employees that appear to be most at risk (in terms of either frequency or severity of violence or potential violence)?

(ii) Is there any particular location that appears to have experienced a higher proportion of incidents of violence?

(iii) In broad terms, are there common recurring risks? If yes, what are the kinds of common recurring risks?

(iv) Indicate existing controls or preventive measures taken to prevent similar occurrence:
Certain types of work or conditions can put workers at higher risk from workplace violence. Review the list of specific risks associated with the type of work or conditions of work included in the table below. **If the risk exists, rate the risk using the guideline on page 4.** Ranking or prioritizing the risk factors is one way to help determine which are the most serious safety hazards and therefore those that need to be addressed first (e.g., by implementing controls) and the level of training required.

You may complete a separate sheet for each group of employees with similar tasks. Ex., Administrative Assistants, advisors etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty/Department:</th>
<th>Job/position:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Work Includes</td>
<td>Examples of Activities or Situations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Direct contact with the public including students or employees or customers with likelihood of dealing with irate persons. | • Working at complaint centre, appeals office  
• Involves in mediation  
• Carrying out legislative or policy enforcement duties  
• Service counter staff | Yes/No | Regularly =3  
Occasional=2  
Rarely=1 | High=3  
Mod=2  
Low=1 | H=High, (score=6)  
M=Moderate (score=4-5)  
L=Low (score 1-3) |
| Handling money, valuables | • Working at cashier station in a fixed location  
• Transporting cash to remote or isolated locations or at night  
• Handling new/expansive mobile devices, equipment and tools | | | |
| Working with unstable or volatile persons | • Providing a service (e.g, counseling) to persons with physiological, psychological, or psychiatric conditions and substance abuse issues  
• Working in premises where alcohol is served | | | |
| Working alone | • Working in a fixed location where there is limited or no access to communication tools  
• Working in a fixed location with a high potential of assault or robbery  
• Working in isolated areas within a worksite, away from other workers  
• Working in a remote worksite where public may have access  
• Working during late evening hours or early morning hours | | | |
| Mobile workplace or transporting passengers as part of your job | • Bus driver (public has physical access to driver/staff)  
• Working in remote unknown areas  
• Working in areas with limited or no access to communication tools  
• Working in situations where fare collection and enforcement of fares is required | | | |
If risk exists in column 3 above, refer to training initiatives in the Workplace Violence Program and resource document (Prevention Tips) in Appendix B. For training initiatives, if employees have more than one type of specific risk associated with their jobs, consider the rating with the highest risk level. For example, if any one of the rating above is “High”, the overall rating will be “High Risk”.

Risk Assessment Method

Category of Risk* = Severity + Frequency**

Notes:
1. *Risk inherent in the job assuming no controls in place.
2. **In this exercise, it is assumed that high frequency also leads to high probability of occurrence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Severity</th>
<th>Category of Risk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regularly, score=3</td>
<td>High, score=3</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Exposed may be part of the normal work routine or assignment | - Potential for fatal or critical injury
 - may be exposed to physical injury from physical assault, punching, kicking, hitting, weapons. | Total score= 6 |
| Occasionally, score=2 | Moderate, score=2                            | Moderate         |
| Infrequent        | Exposed may be part of the normal work routine or assignment | Total score= 4 - 5 |
| Rarely, score=1   | Low, score=1                                  | Low              |
| Not a normal part of the work routine or employees are rarely exposed to risk. | - Potential for first aid
 - may be exposed to behaviours that are disruptive and aggressive (e.g., shouting, slamming the door, walking out etc.) | Total score= 1 - 3 |

Example: A student advisor who works at a service counter responding to enquiries from students in the day time.

Specific risk: dealing with irate customer with potential of workplace violence

Frequency of risk = Moderate, since the worker may occasionally deals with irate customer. Score=2
Severity of risk= Low, worker may be shouted at by the customer demanding to see the manager. Score=1
Risk category= 2+1= 3(low)
Appendix B Safety Tips for Specific Risks Factors of Workplace Violence

These safety tips also include examples of control measures that protect workers from the potential hazard of violence. These tips can be used as resource or training materials by posting or distributing and reviewing with employees at staff meetings.

References:
Direct Contact with the Public (including students or employees or customers) With Likelihood of Dealing with Irate Persons.

- Know how to summon immediate assistance when an emergency occurs or is likely to occur
- Be familiar with warning signs of a potentially violent person (refer to e-course Violence in the Workplace: Awareness)
- If you feel you are being harassed, threatened or intimidated:
  - Tell the person to stop,
  - Document the incident (e.g., the nature of the incident, time, place, witnesses)
  - Inform your supervisor or manager.

Tips for Verbal Communication
- Focus your attention on the person to let them know you are interested in what they have to say.
- Remain calm.
- Speak slowly, quietly and confidently.
- Speak simply. DO NOT rely on official language or complex terminology.
- Listen carefully. DO NOT interrupt or offer unsolicited advice or criticism.
- Encourage the person to talk. DO NOT tell the person to relax or calm down.
- Try to understand. Ask questions like “Help me understand why you are upset.”
- Once you think you understand, repeat it back to the person so they know you understand.
- Remain open-minded and objective.
- Use delaying tactics to give the person time to calm down, e.g. offer a drink of water.
- Acknowledge the person’s feelings. Indicate that you can see he or she is upset.

Tips for Non-Verbal Behaviour and Communication
- Use calm body language – relaxed posture with hands unclenched, attentive expression.
- Arrange yourself so that your exit is not blocked.
- Position yourself at a right angle rather than directly in front of the other person.
- Give the person enough physical space….this varies by culture, but normally 2-4 feet is considered an adequate distance.
- Get on the other person’s physical level. If they are seated try kneeling or bending over, rather than standing over them.
- DO NOT pose a challenging stance, such as standing directly opposite, putting your hands on your hips, pointing your finger, crossing your arms...
Tips for Problem Solving
- Try to put yourself in the person’s shoes, so that you can better understand how to solve the problem.
- Ask for his or her recommendations.
- Accept criticism in a positive way, when a complaint might be true, use statements like “You are probably right” or “It was my fault.” If the criticism seems unwarranted, ask clarifying questions.
- Be honest. DO NOT make false statements or promises you cannot keep.
- Remain professional and take the person seriously. Be respectful.
- Break an issue down into smaller units and offer step-by-step solutions so that the person is not overwhelmed by the situation, issue or solution.
- Be reassuring and point out choices.
- Try to keep the person’s attention on the issue at hand.
- DO NOT take sides or agree with distortions.
- DO NOT reject the person’s demands or position from the start.
- Find ways to help the person save face.
- Establish ground rules if unreasonable behaviour persists.
- In a calm and non-threatening manner, clearly state that violence is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.
- Avoid issuing commands and making conditional statements.
- If the nature of the situation involves punishment or sanctions: delay the punitive action until you have backup or the situation is safe.
- If you feel threatened try to politely and calmly terminate the interaction in a non-threatening manner, if possible.
Handling Money and/or Valuables

- Know how to summon immediate assistance when an emergency occurs or is likely to occur.
- Keep cash register funds to a minimum.
- Use electronic payment systems if possible. For example: automatic ticket dispensers or collectors, debit cards, credit cards, cheques.
- Vary the time of day that you empty or reduce funds in the cash register.
- Remove all large bills ($50, $100) from the register frequently.
- Install and use a locked safe with a drop slot.
- Change the combination of the safe at frequent intervals.
- Post visible signs which indicate that minimum cash (state amount, e.g. less than $50) is kept on the premises.
- Ask customers for exact change or the smallest bills possible.
- DO NOT handle large amounts of cash or count money in public view.
- Use cash drawer covers.
- Install security screens in high-risk areas.

Banking Money

- Deposit money to bank on a frequent basis.
- Use an unmarked bag or container to carry cash and/or securities.
- Vary the route taken to the bank or financial institution.
- Vary times of deposit.
- Avoid making night deposits.
- Observe your surroundings before making your transaction.
- Rotate the task so that it isn’t always the same person making the deposit if possible.
- Avoid making deposits alone especially if workers work in remote and isolated areas. Have one person face the other way to act as a lookout while the other makes the deposit.
- Arrange for regular cash collection by a licensed security firm.
- Refer to [http://www.yorku.ca/finance/documents.htm](http://www.yorku.ca/finance/documents.htm) by Finance Department on procedure for handling cash.
Working with Unstable or Volatile Persons who may be Potentially Violent

- Know how to summon immediate assistance when an emergency occurs or is likely to occur
- Store away objects or equipment (e.g., sharps) that could be used to hurt people
- Use special rooms for meeting e.g., rooms with windows in the door, rooms close to other workers, rooms with easy exit in case of emergency
- Be familiar with warning signs of a potentially violent person (refer to e-course on Violence in the Workplace: Awareness)

Tips for Verbal Communication

- Focus your attention on the person to let them know you are interested in what they have to say.
- Remain calm and try to calm the other person. DO NOT allow the other person’s anger to become your anger.
- Speak slowly, quietly and confidently.
- Speak simply. DO NOT rely on official language or complex terminology.
- Listen carefully. DO NOT interrupt or offer unsolicited advice or criticism.
- Encourage the person to talk. DO NOT tell the person to relax or calm down.
- Try to understand. Ask questions like “Help me understand why you are upset.”
- Once you think you understand, repeat it back to the person so they know you understand.
- Remain open-minded and objective.
- Use silence as a calming tool.
- Use delaying tactics to give the person time to calm down, e.g. offer a drink of water.
- Acknowledge the person’s feelings. Indicate that you can see he or she is upset.

Tips for Non-Verbal Behaviour and Communication

- Use calm body language – relaxed posture with hands unclenched, attentive expression.
- Arrange yourself so that your exit is not blocked.
- Position yourself at a right angle rather than directly in front of the other person.
- Give the person enough physical space…this varies by culture, but normally 2-4 feet is considered an adequate distance.
- Get on the other person’s physical level. If they are seated try kneeling or bending over, rather than standing over them.
- DO NOT pose a challenging stance, such as standing directly opposite, putting your hands on your hips, pointing your finger, crossing your arms
Tips for Problem Solving

- Try to put yourself in the person’s shoes, so that you can better understand how to solve the problem.
- Ask for his or her recommendations.
- Repeat back to the person what you think he or she is asking of you, to clarify what you are hearing.
- Accept criticism in a positive way, when a complaint might be true, use statements like “You are probably right” or “It was my fault.” If the criticism seems unwarranted, ask clarifying questions.
- Be honest. DO NOT make false statements or promises you cannot keep.
- Remain professional and take the person seriously. Be respectful.
- Break an issue down into smaller units and offer step-by-step solutions so that the person is not overwhelmed by the situation, issue or solution.
- Be reassuring and point out choices.
- Try to keep the person’s attention on the issue at hand.
- DO NOT take sides or agree with distortions.
- DO NOT reject the person’s demands or position from the start.
- Find ways to help the person save face.
- Establish ground rules if unreasonable behaviour persists.
- In a calm and non-threatening manner, clearly state that violence is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.
- Avoid issuing commands and making conditional statements.
- If the nature of the situation involves punishment or sanctions: delay the punitive action until you have backup or the situation is safe.
- If you feel threatened try to politely and calmly terminate the interaction in a non-threatening manner, if possible.
- If you feel threatened,
- Know what backup is available to assist you in handling a difficult individual.
- Use a silent alarm.
- Use a code word.
- If you threaten to call the police, call them.
Working Alone

- Know how to summon immediate assistance when an emergency occurs or is likely to occur
- Carry a communication device (e.g., cell phone, radio etc.)
- Know your environment (e.g., location of exits, neighbors etc.)
- Make sure someone knows where you are and your plans (e.g., when you leave etc.)

(a) Workers who work alone on a regular basis

Refer to the Occupational Health and Safety’s “Working Alone Program”

(b) Workers who work alone after hours on occasion (6pm-7am weekdays and anytime on weekends or holidays)

Refer to Security Services’ “Why Work Alone Program”
http://www.yorku.ca/security

Are you concerned about working alone in a classroom, lab or office at night or on weekends and holidays?

If you are working alone between 6 p.m. and 7 a.m. Monday to Friday, or anytime on weekends or holidays, you can call Security Services at extension 58000 and report:
• Your name.
• Where you are working.
• How long you will be working.
• A phone number where you can be reached (if available).
• If you would like a security (goSAFE) escort when you are finished.

The security operator will ask if you can be phoned hourly during the estimated work period or visited periodically by Security or by a Student Safety Officer if no telephone is available. If you do not respond to a telephone check, security staff will attend the work site to ensure you are safe.

You must call the Security Control Centre upon completion of the work period, or if you decide to leave earlier or stay later than reported.

You can contact the goSAFE office and arrange for a foot patrol to meet you at your destination and walk you to another campus destination or to a goSAFE shuttle stop. For more information about goSAFE, please visit www.yorku.ca/goSAFE.
Mobile Workplace or Transporting Passengers as Part of Your Job

- Know how to summon immediate assistance when an emergency occurs or is likely to occur.
- Carry a communication device (e.g., cell phone, radio etc.)
- Keep your car in good repair. Perform circle check regularly (e.g., daily or weekly).
- Always lock your car, even when you are in it.
- Stay cool. Do not react to provocation.
- DO NOT open your car window more than one inch to speak to someone you are not familiar with approaching your car.
- If you suspect another car is following your car:
  - Note the licence plate no. of the other car.
  - Drive to a service, police or fire station.
  - Stay in your car.
  - Honk the horn in short repeated blasts until someone helps you.
- If you think you have been intentionally bumped from behind:
  - DO NOT leave your vehicle.
  - Motion to the other driver to follow you to the nearest police station or open service station.
- Make sure someone knows your plans, your route and your estimated arrival time.
- Reduce amount of cash.
- Consider buddy system if you are transporting people or goods in remote and isolated areas.
Appendix C  Workplace Violence Incident Recording Form

Note: This form is also available in electronic (fillable) format. Go to http://www.yorku.ca/dohs/prog-violence.html

Has Security Services Been Contacted?  ☐ Yes ☐ No

Incident

Occurrence Date/Time: ________________
Reported Date/Time: ________________
Location of Incident:
   Building: ________________  Rm.: ________________
   Other (e.g., parking lot, walkway close to xxx etc.)
   __________________________________________
Description of Incident: ________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________
The Outcome: _______________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________

Worker/Complainant

University Status: Staff
Name (last name, first name): __________________________________
Phone No. _________________________________________________
Work Address: ______________________________________________
Job/Position: _______________________________________________
Department/Section: __________________________________________
Employee ID ________________________ Gender: ☐ Male  ☐ Female

What were you doing at the time of the incident? ____________________
   ___________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________
   ___________________________________________________________

Witness(es)

Name: _____________ Dept./Address: ________________ Phone: ______
Name: _____________ Dept./Address: ________________ Phone: ______
Name: _____________ Dept./Address: ________________ Phone: ______
**Respondent(s) (make copies of this page if there is more than one respondent)**

Name: ____________________________ Phone No. _____________

Dept./Address:
___________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________

Age: ___________________________ Male Female

Description (height, weight, hair colour etc.):
___________________________________________________________

Relationship between worker and respondent (if any):
- co-worker
- client
- student
- member of public
- other (specify) ___________________________

If the respondent is a student, has the Office of Student Conflict Resolution been contacted for guidance?
- Yes
- No

Other details (e.g. use of drugs or alcohol, possession of a weapon, possible contributing factors which precede the incident):
__________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________

Suggested preventative or remedial actions:
___________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________

**Form completed by: ________________________________**

Name of Manager

Submit (in confidential envelope)

To Assistant Vice-President, Human Resources- if formal resolution is required.

Submit (in confidential envelope)

To: Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) for all incidents
(A copy will be sent to the Office of Student Conflict Resolution by OHS if a student is involved.)

Date of submission: ________________________________
Appendix D

Workplace Violence, Policy on

**Description:** Describes workplace violence and the University's commitment to protect its workers from workplace violence.


**Approval Authority:** Board of Governors

**Signature:** “Paul Cantor”

I. **Scope**

This policy is intended to protect all persons working for York University including but not limited to students, faculty, staff, and volunteers.

II. **Definition**

The term, “workplace violence” means:

(a) the exercise of physical force by a person against a worker, in a workplace, that causes or may cause personal injury to the worker;
(b) an attempt to exercise physical force against a worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker; or
(c) a statement or behaviour that it 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.

III. **Policy**

1. York University is committed to protecting all persons working for York University and shall take reasonable precautions to prevent workplace violence.

2. York University shall assess, and reassess as necessary, the risks of workplace violence that may arise from the nature of the workplace, the type of work or the conditions of work.

3. Anyone who engages in workplace violence shall be subject to complaint procedures, investigation, remedies, sanctions and discipline up to and including termination.

IV. **Review**

This policy shall be reviewed at least annually.
V. Responsibility

The Vice-President Finance and Administration shall be responsible for establishing a program, guidelines and procedures to implement this policy.

VI. Related Policies

Occupational Health and Safety Policy
Policy Concerning Racism
Sexual Harassment Policy
Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities
Workplace Harassment Policy