

Category: Human Resources

Workplace Violence Prevention Policy

Policy Number: HRM-120

Approved by: Council Resolution # Click or tap here to enter text. – TBD

Administered by: Human Resources

Effective Date: TBD

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1. Background

The *Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA)* requires employers to prepare a written Workplace Violence policy and program that outlines procedures for the prevention of Workplace Violence, as well as for reporting, investigating, and resolving Incidents or complaints.

At the City of Brampton (the City), these requirements are achieved through the annual review of the:

- Workplace Violence Prevention Policy
- Preventing and Addressing Workplace Violence Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)
- Complaint Handling SOP

2. Purpose

The purpose of this Council Policy is to:

- Define Workplace Violence in accordance with governing legislation;
- Establish expectations for appropriate Workplace behaviour and outline the responsibilities of Workplace parties, as it relates to Workplace Violence; and,
- Provide overarching guidance for the development, implementation, and, maintenance of the SOPs which operationalize this policy.

3. Application and Scope

This Council Policy applies to:

- Workers (including but not limited to employees, service contractors, students and Volunteers);
- Members of Council;
- vendors and suppliers; and,
- Members of the Public (including citizen members of committees).

4. Outcomes

- 4.1 A healthy and safe Workplace that is free from Workplace Violence, supported by proactive measures to prevent its occurrence.
- 4.2 Increased awareness and understanding of what constitutes Workplace Violence, as defined in this policy, and the responsibilities of Workplace parties.
- 4.3 Consistent and timely handling of complaints in accordance with established SOPs guided by this policy.
- 4.4 Legislative compliance with the *OHSA* and other relevant legislation.

5. Policy Statements

- 5.1 The City is committed to maintaining a safe and healthy Workplace free from Workplace Violence, and will take proactive measures to assess, and minimize the risks of Workplace Violence.
- 5.2 The City maintains a zero-tolerance stance toward any form of Workplace Violence in the Workplace by anyone.
- 5.3 Incidents and complaints of Workplace Violence will be addressed in a prompt and confidential manner, in accordance with associated SOPs.
- 5.4 Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent possible. Information related to Incidents or complaints of Workplace Violence will not be disclosed unless the disclosure is necessary for the purposes of investigating or taking corrective action with respect to the Incident or complaint, or as otherwise required by law.
- 5.5 All individuals have the right to report Incidents or complaints of Violence or act as a witness in good faith, without fear of Reprisal. No Worker shall be subject to threatened or actual dismissal, discipline, suspension, intimidation, coercion, or penalty for fulfilling their rights and responsibilities under the Act, including, but not limited to reporting Workplace Violence.
- 5.6 In recognition that involvement in Workplace Violence Incidents or complaints may be stressful and emotionally upsetting, the City will provide employees with support via the City's Employee Assistance Program.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

6.1 The City

- 6.1.1 Prepare a written policy with respect to Workplace Violence that is reviewed as often as necessary, but at least annually.
- 6.1.2 Post the policy on the City's physical and virtual, Health, Safety and Wellness Boards.
- 6.1.3 Develop and maintain a written Workplace Violence program (*See Preventing and Addressing Workplace Violence SOP*) to implement the policy in consultation with the Joint Health and Safety Committees (JHSCs) and review as often as necessary, but at least annually. The program will include:
 - Measures and procedures to control risks identified through Violence Risk Assessments that are likely to expose a Worker to physical injury;
 - Measures and procedures for summoning immediate assistance when Workplace Violence occurs or is likely to occur;

- Measures and procedures for Workers to report Incidents of Workplace Violence; and,
 - How Incidents or complaints of Workplace Violence will be investigated and dealt with.
- 6.1.4 Assess risks of Workplace violence that may arise from the nature of the Workplace, the type of work, or conditions of work, that take into account circumstances that would be common to similar Workplaces and circumstances specific to the Workplace.
- 6.1.5 Re-assess the risks of Workplace Violence as often as is necessary to ensure that the Workplace Violence policy and program continue to protect Workers.
- 6.1.6 Take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances for the protection of the Worker, when aware or ought to be aware that Domestic Violence would likely expose a Worker to physical injury in the Workplace.
- 6.1.7 Provide a Worker with information and instruction that is appropriate for the Worker on the contents of the Workplace Violence policy and program.
- 6.1.8 Provide information, including personal information, related to a risk of Workplace Violence from a person with a history of violent behaviour if the Worker is expected to encounter the person in the course of their work or the risk is likely to expose the Worker to physical injury.

6.2 Human Resources

- 6.2.1 Operationalize the City's legal obligations as they relate to Workplace Harassment through the development, implementation and maintenance of the City's:
- Preventing and Addressing Workplace Violence SOP
 - Complaint Handling SOP

This includes providing guidance, subject matter expertise, and strategic advice to support consistent and effective application of these procedures across the City.

6.3 People Leaders

- 6.3.1 Promote and maintain a healthy and safe Workplace, free from Workplace Violence.
- 6.3.2 Ensure Worker compliance with this policy and associated SOPs.
- 6.3.3 In collaboration with Human Resources, support all Workplace parties involved in resolving Incidents or complaints.

- 6.3.4 Conduct Violence Risk Assessments and address hazards of Workplace Violence with appropriate corrective actions.
- 6.3.5 Advise the JHSC of the results of the Violence Risk Assessment(s), and, provide a copy if the assessment is in writing.
- 6.3.6 Inform Workers of how to summon immediate assistance in the case of an imminent threat of Workplace Violence.
- 6.3.7 Advise Workers to report their concerns if they fear that Domestic Violence may enter the Workplace.
- 6.3.8 Advise Workers of the risk of Workplace Violence from a person with a history of violent behaviour they may encounter where physical injury is likely.
- 6.3.9 Ensure Incidents are reported and investigated in accordance with the *Incident Notification and Investigation SOP*.
- 6.3.10 Ensure complaints are reported in accordance with are reported and the *Complaint Handling SOP*.

6.4 **Workers**

- 6.4.1 Adhere to the expectations of this policy, and the associated SOPs, including but not limited to refraining from Workplace Harassment and Discrimination.
- 6.4.2 Report Incidents in accordance with the *Incident Notification and Investigation SOP*.
- 6.4.3 Report complaints in accordance with the *Complaint Handling SOP*.
- 6.4.4 Review this policy at least once annually, and participate in related training.

6.5 **Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSCs)**

- 6.5.1 In consultation with the City, participate in the annual review of this policy and the associated SOPs.

7. **Monitoring and Compliance**

- 7.1 Responsibility for monitoring adherence to this policy and its associated SOPs is a shared responsibility between the City, Human Resources, People Leaders and the JHSCs.

A comprehensive review of the policy and associated SOPs will be conducted at least annually to ensure continued effectiveness and compliance with applicable legislation, in consultation with various Workplace parties.

7.2 **Consequences of non-compliance**

Breaches of this policy undermine the City's goal of fostering a safe and healthy Workplace by causing harm to individuals and negatively affecting morale and productivity. Such breaches can lead to increased stress, decreased engagement, and, potential for Workplace injury or illness.

- 7.2.1 Failure to follow this Council Policy by City staff (Workers / People Leaders), or knowingly submitting a false, frivolous, or bad faith complaint, may result in, but is not limited to: corrective action, disciplinary action, and / or, reporting the Incident to Police.
- 7.2.2 Failure to follow this Council Policy by non-City staff, may include, but is not limited to: barring the Respondent(s) from City property, discontinuing the services of contractors, vendors, and suppliers, and / or reporting the Incident to Police.

8. Definitions

Legislative definitions are subject to any updates or amendments to the legislation and should be interpreted in accordance with the most current version of the legislation.

- 8.1 **Domestic Violence** – means a person who has a personal relationship with a Worker – such as a spouse or former spouse, current or former intimate partner, or a family member – who may physically harm, or attempt or threaten to physically harm that Worker at work.
- 8.2 **Hazard** – means a condition or practice with the potential for causing injury/ illness and/or damage to equipment, property, material or the environment.
- 8.3 **Incident** – means an occurrence that results or could have resulted in injury / illness and / or damage to equipment, property, material, or the environment. Incident types, listed from highest severity to lowest, include: fatality, critical injury, lost time, health care, first aid, incident only (no injury) and near miss.
- 8.4 **Members of Council** – refers to any elected or appointed official on Council, including the Mayor.
- 8.5 **Members of the Public** – refers to a member of the general population.
- 8.6 **Supervisor (OHSA) [Referred to in this document as People Leader]** - means a person who has charge of a Workplace or authority over a Worker.
- 8.7 **Violence Risk Assessment** – means a process that assesses the risk of Workplace Violence, from a prevention perspective, that may arise from the nature of the Workplace, the type of work, or the conditions of work. It identifies hazards, evaluates the risk of harm from those hazards, and implements measures to eliminate or control those hazards.
- 8.8 **Volunteer** – means a person who performs tasks and / or services without compensation or expectation of compensation.
- 8.9 **Worker (OHSA)** – means, a person who performs work or supplies services for monetary compensation; a secondary school student who performs work or supplies services for no monetary compensation under a work experience program authorized by the school board that operates the school in which the student is enrolled; a person who performs work or supplies services for no monetary compensation under a program approved by a college of applied

arts and technology, university, career college, or other post-secondary institution; and, such other persons as may be prescribed who perform work or supply services to an employer for no monetary compensation.

8.10 **Workplace (OHSA)** – means any land, premises, location or thing at, upon, in or near which a Worker works.

8.11 **Workplace Violence (OHSA)** – 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 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.

9. References and Resources

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

9.1 External references

- [Occupational Health and Safety Act](#)

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

- [Occupational Health and Safety Policy HRM-110](#)
- [Respectful Workplace Policy HRM-150](#)
- [Employee Code of Conduct HRM-100](#)
- [Council Staff Relations Policy GOV-140](#)
- [Code of Conduct for Members of Council](#)

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

- [Preventing and Addressing Workplace Violence SOP](#)
- [Addressing Harassment and Discrimination SOP](#)
- Complaint Handling SOP
- [Incident Notification and Investigation SOP](#)
- Workplace Complaint Intake Form
- [Workplace Violence Prevention Service Card](#)
- [Respectful Workplace Service Card](#)
- [Reporting and Investigating Workplace Incidents Service Card](#)
- [Health, Safety and Wellness Bulletin Board Service Card](#)
- [Employee Assistance Program Service Card](#)

10. Revision History

Date	Description
2018/05/30	Approved; Replaces Workplace Violence Prevention (12.9.1)
2019/11/20	Amended by Council Resolution CW470-2019
2021/03/24	<p>Scheduled Review. Administrative amendments were made to the policy.</p> <p>Amendments approved by Council Resolution No. C082-2021</p>
2022/05/23	<p>Scheduled Review. Administrative amendments made to the policy. Amendments approved by Committee of Council Resolution CW271-2022. Inclusion of Statement of Commitment consistent with Respectful Workplace Policy. Workplace definition to reflect physical and virtual work environments. Expanded Reprisal definition. Links reviewed and updated.</p>
2023/09/13	<p>Scheduled Review. Administrative amendments made to the policy. Updated Ministry name to Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training, Skills and Development. Amendments approved by Council Resolution No. CW293-2023</p>
2024/10/23	<p>Scheduled Review. Administrative amendments made to the policy. Amendments approved by Council Resolution No. CW382-2024</p>
TBD	<p>Scheduled Review. Removed <i>Principles</i> to strengthen <i>Policy Statements</i> and avoid duplication. Added reference to the new Complaint Handling Standard Operating Procedure and Workplace Complaint Intake Form. Aligned <i>Exceptions</i> with OHSA. Reassigned Senior Leader duties to the City (OHSA-Alignment). Clarified Human Resources' operational role. Expanded <i>Monitoring and Compliance</i> to include broader consequences. Aligned legislated definitions with governing legislation. Added definition of Hazard and Incident.</p>
TBD	Next Scheduled Review.