## Community Resource - Violence in the Workplace Policy

Credit: This specific policy comes from the ‘Operational Health and Safety Manual’ provided in full in the XXX section by the Ha-ma-yas Stewardship Society.

**Policy**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is committed to providing a workplace in which the respect and safety of the employees is paramount. The risk or occurrence of violent acts involving employees requires particular attention as violence undermines employees' ability to work effectively and impacts their quality of life. Any work-related threats or acts of violence against employees, or their families, are unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

Employees require safe working conditions which allow for: effective client service; input into well-defined violence prevention and response procedures; support from supervisors and colleagues in preventing and responding to incidents. Employees require safety from violence and harassment outside of the work setting which results from their employment; and counseling if affected by a violent incident.

**Definition**

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 behavior which gives a worker reasonable cause to believe that the worker is at risk of injury.

**Responsibility**

It is the responsibility of the First Nation to:

* Promote a violence-free workplace for all employees
* Respect and protect the health, safety and dignity of all employees
* Empower employees to make and act on decisions regarding risk of violence
* Ensure employees are aware of and follow safety practices to prevent and respond to violent incidents
* Establish written practices to identify and address risks at work, using input from all work site employees
* Offer critical incident debriefing and other support to employees affected by workplace violence
* As a minimum, comply with WorkSafeBC OH&S regulations and applicable collective agreements.

**Violence from a Co-worker**

This practice does not apply to violence from a co-worker. The employer, in consultation with the unions, associations, has developed policy and procedures for preventing and addressing harassment and discrimination in the workplace. Employees subject to violence from a co-­worker should seek a remedy to this problem through established procedures.

**Violence from Clients/Public**

Preventing, reducing and responding to violence directed toward employees from anyone other than a co-worker are addressed by the following:

* + 1. *Risk Assessment*

Managers shall, with input from employees at each work site, ensure a regular risk assessment for each work place to evaluate the risk of violence. Workplace risk assessments must be documented and records maintained at the local office.

* + 1. *Employee and Supervisor Training*

The job training must include a review of the risks inherent in an employee's position, violence prevention procedures, correct response procedures, workplace emergency procedures and Incident reporting procedures. Work Violence prevention training must start at the New Employee Orientation.

* + 1. *Incident Reporting, Investigation and Follow-Up*

Employees are required to report any violent incident or threat they have been subjected to on the job, consistent with the First Nation procedures. All reports of violent incidents shall be investigated by the manager or local supervisor, with the assistance of employees.

* + 1. *Advice to Consult a Physician*

The First Nation will ensure that an employee reporting an injury/adverse symptom from a workplace incident of violence, is advised to consult a health professional of their choice.

**Responsibilities**

Employees will:

* Provide input into risk assessments
* Attend training sessions when requested
* Provide input into development of the local office violence prevention plan
* Follow procedures for prevention of violence
* Report incidents of violence
* Provide input into incident investigations

Supervisors will:

* Comply with reporting, investigating and documenting procedures
* Facilitate ongoing discussions on workplace violence issues with staff, as required
* Provide input into risk assessments
* Assist in development and updating of the local office violence prevention plan
* Instruct staff on procedures for prevention of violence
* Promote and encourage reporting of violent incidents

Management will:

* Inform workers of the First Nation’s policies and procedures on workplace violence
* Ensure the reporting, investigating and documents of incidents of violence in accordance with WorkSafeBC OH&S regulations and ministry reporting procedures
* Ensure local offices prepare and update violence prevention plans
* Ensure risk assessments are undertaken
* Take corrective action and monitor its effectiveness
* Ensure regular evaluation of the workplace violence prevention program

**Steps for Conducting a Violence Risk Assessment**

1. **The Game Plan**
   * 1. Meet with stakeholders – manager, employees, OHS committee chairs
     2. Gather a team of dedicated individuals (consider worker rep from safety committee)
     3. Decide what information you want to gather and how it will be gathered
     4. Set realistic timelines as a guide for your team
     5. Set dates in advance for benchmarking/group meetings
2. **Information Gathering**
   * 1. Previous experience in your workplace – close calls and injuries
     2. Similar workplaces
        + who does the same (similar) work as you do?
        + collect information through interviews, documentation, phone calls
     3. Location and Circumstance of your work
        + types of interactions (ex. providing medical assistance, resident manager, facility maintenance (buildings and grounds), security, etc.)
        + What is the service provided (i.e. medical, security, housing, etc.) ?
        + Who are the clientele (i.e. residents, public, clients, patients, etc.)?
        + What causes clientele to be angry (i.e. tenant – tenant interaction, off meds, on meds, other?)?
        + is money involved?
3. **Summarizing Findings (the Report)** 
   * 1. Enter the information on the Hazard/Risk/Control Table
     2. For single worksite, complete the Overview report
     3. For multiple worksites, complete a separate Hazard/Risk/Control Table for any common issues.
4. **Addressing Issues**
   * 1. Write an action plan to address risks (implementation recommendations).
     2. Start to implement recommendations

Review on a regular basis the status of the risk assessment and action plans.