

## Preventing Workplace Violence – B-P-009

### Board of Health Policy

#### 1.0 Policy Statement

The North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit (Health Unit) is committed to providing an environment free from workplace violence. The Health Unit recognizes that workplace violence is against the law and will not be tolerated from anyone. The Health Unit will take reasonable precautions to prevent workplace violence in order to protect personnel, clients, and members of the public while in a Health Unit workplace setting.

#### 2.0 Purpose

This Policy describes the Health Unit's ongoing commitment to provide an environment in which all personnel are free from workplace violence by:

- Defining workplace violence, types of violence, and reprisal; and,
- Outlining the responsibilities of personnel to prevent workplace violence.

#### 3.0 Scope

**3.1** The Policy applies to all personnel, which includes employees, students, volunteers, contracted services, and Board of Health members.

**3.2** This Policy applies to all conduct that occurs in the work environment. The work environment is any place where work-related activities are conducted. It includes but is not limited to:

- the physical work premises of the Health Unit;
- work-related social functions; and
- work assignments outside of the office including travel in vehicles, conferences and training sessions, and offsite visits to client homes, or other business premises.

**3.3** The process for formally reporting and managing workplace violence is covered under [WI-HU-OHS-163](#), Reporting and Managing Workplace Violence.

**3.4** Issues of workplace harassment are covered under Board Policy [B-P-001](#) - Preventing Workplace Harassment.

**3.5** These Policy requirements do not preclude an individual from exercising any rights under the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, their respective Collective Agreement/Employment Policy, or from utilizing other options contained herein if it is felt that workplace violence has occurred.

#### 4.0 Definitions

##### 4.1 Workplace Violence is defined as:

- The exercise of physical force by a person against a worker, in a workplace, that causes or could cause physical injury to the worker;

- The attempt to exercise physical force against a worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker;
- A statement or behaviour that a worker could reasonably interpret as a threat to exercise physical force against a worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker. (OHSA, 2017)

#### 4.2 Reprisal

Reprisal is punishment or retaliation against an individual for exercising their rights under this Policy or for participating in the workplace violence investigation process. Reprisal, in any form, against any party involved in a workplace violence investigation is prohibited. Reprisal may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment for just cause.

### 5.0 Procedure

- 5.1 The Board of Health through the Medical Officer of Health/Executive Officer ensures that this Policy and supporting program are implemented and maintained.
- 5.2 Human Resources develops the workplace violence program, which includes:
- measures and procedures to protect personnel from workplace violence (hazard identification and communication, applicable training, corrective measures);
  - a means for summoning immediate assistance;
  - a process to confidentially report and investigate incidents or concerns related to workplace violence; and
  - signage to communicate the intent of this policy displayed in identified client-service areas and Occupational Health and Safety bulletin boards.
- 5.3 Management supports the program and sets expectations of appropriate workplace conduct, assists with identifying hazards, takes all reasonable steps to respond to reports of workplace violence of which they are aware or ought to be aware in a timely fashion, and takes corrective action as required.
- 5.4 Personnel review this Policy and seek clarification from their supervisor or Human Resources, if required.
- 5.5 Personnel complete training related to workplace violence when required by the Employer (workplace violence and de-escalation training) and apply these skills when necessary.
- 5.6 Personnel may also refer to resources on the Health Unit's intranet about workplace violence, including domestic violence when it extends into the workplace.
- 5.7 Instances of workplace violence are reported as outlined in [WI-HU-OHS-163](#), Reporting and Managing Workplace Violence.
- 5.8 In accordance with the *Occupational Health & Safety Act*, employees have the right to refuse to work if they have reason to believe they may be endangered by workplace violence. (OHSA, 2017).

- 5.9** Additionally, information about a report of workplace violence will not be disclosed except to the extent necessary to protect workers, conduct an investigation, take corrective action, or as otherwise required by law. (MOL, 2016).
- 5.10** Management will disclose information, including personal information, to workers (employees, students, volunteers) related to a risk of workplace violence from a person with a history of violent behaviour if:
- a) the worker can expect to encounter that person in the course of their work; and,
  - b) the risk of workplace violence is likely to expose the worker to physical injury.
- However, this disclosure shall not include more personal information in the circumstances than is reasonably necessary to protect workers from physical injury. (OHSA, 2017)
- 5.11** This Policy is reviewed by Human Resources, the Joint Health and Safety Committee, the Executive Team, and the Board of Health at least annually, or when changes are required.

## 6.0 Records Retention

All records relating to this Policy are retained in accordance with the Records Retention and Management work instruction ([WI-HU-108](#)).

## 7.0 References

### Internal References

- a) North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit, [Board of Health Bylaws](#).
- b) Occupational Health and Safety – [B-P-004](#)
- c) Preventing Workplace Harassment – [B-P-001](#)
- d) [Quality Assurance Manual](#) (1999).
- e) Records Retention and Management – [WI-HU-108](#)
- f) Occupational Health and Safety Incident Report – [WIF-HU-OHS-087-01](#)
- g) North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit, [Code White Disaster Response Plan](#)
- h) Reporting and Managing Workplace Violence – [WI-HU-OHS-163](#)

### External References

- a) *Health Protection and Promotion Act*, R.S.O., 1990, c H.7. [Ontario E-Laws Website](#)
- b) *Municipal Act*, 2001, S.O. 2001, c. 25. [Ontario E-Laws Website](#)
- c) *Municipal Statute Law Amendment Act*, 2006. S.O. Chapter 32. [Ontario E-Laws Website](#)
- d) *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter O.1. [Ontario E-Laws Website](#)
- e) Consult Carswell. (2010). "Bill 168 Implementation Guide"
- f) [Ontario Ministry of Labour. \(2010\). "Workplace Violence and Harassment: Understanding the Law"](#)

- g) Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario. (2009). "Preventing and Managing Violence in the Workplace"
- h) Occupational Health and Safety Council of Ontario (OHSCO). (April 2010). "Developing Workplace Violence and Harassment Policies and Programs: What Employers Need to Know"
- i) Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety, [Respect: Everyone Deserves It](#) (Poster), May 2019

## 8.0 Summary of Revisions

2019-05-31 – Re-formatted item 5.2, added note regarding signage, updated references.

## 9.0 Board Policy Development Details

Author: **Human Resources**

Reviewed by: **Sherri St. Jean, Josée Goulet**

Date Approved by Board of Health: **2019-06-26**

Resolution Number: **BOH/2019/06/03**

Date Approved in Portal by Dr. Chirico: **2019-07-12**

Date Issued: **2019-07-12**

Date Due for Review: **2021-07-12**