
PROTECTION OF EMPLOYEES FROM VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE

Background

The District believes that employees should work in an environment free from violence. Workplace violence is defined by the *Occupational Health and Safety Regulation (Section 4.27)* as:

“... 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 the worker is at risk of injury.”

The phrase “other than a worker” includes students, intruders, parents or guardians, and workers of an employer other than School District No. 43 (Coquitlam).

The District’s Violence in the Workplace Program is consistent with **Sections 4.27 to 4.31** of the *Occupational Health and Safety Regulation*. Violence between employees of School District No. 43 (Coquitlam) is governed by **Sections 4.24 to 4.26** of the *Occupational Health and Safety Regulation*; the District’s Administrative Procedure (AP 465) on personal, discriminatory and sexual harassment; and by its collective agreements.

School District No. 43 (Coquitlam) considers any act of violence against employees of the District, while performing their duties, to be a serious threat to the school environment and to the safety of staff. The District will promote the prevention of violence in the workplace by providing necessary information relating to: potential violence; the training of employees; circulating preventative reports; the reporting of violent incidents; conducting investigations, and making recommendations to prevent future incidents of violence in the workplace.

Procedures

1. All District employees shall be made aware of their responsibilities to respond to and report incidents of violence.
2. The employer shall inform workers who are likely to be exposed to a risk of violence of the nature and extent of the risk. Employer responsibilities include the duty to provide information and to outline violence prevention procedures when there is a known risk of violence. This information includes identifying persons with a history of violent behaviour whom workers are likely to encounter in the course of their work.
3. In-service opportunities shall be provided, as needed. These may include workshops on conflict resolution and intervention strategies for dealing with violent incidents.
4. Joint Health and Safety Committees
 - 4.1 The Joint Health and Safety Committee at each work site, annually, shall establish and/or review procedures to eliminate or minimize the risk of violence to employees.
 - 4.2 If applicable, an Environmental Violence Risk Assessment/Inspection shall be undertaken by the Joint Health and Safety Committee at any work site where there is a risk of injury to

employees from violence or where a violent incident involving employee(s) has occurred in the course of performing their duties and responsibilities. Refer to Form 408-1 - Violence in the Workplace Environmental Risk Assessment/Inspection.

An online Violence in the Workplace Employee Perception Survey/Risk Assessment may also be used to assess violence in the workplace and to provide direction for its prevention.

- 4.3 Results and recommendations from the risk assessments are to be reviewed by the site JHSC committee and a copy is to be forwarded to the District's Occupational Health and Safety Department.
5. To the fullest extent possible, the following response procedures shall be utilized in dealing with an incident of violence, as defined in this Administrative Procedure.
 - 5.1. If an employee is involved in a violent incident where there is a continuing danger of violence, the police should be notified using 911 procedures. The Principal/Supervisor shall be informed as soon as possible.
 - 5.2. If an employee is involved in a violent incident where the immediate threat has passed, then the Principal/Supervisor shall be informed. The police shall be notified through non-emergency procedures, as appropriate to the incident.
 - 5.3. Acts of violence to District employees shall be reported using the online Violent Incident Report Form. It is the responsibility of an employee to complete the report, and for the Principal/Supervisor to investigate the incident, together with a Joint Health and Safety Committee representative. Corrective action, by appropriate personnel, must be taken to prevent or minimize future violence in the workplace.
 - 5.4. Employees who have been injured in a violent incident or report adverse symptoms as a result of an incident must be advised by the employer to consult a physician of their choice for treatment or referral and be informed of supports available through the Employer's Employee and Family Assistance Program.
 - 5.5. Learning Services will be informed and will review the Violent Incident reports involving students. A member of the Learning Services team will contact the school-based team as necessary and provide support when needed.
 - 5.6. The District Occupational Health and Safety Department will review Violent Incident Reports and follow-up as necessary with the work site.

Reference: BC Occupational Health and Safety Regulation – OHSR 4.27-4.31
Form 408-1 Violence in the Workplace- Environmental Risk Assessment/Inspection

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