



Rationale

The aim of this policy is to minimize and, where possible, eliminate the incidence of violence in the workplace. CISVA schools strive to ensure that its schools are safe at all times for its employees.

Policy

Definition: BC's Occupation Health and Safety Regulation (OHSR) defines violence 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 he or she is at risk of injury."

What this does not include:

- a. For the purposes of this policy, verbal abuse or harassing behaviour is not included. Please refer to CISVA policy 321 on Harassment and Bullying Prevention.
- b. Nor does this definition include instances of inappropriate activity or behaviour by a co-worker toward another co-worker. This is addressed under "Workplace Conduct" of the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation sections 4.24-4.26.

Identifying Risk: Under the OHSR, the employer is required to conduct a risk assessment if there is interaction between employees and persons other than co-workers that might lead to threats or assaults (OHSR, section 4.28). If an employer learns of a situation of domestic violence involving an employee that puts the workplace at risk, the employer must assess this risk and decide how best to protect all workers. Under sections 4.2-4.6 of the OHSR, employers also have legal obligations when violent situations occur between two employees.

The designated Manager of Organizational Health and Safety (i.e., Principal or his or her designate) will conduct on an annual basis a school-wide risk assessment that will factor previous risk assessments, the nature of incidents that took place over the previous year (including a review of all incidents reported) and experience in similar workplaces that are of assistance in improving workplace safety in this area. The aim of this assessment is to: assess the potential for workplace violence; identify opportunities to reduce the risk of violence and revise appropriate protocols as needed; and identify any trends that may appear from year-to-year and how best to address them.

A school-wide safety plan will be developed/revised in light of any issues relating to the workplace that are identified during the annual school-wide risk assessment exercise. It is the Principal or his or her delegate that is responsible for ensuring that such a plan exists and is kept current. The school-wide safety plan outlines procedures, escalation protocols and workplace arrangements to mitigate the risk of workplace violence.

Please note that school-wide safety plans are not to be confused with the Safety Plan that is prepared in conjunction with the Special Needs consultant and the Superintendent's Office. In these cases the Safety Plans are specific to individual Special Needs students.

Procedure

CISVA School Safety Plan Protocol: The aim of this protocol is to help minimize and, where possible, eliminate the risk of violence in the workplace. Should a situation of workplace violence present itself, and workers have cause to believe that responding to a violent situation may lead to bodily harm or health hazard, the worker(s) is expected to take refuge in a safe area and call Emergency Services 911.

A school-wide safety plan must be written and followed that includes the following:

Awareness: The Principal or his or her designate must ensure that workers are made aware of the responsibility to respond to, and report situations, where safety may be threatened as a result of violence. Further, appropriate orientation to the school-wide safety plan and safety protocols for escalation that are to be followed must be given to all new staff as part of their overall orientation. Further, new staff is required to follow and acknowledge that they understand these procedures and protocols. In the case of existing employees an annual refresher exercise is to be undertaken to ensure that the school-wide safety plan and safety protocols are well understood and any changes identified. Schools are required to set up an Occupational Health & Safety Committee whose job it is to ensure a formal program is in place at the school.

Incident Reporting: Workers must promptly report situations of concern and/or incidents of violence to the Principal or his or her designate. When an incident of violence occurs, the affected worker must complete the "Safety Incident Report: Violence in the Workplace" form available from the Principal's Office.

Investigate: The Principal or his or her designate must initiate an investigation immediately following a report of a concern and/or incident of violence. Should a Safety Incident Report be required, the Principal/ designate may convene a meeting to clarify what has happened and take steps to mitigate this from recurring. If necessary the overall school-wide safety plan will be amended as appropriate to include any new or revised safety protocols.

Records Keeping: In cases where a worker determines that the incident has been addressed satisfactorily, a copy of the Safety Incident Report will be kept on file and deemed as having led to a satisfactory resolution.

Non-resolution: in cases where the incident investigated has not been satisfactorily resolved, the Principal/or designate, in consultation with the worker and the School's Occupational Health & Safety Committee, the worker may forward a copy of the Safety Incident Report to the Education Committee Chairperson for appeal.

Review of School-wide Safety Plan: The Principal or his or her designate will review the school-wide safety plan and safety protocols and communicate hazards at regularly scheduled site-based Occupational Health & Safety Committee meetings.

A worker will be provided with information related to any risk of violence from a person who has a history of violent behaviour and whom the worker is likely to encounter in the course of work. This includes information about a student if there is a history of violent behaviour.

Safety Protocol and Escalation: it is the School’s responsibility to define its own safety protocol developed with the needs of workers and students in mind and the overall school campus environment.

Privacy and Personal Information Collection

Any personal information that is collected pursuant to this policy is collected under the authority of, and used for the purposes of administering the *School Act*. All information provided pursuant to this policy will be considered as supplied in confidence. Under certain circumstances, some information may be released subject to the provisions of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. If any person has any questions about the collection and use of this information, please contact the Superintendent’s Office.

References WorkSafe BC, Occupation Health and Safety Regulation “How to Implement a Formal Occupational Health and Safety Program”, WorkSafe BC, 2013. “Addressing Domestic Violence in the Workplace A Handbook for Employers”, WorkSafe BC, 2012. “Take Care How to Develop and Implement a Workplace Violence Prevention Program”, WorkSafe BC, 2012.	Approved CISVA Board of Directors Date 5 July 2016
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