

Policy Name:	VIOLENCE PREVENTION		
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Issued By:	HUMAN RESOURCES SECTION	Approved By:	ELT
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RELATED POLICIES

AD 5.7 Human Rights and Respectful Workplace

AD 5.8.1 Occupational Health and Safety – Governance

AD 5.8.2 Occupational Health and Safety – Workplace Injuries

AD 9.18 Security and Confidentiality of Records and Information

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. This policy demonstrates Surrey Police Service's (SPS) commitment to maintaining a work environment free from workplace violence.
- 1.2. This policy aligns with SPS AD 5.7 *Human Rights and Respectful Workplace*. It follows the same vision of promoting and sustaining a safe and healthy workplace for all SPS Employees, Seconded Personnel, and Contractors.
- 1.3. This policy complies with all applicable authorities governing workplace safety for SPS Employees, Contractors, and Seconded Personnel.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1. This policy applies to all SPS Employees, Contractors, and Seconded Personnel.
- 2.2. This policy does not apply to Members who face violent situations with the public while performing their operational duties. Encounters with violence are considered an inherent aspect of their responsibilities. Any exposure to violence in these circumstances will be addressed through separate SPS processes.

2.3. This policy applies under circumstances in which Employees experience workplace violence. Violence includes:

- i. The act of one person using physical force against a worker or another person in the workplace that results in or can potentially cause bodily injury to the worker.
- ii. Any attempt to use physical force against a worker in the workplace that could result in bodily injury to the worker.
- iii. Any statement or behaviour that a worker could reasonably interpret as a threat of physical force being used against them in the workplace that may result in bodily injury.

2.4. This policy does not apply to verbal abuse or harassing behaviour which is not included in the definition of violence outlined in section 2.3 unless it includes threats or behaviour that gives the worker reasonable cause to believe that the worker is at risk of injury.

2.5. AD 5.7 *Human Rights and Respectful Workplace* should be consulted regarding issues of personal harassment, harassment related to discrimination, and inequitable workplaces.

3. POLICY

3.1. This policy supports the requirements outlined in BC *Occupational Health and Safety Regulation (OHS)*, including:

- i. Risk assessments;
- ii. Procedures and guidelines;
- iii. Instruction to workers; and
- iv. Advice to consult a physician.

3.2. In line with the British Columbia *OHS*, Part 4.29, where workers have been exposed to a risk of violence as identified by an assessment, SPS must:

- i. Establish procedures, policies, and work environment arrangements to eliminate the risk to workers from violence; and
- ii. If elimination of the risk to workers is not possible, SPS must establish procedures, policies, and work environment arrangements to minimize the risk to workers.

4. PROCEDURE

4.1. SPS will:

- i. Develop and implement an effective violence prevention program, including the following elements:
 - a. Risk Assessments;
 - b. Information, instruction, and training regarding the identification of factors that contributed to workplace violence and steps to take after it has occurred;

- c. Investigation Process;
 - d. Development and implementation of controls to eliminate or minimize the hazards; and
 - e. Annual program review.
- ii. Ensure the policy is posted at the workplace and is readily available to all Employees; and
- iii. Ensure Supervisors have the appropriate tools, training, and support to implement and monitor the policy effectively.

4.2. The Supervisor will:

- i. Understand and uphold the principles of this policy;
- ii. Communicate this policy, guidelines, and risk assessment findings to all Employees;
- iii. Complete all mandatory awareness and training sessions;
- iv. Conduct workplace violence risk assessments, with the assistance of the Health and Safety Division, at least annually, to determine whether the nature of the workplace, the type of work, or the conditions of work may place Employees at risk of violence;
- v. Take all reasonable and practical measures to minimize or eliminate risks identified through the risk assessment process, workplace inspections, or the occurrence of workplace violence incidents and
- vi. Maintain and follow the investigation and reporting of work-related injuries and incidents (see AD 5.8.2 *Occupational Health and Safety-Workplace Injuries*). With the assistance of the Health and Safety Division, ensure that all incidents of workplace violence are investigated to the extent appropriate based on the nature of each incident and the actual or potential threat posed to worker safety:
 - a. Take all reasonable steps necessary to minimize or address any risks identified during the incident;
 - b. Ensure that the incident, including its investigation and any corrective actions taken, are thoroughly documented; and
 - c. Promptly communicate the findings of the investigation to the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee (JOHSC), as well as to workers involved in the incident.

4.3. The Health and Safety Division will:

- i. Perform a risk assessment in line with *OHS*, Part 4.28, for any workplace where a risk of injury to workers from violence arising from their employment may be present. The risk assessment must include the consideration of:
 - a. Previous experience in that workplace;
 - b. Occupational experience in similar workplaces; and
 - c. The location and circumstances in which work will take place.
- ii. For areas identified as presenting a risk to workers from violence by a risk assessment, the Health and Safety Division will:

- a. Establish procedures, policies, and work environment arrangements to eliminate the risk to workers from violence; and
 - b. If eliminating the risk to workers is not possible, the division will establish procedures, policies, and work environment arrangements to minimize the risk to others.
- iii. Assist management in implementing this policy and procedures and initiate the annual review of the policy and risk assessments.
- iv. Provide advice and guidance regarding the elements of maintaining a violence-free workplace or make changes to the policy as required by consulting with management staff and the JOHSC.
- v. Ensure workers complete the mandatory training and are informed on the following topics:
 - a. Their rights to have workplace violence incidents investigated when they are reported;
 - b. The risk of violence of the nature and extent of the risk;
 - c. Duty to Inform workers who may be exposed to the risk of violence of the nature and extent of the risk;
 - d. Provide information related to the risk of violence from persons who have a history of violent behaviour and whom workers are likely to encounter in the course of their work;
 - e. The means for recognition of the potential for violence;
 - f. The procedures, policies, and work environment arrangements that have been developed to minimize or effectively control threats to workers from violence;
 - g. The appropriate response to incidents of violence, including how to obtain assistance;
 - h. Procedures for reporting, investigating, and documenting incidents of violence; and
 - i. Referral to a physician or medical professional following any violent incident that may result in physical injury.

4.4. The Employee will:

- i. Maintain a safe work environment whenever possible;
- ii. Not engage in or ignore violent, threatening, intimidating, or other disruptive behaviours; and
- iii. Report promptly and provide details to their Supervisor any incident where the Employee is subjected to, witnesses, or has knowledge of workplace violence or has reason to believe that workplace violence may occur.

4.5. The JOHSC will:

- i. With the OHS Advisor, review the policy and procedure annually, in conjunction with a review of risk assessments, the effectiveness of actions taken to minimize or eliminate workplace violence, and make improvements; and
- ii. Receive the investigation report and review and provide additional recommendations to the employer if warranted.

5. INVESTIGATION

5.1. Reporting

- i. An Employee must immediately report, verbally or in writing, any alleged observation or experienced incidents of workplace violence to their Supervisor or next level of management.
- ii. If an employee is in an immediate harmful situation, they must first remove themselves from the situation before reporting. Reports of workplace violence must fall under the definition of OHSR workplace violence to be investigated under the provisions of this policy.

5.2. Supervisor Escalation

- i. Once the Supervisor is aware of a potential or alleged workplace violence incident, the Supervisor will assess the situation and try to resolve it informally and expeditiously at the lowest level possible. If the complaint can be resolved informally, the Supervisor will implement measures to eliminate or minimize similar incidents in the future.
- ii. If the incident cannot be resolved informally or warrants an investigation, a Competent Person should be appointed. Other formal complaint processes, such as harassment investigation, Code of Conduct complaint and investigation, or criminal investigation, may be initiated.

5.3. Investigation

- i. A Competent Person shall investigate thoroughly, impartially, unbiased, and sensitively. They will provide the employer with a written report containing the investigation's findings and recommendations on adapting or implementing controls to prevent future occurrences. In some investigations, participation with the JOHSC may be warranted.

5.4. Resolution

- i. The Supervisor will implement the recommendations provided by the competent person and the JOHSC, making a written record of the corrective measures taken or the reason for not taking specific actions. This record will be provided to the JOHSC. Assistance from the Disability Management Division will facilitate a safe and/or early return to work.

APPENDIX A: DEFINITIONS

“Competent Person” means a person who has the skills and knowledge to identify new and existing hazards in the workplace.

“Contractor” means a person or persons who has access to SPS premises, as defined in this policy, to provide services or supplies to SPS on a contractual basis.

“Employee” means a current SPS Employee (including Members and civilian staff) appointed by the Surrey Police Board.

“Employer” means the Surrey Police Board.

“Harassment” is a type of Discrimination and includes any conduct, comment, gesture, or contact related to one of the prohibited grounds in the *Human Rights Code*. It is behaviour or communication, including interaction over email or social media/social networks, of such a nature that is, or it would be reasonable to assume it is, unwelcome and detrimentally affects the work environment for any individual or leads to adverse job-related consequences for that person “Seconded Personnel” means an Employee of another employer who is assigned under the leadership of the Chief Constable for a specific period of time and who is not an Employee of SPS.

“Member” means a Sworn Police Officer appointed by the Surrey Police Board.

“SPS premises” includes, but is not limited to, any property permanently or temporarily under the jurisdiction of SPS, including land, buildings, job sites, facilities, parking lots, equipment, and vehicles, whether owned, leased, or used by SPS and wherever located. The work site of a seconded Employee is considered an extension of the SPS workplace and, therefore, SPS premises.

“Supervisor” means a Team leader, Manager, Staff Sergeant, Sergeant, Inspector, Superintendent, Deputy Chief Constable, Chief Constable, and any other person acting in as Supervisory capacity who is accountable for a particular area or shift on behalf of SPS.

“Worker” means an Employee, Contractor, or Seconded Personnel.

“Workplace” means any location where an Employee, Contractor, or Seconded Personnel performs their work; any work-related event or gathering, whether sponsored by the Employer or not; or any location traveled to for a work-related reason.

APPENDIX B: REFERENCES

Human Rights Code, R.S.B.C. 1996, c. 210

Occupational Health and Safety Regulation, BC Reg. 296/97, Part 4 – General Conditions, Division 4.27-4.31- Violence in the Workplace