

HR 25 Psychological Health & Safety

Classification:	Human Resources
Responsible Authority:	Manager, Employee Abilities and Wellness
Executive Sponsor:	Vice President, Human Resources
Approval Authority:	Algonquin College Executive Team
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Mandatory Review Date:	2020-11-06 (5 years for existing policies & 1 year for new policies)

PURPOSE

To establish the parameters for the implementation and operation of an effective Psychological Health and Safety Management System (PHSMS) where all college staff share responsibility.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all College employees, contractors and volunteers.

DEFINITIONS

Word/Term	Definition
College Staff	Refers to all employees, volunteers, and contractors the purpose of this policy.
Psychologically Healthy and Safe Workplace:	A workplace that promotes the College community's psychological well-being and actively works to prevent harm to our College community's psychological health, including in negligent, reckless, or intentional ways.
Psychosocial Risk Factors (PSR)	Psychosocial factors are elements that impact employees' psychological responses to work and work conditions, potentially causing psychological health problems. Psychosocial factors include the way work is carried out (deadlines, workload, work methods) and the context in which work occurs (including relationships and interactions with managers and supervisors, colleagues and coworkers, and clients or customers
Psychological Safety	The absence of harm and/or threat of harm to mental well-being that the College staff might experience.

Word/Term	Definition
Workplace	Any College building or location where an employee works or where work-related activities are conducted. It includes, but is not limited to, the physical work premises, work-related social functions, work assignments off College premises, work-related travel and work-related conferences or training sessions.

POLICY

1. Algonquin College is committed to providing a safe and psychologically healthy work and learning environment for its College community.
2. The College recognizes that psychological health and safety is equally as important as physical health and safety and is essential to ongoing organizational success and sustainability.
3. The College will implement a Psychological Health and Safety Management System that:
 - 3.1 Has the support and commitment of college staff.
 - 3.2 Facilitates the participation of all college staff to identify and address risk factors that impact psychological health and safety in the workplace.
 - 3.3 Has the resources required to take appropriate action to address identified risk factors.
 - 3.4 Regularly monitors its performance against measurable objectives and desired outcomes.
 - 3.5 Demonstrates due diligence.
 - 3.6 Complies with the National Standard of Canada for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace (CSA Z1003).
 - 3.7 Acknowledges a shared responsibility across all college staff in achieving a psychologically healthy and safe workplace.
4. Confidentiality is to be practiced in accordance with HR Policy 22.

PROCEDURE

<u>Action</u>	<u>Responsibility</u>
1. Develop the PHSMS.	Co-Chairs Psychological Health & Safety Taskforce
2. Assign appropriate resources to support the PHSMS, including membership for a taskforce to implement this policy.	Algonquin College Executive Team
3. Conduct measurement activities to assess the impact of psychological health and safety hazard identification and risk mitigation.	Co-Chairs Psychological Health & Safety Taskforce
4. Implement and evaluate policies, procedures, standards and programs relating to psychologically safe working conditions and work practices in response to results of measurement activities.	Co-Chairs Psychological Health & Safety Taskforce
5. Plan and deliver appropriate psychological health and safety learning to all college staff.	Manager, Employee Abilities and Wellness & Manager, Centre for Occupational Learning
6. Report on psychological health and safety metrics, performance and programming annually to the Algonquin College Executive Team.	Vice President, Human Resources

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendix 1 Psychological Health & Safety Taskforce Terms of Reference

RELATED POLICIES

- HR18 – [HR18: Employee Code of Conduct](#)
- HR22 – [HR22: Respectful Workplace](#)
- HS01 – [HS01: Occupational Health and Safety](#)

RELATED MATERIALS

[National Standard of Canada Psychological Health and Safety in The Workplace CAN/CSA-Z1003-13](#)

Appendix 1: Psychological Health & Safety Taskforce Terms of Reference

PURPOSE

The Psychological Health and Safety (PHS) Taskforce exists to advise and assist in the identification, development and implementation of mechanisms to ensure the protection of psychological safety and the promotion of psychological health for all Algonquin College staff. The PHS Taskforce will engage in this work with the desired outcome of preserving every employee's right to work in an environment that affords them the opportunity to be their healthiest self at work.

MANDATE

With an initial 3-year mandate, the PHS Taskforce will use the National Standard for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace (CSA-Z1003) as a guide to implementing a continuous quality improvement process that identifies and addresses psychosocial risk in the workplace.

Success will be viewed as making measurable improvement and reducing risk related to at least three (3) identified psychosocial risk factors.

To accomplish this mandate, the PHS Taskforce will undertake activities including:

- a. Communicating Algonquin College's clear commitment to psychological health and safety.
- b. Educating the Algonquin College community about psychological health and safety as well as individuals' roles in building a psychologically healthy workplace.
- c. Informing and monitoring the development of a psychological health and safety management system.
- d. Collecting and analyzing data to assess the current state of psychological health and safety and to track improvement over time.
- e. Identifying and representing the diverse needs of the workforce, including role-specific hazards and interventions.
- f. Identifying ways to support psychological health and safety through recommendation of systematic changes to policies, procedures, and practices.
- g. Supporting the implementation and evaluation of initiatives aimed at reducing the impact of psychological health risks in the workplace.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership of the PHS Taskforce is to include no more than 15 members. To ensure all worker needs are represented, appointments will ensure that the committee is comprised of members that represent the full breadth of workers at Algonquin College.

It is required that there will be adequate representation from:

- a. the general membership of each of the unions representing members of the Algonquin College workforce;
- b. health and safety representatives from each union representing members of the Algonquin College workforce;
- c. human resources and occupational health and safety departments;
- d. the Diversity and Inclusion Circle;
- e. staff member(s) with knowledge of Indigenous concepts of health and wellbeing; and
- f. each of the College campuses.

Each union group will appoint their own member and a health and safety representative to sit on the Taskforce. All other members will be appointed by the VP, Human Resources based on their role or subject matter expertise.

The term of members will be for a 3-year appointment, with the opportunity to be-reappointed at the direction of the sponsor or respective union group.

DURATION

The current taskforce is stood for a 3 year timeframe, at which point the work will be assessed by the sponsor for continuation, or absorption into another permanent committee.

EXECUTIVE SPONSORSHIP

The PHS Taskforce will be sponsored by the executive leader in Human Resources, and Human Resources will be responsible reporting department and providing updates to ACET.

LEADERSHIP

- a. The PHS Taskforce shall have one pair of co-chairs appointed by the sponsor, with a maximum one chair being renewed on a biennial basis. Identification of the co-chair to be renewed will be through consensus of the Taskforce.
- b. The duties of the co-chairs include:
 - i. Scheduling and opening meetings; ensuring agendas, minutes and supporting documents are distributed in advance of each meeting.
 - ii. Ensuring meeting objectives are aligned with and contributing to the committee's identified priorities and work plan.
 - iii. Reporting on Taskforce progress to executive sponsors.
- c. The Taskforce will determine if sub-groups are required for special projects. These sub-groups will report to the Taskforce on actions, findings and recommendations.

OPERATING PROCESS

- a. The Taskforce is to meet every six weeks. To accommodate the summer leave period for the academic members, there will be one meeting held the week prior to the summer leave, and the week academic members end their leave.

- b. Special meetings to be called on an as-required basis by the co-chairs.
- c. Quorum for meetings will be half plus one of the appointed members.
- d. Administrative support will be provided by Human Resources.
- e. Meeting notes will summarize discussions and recommendations and will be distributed as appropriate and may be distributed college-wide.
- f. Decision-making will be by consensus. Should any members of the Taskforce believe that consensus has not been achieved, a written appeal may be submitted to the co-chairs within seven calendar days of the decision. Receipt of an appeal will put the decision on hold until the appeal can be reviewed at the subsequent Taskforce meeting.