

HS03

Workplace Violence Prevention

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Responsible Authority:	Director, Risk Management
Executive Sponsor:	Vice President, Finance and Administration
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PURPOSE

To outline the College's Workplace Violence Prevention Policy and to implement a program to prevent and respond to incidents of workplace violence in accordance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA).

SCOPE

All workers at the College, regardless of tenure or position, including without limitation all volunteers, workers, supervisors, managers, department chairs and executives of the College. The Policy applies to all activities that occur while on College property or while at other location(s) where a worker may be located as a result of their employment, or while a worker is engaging in College business, activities or social events.

DEFINITIONS

Word/Term	Definition
Workplace Harassment	Engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct against a worker in a workplace that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome (OHSA).
Workplace Violence	As defined by OHSA: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> the exercise of physical force by a person against a worker, in a workplace, that causes or could cause physical injury to the worker; an attempt to exercise physical force against a worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker; a statement or behaviour that it is reasonable for a worker to interpret as a threat to exercise physical force against the worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker.
Academic Administrator	Program Chair, Course Chair, Academic Manager or Dean.
Risk Behaviour	Behaviours associated with risk behaviour identification criteria listed in the Workplace Violence Prevention Program (Appendix 4).

Zero Tolerance	Requirement to respond to all reported incidents of workplace violence and concerns about risk behaviour by means of investigation and resolution.
OHSA	Occupational Health and Safety Act (Ontario).
College Community	Refers to all workers, volunteers, contractors, clients, visitors and guests of the College for the purpose of this policy.
Worker	A person employed by the College; or An unpaid learner participating in a program approved by the College; or An unpaid trainee or other persons who work or provide services to the employer (College) without compensation (OHSA).
Workplace	Any College building or location where a worker 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.
Supervisor	Person who has charge of a workplace or authority over workers (OHSA).
Complainant	Person who files a formal complaint in writing under this Policy.
Respondent	Individual against whom allegations that could constitute a violation of this Policy have been made.

POLICY

1. The College is committed to provide a working environment free of violence and to implement measures to prevent acts of workplace violence.
2. The College subscribes to a zero-tolerance approach to any occurrences of workplace violence. Actions taken by the College in dealing with workplace violence relate to both response and prevention measures.
3. No worker or any other individual affiliated with the College shall subject a worker to workplace violence or allow or create conditions that support workplace violence. Workers are expected to understand and comply with this Policy and all related procedures.
4. Members of the College community are to report to their supervisors' incidents of workplace violence, and concerns about risk behaviour they may experience or witness. Members of the College community are also to report circumstances where a threat of domestic violence may exist that would likely expose a worker to physical injury in the workplace. Finally, members of the College community must cooperate with any efforts to investigate and resolve matters arising under this Policy.
5. The College will maintain a multi-disciplinary Behaviour Risk Assessment Group (Appendix 2) to review reported behaviour which poses a concern for the safety of members of the College

community. The Group has the mandate to undertake the necessary risk assessment to determine the most suitable approach to intervene and manage the situation within the context of College policies and practices.

6. A worker of the College that subjects a worker to workplace violence or otherwise violates this Policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including immediate dismissal for cause. Workers who have engaged in workplace violence may also be subject to sanctions by applicable regulatory bodies and professional associations, and may also be subject to criminal or civil proceedings.
7. A worker of the College who makes a false accusation under this Policy, knowingly or in a malicious or bad faith manner, may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including immediate dismissal for just cause.
8. The College will not tolerate reprisals or retaliatory measures against a member of the College community who, in good faith, raises a complaint of workplace violence within the meaning of this Policy. These protections apply to anyone who cooperates in the investigation of a complaint. Disciplinary action may be taken against any worker who commits a reprisal or retaliatory measure against a person who reports workplace violence or who cooperates in an investigation.
9. Confidentiality is required to properly investigate an incident and to offer appropriate support to all parties involved: only those who “need to know” will be advised of the complaint and/or investigation. The College will endeavour to maintain confidentiality to the extent possible within the limits of the law; workers are advised that engaging in spreading rumours, speculation or conjecture about an incident will not be tolerated. Those with questions or concerns should speak to their immediate supervisor or the Manager, Security and Emergency Services.
10. The College may provide workers with information, including personal information, about a person with a history of violent behaviour if the worker can be expected to encounter that person in the course of their work and the risk of workplace violence is likely to expose the worker to physical injury. The College will not disclose more information than is reasonably necessary for the protection of a worker from physical injury.
11. While the College is committed to taking actions to maintain an environment free of workplace violence, it recognizes that no workplace is immune from the risk of workplace violence.
12. The required actions and form of investigation will in all cases depend on the circumstances, taking into consideration the nature of the workplace violence and the concerns of worker(s) who experienced or witnessed the workplace violence. In some cases, not all steps will be required and in other cases, additional steps may be taken.

PROCEDURE

<u>Action</u>	<u>Responsibility</u>
1. Response Measures: Urgent Incident	
1.1 Report an urgent incident immediately by dialling 5000 or 911 and follow emergency procedures.	Victim or witness
1.2 Provide emergency response and invoke necessary emergency procedures.	Security Services
1.3 Activate appropriate emergency measures, if required.	Security Services
1.4 Support the investigation of criminal matters in consultation with the Police, where necessary.	Security Services
1.5 Notify the Behaviour Risk Assessment Group if circumstances exist where the behaviour of an individual may continue to represent a potential concern for the safety of other members of the College Community.	Security Services
1.6 Consult and make recommendations to the affected person's immediate supervisor regarding the outcome of the investigation.	Security Services
1.7 Determine whether any action is required, which may include preventive, corrective and/or disciplinary action.	Immediate Supervisor
1.8 Document findings and actions taken.	Security Services
2. Response Measures: Non-urgent Incident	
2.1 Report in writing, using the on-line Accident / Incident Report Form (Appendix 5), incidents which do not require emergency response to the Supervisor. If the Supervisor of the affected person is involved in the incident, make the report to the Supervisor's Supervisor. Include detailed notes of the incident(s), including date, time and nature of the incident(s) as well as the name of any witnesses.	Victim or witness
2.2 Determine the urgency of the incident using the Workplace Violence Prevention Model. Where necessary, request the assistance of Security Services or Human Resources to determine the urgency. (Appendix 1)	Immediate Supervisor
2.3 Investigate the incident or seek investigative guidance from Human Resources or Security Services. Such guidance may include assigning the investigation to an internal or external person to investigate. The investigation may include interviewing the complainant and the respondent as soon as possible, interviewing any witnesses, reviewing relevant	Immediate Supervisor

documents and other materials and producing a final report of findings.

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| 2.4 | Request, if a potential concern for the safety of other members of the College community exists and time permits, a meeting of the Behaviour Risk Assessment Group as soon as practicable to assess the incident. | Security Services |
| 2.5 | Follow procedures outlined in Policy HR 22 <i>Respectful Workplace</i> if the incident relates to harassment or discrimination. | Immediate Supervisor |
| 2.6 | Follow the procedures outlined in Policy SA 07 <i>Student Conduct</i> if the instigator of the incident is a student. | Immediate Supervisor |
| 2.7 | Following the investigation, make a finding of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. sufficient evidence to support a finding of violation of this Policy; b. insufficient evidence to support a finding of violation of this Policy; or c. no violation of this Policy. | Immediate Supervisor |
| 2.8 | Where applicable, respond in writing to the complainant within five (5) working days or as soon as practicable. | Immediate Supervisor |
| 2.9 | Determine whether any action is required, which may include preventive, corrective and/or disciplinary action. | Immediate Supervisor |
| 2.10 | Document findings and actions taken. | Immediate Supervisor |

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

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| Appendix 1 | Workplace Violence Prevention and Response Model |
| Appendix 2 | Behaviour Risk Assessment Group Terms of Reference |
| Appendix 3 | Workplace Violence Prevention Strategies |
| Appendix 4 | Risk Behaviour Assessment and Response |
| Appendix 5 | Security Incident Report |

RELATED POLICIES

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| HR 22 | Respectful Workplace |
| SA 07 | Student Conduct |

RELATED MATERIALS

Occupational Health and Safety Act (Ontario)

<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90o01>

Workplace Violence Prevention Program

<https://www.algonquincollege.com/safety-security-services/home/occupational-health-and-safety/occupational-health-and-safety-programs/workplace-violence-prevention/>

Appendix 1:

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND RESPONSE MODEL

Prevention / Mitigation	Broadly communicate Code of Conduct Establish behavioural expectations and consequences Workplace Design Measures (CPTED) Personal Safety Awareness Measures	Managing Aggressive Behaviour training De-escalation techniques Reporting processes Specialized behavioural services Disciplinary Processes	Training and awareness around emergency procedures, reporting and immediate actions	Training and awareness around specific procedures such as evacuation, lockdown, emergency communications systems
	Low	Moderate	High	Critical
Violence Level	Individually managed, not frequent, not severe, no negative consequences for others or learning / work environment Includes behaviours such as: disruptions, potentially aggressive behaviour, authority challenging, verbal abuse, offensive comments, slurs etc.	Behaviour has a detrimental influence on the work / learning environment, objectively apparent, increased frequency or severity of violence beyond low level Includes behaviours such as: bullying, harassment, intimidation, aggressive, abusive, offensive, verbal threats	Threat to personal safety or the safety of others is perceived Includes behaviours such as: Weapons threat, assault (pushing, hitting, Kicking, Punching, biting), other violent criminal acts, immediate threat to injure self or others	Threat to life safety and / or imminent risk to College occupants creating College crisis Includes behaviours such as: use of weapons (guns, knives, explosives, agents or other items used as weapons), imminent threats of weapons and other imminent threats to life safety
Impact	Anxiety	Personal Safety Concerns	Safety at risk	Imminent Danger to Life
College / Individual Response	Recognize Respond Refer to specialized services where appropriate Classroom Management Skills Boundary setting Documentation	Intervention using classroom management techniques and de-escalation skills Ensure physical safety Report Documentation Disciplinary action as appropriate	Call 5000 (911) to report Avoid escalation Take necessary measures to mitigate risk to safety of self and others	Call 5000 (911) to report Avoid escalation / mitigate risk Evacuate if possible Lockdown if necessary Follow directions over emergency communication systems Follow directions of emergency personnel

Appendix 2:

BEHAVIOUR RISK ASSESSMENT GROUP TERMS OF REFERENCE:

1. Membership

The membership of the Behaviour Risk Assessment Group will vary depending on the incident under review:

1.1 If the behaviour of a *learner* is of concern, the members will be:

- Manager, Security and Emergency Services or designate
- Manager, Counselling or Director, Student Support Services or designate
- Manager, Health Services or designate
- Program Chair

1.2 If the behaviour of a *member of the College Community*, with the exception of a student, is of concern, the members will be:

- Manager, Security and Emergency Services or designate
- Director, Labour Relations or designate
- Employee Assistance Program representative (psychologist, psychiatrist, counsellor)
- Director or Dean or Academic Administrator

2. Mandate

2.1 Meet as soon as is practicable after a report of an incident of concern is received by Security Services

2.2 Formally review the reported information.

2.3 Undertake an internal investigation to determine the most suitable approach to intervene and manage the situation within the context of College policies and practices.

2.4 Undertake an assessment of the potential risks involved.

2.5 Consult additional internal and external resources as necessary, within the context of confidentiality practices and privacy legislation, to address the risks and provide direction to resolve the situation in the interests of the safety of the College community. Depending on the circumstances, resources may include:

- support staff and faculty unions,
- Student Support Services,
- Ombudsman,
- Centre for Accessible Learning (CAL),
- Ottawa Police Service,
- mental health professionals,
- physicians,
- family members etc.

2.6 Document all findings and measures taken.

Appendix 3:

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION STRATEGIES

The Workplace Violence Prevention Program describes workplace violence hazards and offers processes to assess and control these risks. It promotes proactive strategies to prevent violence.

Examples of these strategies include:

- a. **Workplace Design Measures**
A range of measures available for consideration through consultation with either Security and Emergency Services or Facilities Planning and Development as they relate to the design of new and renovated spaces in the College.
- b. **Physical and Electronic Security Measures**
A variety of measures are available for consideration through consultation with Security Services.
- c. **Administrative Systems and Procedures**
Describe committee structures and procedural environments concerned with personal security issues, as well as services such as Walk Safe.
- d. **Training Programs**
Describe a range of training programs such as Non-violent Crisis Intervention, Sexual Assault Aggression Defence Techniques, Dealing with Classroom Emergencies and Managing Aggressive Behaviour and Ethical Upstander Training available to workers as general and targeted professional development.
- e. **Personal Safety Awareness Techniques**
Describe a host of techniques that can be used by individuals and supported by management staff.
- f. **Warning Signs**
Describe specific warning signs of potential violence as well as behavioural criteria for identifying potential risks.
- g. **Behaviour Risk Assessment Group (Appendix 1)**
Algonquin College maintains a multi-disciplinary Behaviour Risk Assessment Group to review reported behaviour which poses a concern for the safety of members of the College community in the context of the risk behaviour identification criteria listed in section 6 of the Workplace Violence Prevention Program.

Appendix 4:

RISK BEHAVIOUR ASSESSMENT AND RESPONSE

Out of concern for fellow staff or students, it is important that members of the College Community report circumstances where an individual has displayed behaviours which may be an indicator that they are in need of assistance. If any of the observed behaviours cause a concern that they or other members of the College Community may be at risk, it is critical this information be reported. It is equally critical that members of the College Community do not attempt to deal with situations themselves or otherwise put themselves at risk.

There are a wide variety of support mechanisms to assist persons who may be having social, emotional, or mental health difficulties. Such persons may be in need of help from College and community health professionals. The College wants to be able to provide this help when necessary. Helping persons through the appropriate support processes is essential in maintaining a healthy and safe College community.

The following list identifies various life events and behaviours that may affect an individual's social, mental or emotional well being

Please note that persons who demonstrate these behaviours or are influenced by the events listed below DO NOT necessarily pose a risk to themselves or others. Ensuring that these persons have adequate access to necessary social supports and assistance is the thrust of any preliminary intervention and can have a proactive influence over the potential for negative outcomes if not addressed. This is the context in which the following list is presented.

The following list is intended to generally characterize some traits and behaviours for reporting purposes.

1. History of Violence
 - a. Fascination with weapons, acts of violence, or both
 - b. Demonstrates violence towards inanimate objects
 - c. Evidence of prior violent behaviour

2. Threatening Behaviour
 - a. States intention to hurt someone (verbal or written)
 - b. Holds grudges
 - c. Excessive behaviour (phone calls, gift-giving)
 - d. Escalating threats that appear well planned
 - e. A preoccupation with violence

3. Intimidating Behaviour
 - a. Argumentative
 - b. Displays unwarranted anger
 - c. Easily frustrated
 - d. Uncooperative
 - e. Impulsive
 - f. Challenges co-workers and management

4. Increase in Personal Stress

- a. An unreciprocated, romantic obsession
 - b. Serious family or financial problems
 - c. Recent job loss
5. Negative Personality Characteristics
- a. Suspicious of others
 - b. Believes they are entitled to something
 - c. Cannot take criticism
 - d. Feels victimized
 - e. Shows a lack of concern for the safety and well-being of others
 - f. Has low self esteem
 - g. Blames others or their problems or mistakes
6. Marked Changes in Mood or Behaviour
- a. Extreme or bizarre behaviour
 - b. Irrational beliefs and ideas
 - c. Appears depressed
 - d. Expresses hopelessness or heightened anxiety
 - e. Demonstrates a drastic change in belief systems
 - f. Marked decline in work performance
7. Socially Isolated
- a. History of negative interpersonal relationships
 - b. Few friends or family
 - c. Has on obsessive involvement with their work
8. Abuses Drugs or Alcohol

Response from College Community

1. Staff and Students will:
 - a. Contact their supervisor or academic chair to report concerns.
2. Supervisors will:
 - a. Discuss and document the stated concerns with the complainant;
 - b. Contact Security and Emergency Services at ext. 5010 to report concerns.
3. Security and Emergency Services will:
 - a. Document initial information;
 - b. Conduct preliminary investigation of the information provided to determine validity;
 - c. If concern(s) are valid, coordinate a meeting of the Behaviour Risk Assessment Group as soon as practicable;
 - d. If a student is the subject of the concern, contact the program chair of the student to meet with the Behaviour Risk Assessment Group;
 - e. If a worker is the subject of concern, contact the worker's immediate supervisor to meet with the Behaviour Risk Assessment Group.

Appendix 5:**ACCIDENT / INCIDENT REPORT FORM**

This on-line form can be found on the Risk Management website:

<https://www.algonquincollege.com/safety-security-services/home/accident-incident-report-on-line-form/>