

## HR25 Psychological Health and Safety

Classification:	Human Resources
Responsible Authority:	Director, Employee and Labour Relations
Executive Sponsor:	Vice President, Human Resources
Approval Authority:	Algonquin College Executive Team
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### 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 staff.

### DEFINITIONS

Word/Term	Definition
College Staff	College Staff is the set of all employees, volunteers, and contractors.
Psychological Health	A state of well-being in which an individual realizes their own abilities, can cope with normal stresses of life, can work productively, and is able to contribute to their community.
Psychological Health and Safety Management System	A coordinated set of policies, procedures, and practices designed to promote psychological well-being in the workplace.
Psychological Safety	The absence of harm and/or threat to mental Well-being, combined with a workplace culture where individuals feel confident to express themselves, share ideas, ask questions, and raise concerns without fear of negative consequences.
Psychologically Healthy and Safe Workplace	A workplace that promotes psychological well-being and actively works to prevent harm to College staff psychological

	health, including in negligent, reckless, or intentional ways. (Source: Canadian Standards Association)
Psychosocial Risk Factors	<p>Elements of the work environment, management practices, and organizational culture that may affect employee's psychological health.</p> <p>13 organizational factors that impact organizational health, the health of individual employees and the way work is carried out are or in which it occurs (Source: Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Balance</li> <li>2. Civility and Respect</li> <li>3. Clear Leadership and Expectations</li> <li>4. Engagement</li> <li>5. Growth and Development</li> <li>6. Involvement and Influence</li> <li>7. Organizational Culture</li> <li>8. Protection of Physical Safety</li> <li>9. Psychological Competencies and Demands</li> <li>10. Psychological Protection</li> <li>11. Psychological and Social Support</li> <li>12. Recognition and Reward</li> <li>13. Workload Management</li> </ol>
Workplace	Any place where business or work-related activities are conducted. It includes, but is not limited to, the physical work premises, work-related social functions, work assignments outside of Algonquin College's work 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 has implemented a Psychological Health and Safety Management System that:
  1. Has the support and commitment of College staff.
  2. Facilitates the participation of all College staff to identify and address risk factors that impact psychological health and safety in the workplace.
  3. Has the resources required to take appropriate action to address identified risk factors.
  4. Regularly monitors its performance against measurable objectives and desired outcomes.
  5. Demonstrates due diligence.
  6. Complies with the National Standard of Canada for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace (CSA Z1003).
  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 policy HR22: Respectful Workplace.
5. **Roles and Responsibilities**
  1. **Algonquin College Executive Team (ACET):**
    - Foster an organizational culture that promotes psychological health and safety.
    - Ensure that a psychological health and safety management system is in place to provide a work environment that is free from psychological harm where:
      - Psychological health and safety hazards are identified.
      - Psychological health and safety hazards are communicated to supervisors, employees and key stakeholders.
      - Employees are trained to recognize psychosocial hazards and respond to situations involving psychological harm.
      - Incidents of psychological harm are investigated in a fair, objective manner.
    - Ensure compliance with occupational health and safety, human rights and other applicable laws and College policies.

**2. People Leader:**

- Exhibit leadership behaviours to support workers' psychological wellbeing.
- Help to identify workplace stressors and conduct.
- Look out for and respond to signs and symptoms of psychological harm exhibited by their team members.
- Promote a culture where workers who exhibit symptoms of psychological harm are met with support rather than stigma.
- Offer immediate and ongoing support to employees involved in traumatic or stressful incidents, complaints or claims.
- Ensure all team members are aware of this policy.
- Participate in and apply training and instruction on psychological health and safety and mental well-being.
- Maintain confidentiality of the individuals concerns, except where disclosure is necessary to investigate the complaint or take disciplinary measures in responding to a complaint.

**3. Employees:**

- Treat one another with dignity, courtesy and respect at all times.
- Be familiar with and follow the policies and procedures in place to protect psychological health and safety.
- Participate in and apply training and instruction on psychological hazards and mental well-being.

**4. Human Resources:**

- Support and contribute to the college goal of providing a mentally healthy and supportive environment for all employees by reinforcing the policy in everyday activities and being active representatives of the policy's guiding principles.
- Actively advise on or provide training and educational materials on psychological health and safety to all employees.
- Utilize external support and resources as needed for further support on psychological health and safety best practices.
- Lead the evaluation of the psychological health and safety management system.
- Conduct measurement activities and report of psychological health and safety hazard identification.

**5. Risk Management/Occupational Health and Safety:**

- Support Human Resources, People Leaders, Employees as experts in Occupational Health and Safety programming and review of psychological health and safety program.

- Support the monitoring of psychological incidents and reporting under HS01: Occupational Health and Safety and report to Joint Health and Safety Committee(s).

#### 6. Union:

- Foster an organizational culture that promotes psychological health and safety.
- Support union members on psychological health and safety issues or concerns, while respecting the collective agreement, college policies and procedures.
- Work collaboratively with the College to support and contribute to providing a mentally healthy and supportive environment for all employees.

### PROCEDURE

	<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
1.	Maintain the PHSMS through regular review and updates.	All Members Psychological Health & Safety Taskforce
2.	Ensure appropriate resources to support the PHSMS, including membership for a taskforce.	Algonquin College Executive Team
3.	Conduct measurement activities to assess the impact of psychological health and safety hazard identification and risk mitigation.	Appointed Leads, Psychological Health & Safety Taskforce
4.	Refine and evaluate policies, procedures, standards and programs relating to psychologically safe working conditions and work practices in response to results of measurement activities.	All Members 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 Organizational Learning
6.	Report on psychological health and safety metrics, performance and programming annually to the Algonquin College Executive Team.	Director, Employee and Labour Relations, Human Resources

### SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendix 1: Psychological Health & Safety Taskforce Terms of Reference

## **RELATED POLICIES**

AC04: Notification of Service Disruption for People with Disabilities  
AD21: Safe to Speak Up  
HR15: Return to Work with Modified Workload  
HR16: Leave of Absence for Personal Reasons  
HR18: Employee Code of Conduct  
HR21: Employee/Student Personal Relationships  
HR22: Respectful Workplace (Anti-Harassment and Anti-Discrimination)  
HR23: Sick Leave (Short Term Disability)  
HR24: Equity, Diversity and Inclusion  
HS01: Occupational Health and Safety

## **RELATED MATERIALS**

[CSA Group - Psychological health and safety in the workplace - Prevention, promotion, and guidance to staged implementation](#)

## 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.

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### 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:

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

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### 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:

1. the general membership of each of the unions representing members of the Algonquin College workforce;
2. health and safety representatives from each union representing members of the Algonquin College workforce;

3. human resources and occupational health and safety departments;
4. the Diversity and Inclusion Circle;
5. staff member(s) with knowledge of Indigenous concepts of health and wellbeing; and
6. 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**

1. 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.
2. The duties of the co-chairs include:
  - Scheduling and opening meetings; ensuring agendas, minutes and supporting documents are distributed in advance of each meeting.
  - Ensuring meeting objectives are aligned with and contributing to the committee's identified priorities and work plan.
  - Reporting on Taskforce progress to executive sponsors.
3. 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**

1. 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.
2. Special meetings to be called on an as-required basis by the co-chairs. HR25 Psychological Health & Safety 3
3. Quorum for meetings will be half plus one of the appointed members.

4. Administrative support will be provided by Human Resources.
5. Meeting notes will summarize discussions and recommendations and will be distributed as appropriate and may be distributed college-wide.
6. 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.