



Policy Name:	Addressing Violence in the Workplace
Policy Type:	Human Resource
Policy Number:	HR-08
Original Adoption Date:	November 2008
Current Approval:	September 2024
Review:	June 2025
Motion:	2025:53

Addressing Violence in the Workplace

1. Purpose:

This policy addresses the prevention of workplace violence as part of the Orillia Public Library Board’s responsibility for worker health and safety under the ***Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act***.

The OPL is committed to building and preserving a safe, productive, and healthy working environment based on mutual respect. This policy is intended to:

- Create and foster a work environment that is free from workplace violence
- Establish and detail the responsibilities of all persons of the Library to maintain a workplace free of actual, attempted or threatened violence
- Establish a process for assessing risk, reporting, investigating and responding to complaints of violence in an effective and timely manner
- Raise awareness amongst all employees about the process for dealing with and reporting incidents of violence

2. Policy:

Violent behaviour in the workplace is unacceptable from anyone including staff, members of the Board, volunteers, members of the public, and others who do business with the Library. Individuals who violate this policy may be removed from Library property, and in the case of employees, are subject to disciplinary action including termination.

3. Definitions

“Workplace violence” means:



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- a. the exercise of physical force by a person against a worker, in a workplace, that causes or could cause physical injury to the worker,
- b. an attempt to exercise physical force against a worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker,
- c. 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. ***Occupational Health and Safety Act, R.S.O. 1990, chapter O.1, s.1 (1).***

“Intimate Partner Violence” means any physical, psychological, sexual, economic, and emotional abuse perpetrated by one person against a partner, with the goal of establishing and maintaining power and control over the victim.

“Domestic Violence” means any physical, psychological, sexual, economic, and emotional abuse perpetrated by a family member with the goal of establishing and maintaining power and control over the victim.

“Workplace” means any place where business or work-related activities are conducted. Includes but is not limited to the work premises, work assignments outside the OPL’s outreach locations, work-related travel or training sessions.

4. Responsibilities

- a. The Board
 - i. Supports the policy and reviews it annually.



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- ii. The Board Chair is responsible for initiating an expeditious and confidential investigation into any workplace violence complaint by an employee where the alleged perpetrator is the CEO or member of the Board. Board members will be investigated and disciplined as directed by the ***City of Orillia Policy Manual, ch. 27, article 14.***
- b. The CEO or designate(s) will develop and maintain a workplace violence plan which will set out:
 - i. a process for assessing the risk of violence in the workplace
 - ii. measures to control risk including those from domestic and intimate partner violence
 - iii. procedures for reporting incidents of violence
 - iv. the process for dealing with and investigating violent incidents and complaints.
 - v. A process for communicating information and instruction regarding and incident of violence to employees.
- c. Each employee, Board member, and volunteer
 - i. Ensures the working environment is free from workplace violence by complying with this policy.
 - ii. Is knowledgeable about workplace policies and procedures relating to workplace violence.
 - iii. Report and document incidents in which they have experienced workplace violence without reprisal or the threat of reprisal.



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5. Procedure

Section 1 – Awareness and Training

- a. The Library will provide staff with information on the risk of violence in the Library and relevant training workshops addressing these concerns. Training will also be provided based on staff feedback.
- b. A copy of this policy will be posted in the Staff Room.
- c. Staff will be required to review this policy annually.
- d. Emergency response procedures will be drilled at least once a year.

Section 2 - Reporting an Incident

- a. Employees are encouraged to immediately report behaviour that they reasonably believe poses a potential for violence as described above to the most senior staff member available.
- b. Anyone experiencing or witnessing imminent danger or occurring violence involving weapons or personal injury should call the police.
- c. Physical or sexual assault or threat of physical violence will be reported to the police.
- d. Upon reporting an incident, verbally or in writing, a member from the Leadership Team will undergo debriefing with the reporting employee.
- e. All reports will be investigated by the CEO or designate.
 - The report should include a brief statement of the incident, when it occurred, where it occurred, date and time it occurred, the person(s) involved and the names of any witnesses.
 - If this is a complaint against a staff member or Board member a copy of Appendix E, Orillia Public Library Workplace Violence,



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Workplace Harassment, and Workplace Sexual Harassment Report and Investigation Form, should be filled out by the complainant.

- For complaints against members of the public, an incident report should be filled out.

Section 3 – Investigating and Dealing with Incidents and Complaints

- a. After receiving a report, the CEO or designate will complete an investigation as quickly as possible. This may include interviews with the employee, the alleged perpetrator, if a staff member, and any witnesses.
- b. The results of the investigation will be discussed with the employee and recommended preventative actions and/or resolutions presented. Any accommodations the employee may require will be discussed.
- c. A separate meeting will be held with the alleged perpetrator, if a staff member.
- d. All investigations will be conducted in strict confidence to the extent possible. Documents will be stored in a locked cabinet and access to these records will be restricted.
- e. If the findings do not support the allegations the CEO will recommend that no further action is necessary and that the matter be closed.
- f. Should the investigation conclude that there is evidence of misconduct the CEO will prescribe a resolution that may include police intervention. In cases where the perpetrator is a member of the public, a Suspension Letter or Letter of Trespass will be served.
- g. Employees who are found to have made false or malicious complaints will be subject to disciplinary action.



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f. The Orillia Public Library, at the direction of an employee, or at its own discretion, may prohibit members of the public, including family members, from engaging with an employee on library property in cases where the employee suspects that an act of violence, will result from an encounter with said individual(s). These actions may continue after the threat of violence is no longer imminent to accommodate psychological well-being.

Related Documents:

- Appendix E, Orillia Public Library Workplace Violence, Workplace Harassment, and Workplace Sexual Harassment Report and Investigation Form
- [City of Orillia: Code of Conduct – Members of Council, Committees and Local Boards, Chapter 27](#)
- [***City of Orillia Policy Manual***](#)
- [***Occupational Health and Safety Act, R.S.O. 1990***](#)
- Orillia Public Library: Incident Report
- Orillia Public Library: Hold and Secure Emergency Response
- Orillia Public Library: Letter of Suspension
- Orillia Public Library: Letter of Trespass
- Orillia Public Library: Lockdown Emergency Response
- Orillia Public Library: Workplace Harassment and Discrimination (HR-07)
- Orillia Public Library: Workplace Violence, Harassment, and Discrimination Plan
- Orillia Public Library: Safety, Security, and Emergencies (OP-02)