

DIVISION: Human Resources

HR-811

POLICY NAME: Prevention of Workplace Violence

POLICY STATEMENT:

The Newfoundland and Labrador English School District recognizes that the potential for violence against its employees exists in its workplaces and is committed to providing a safe work environment for all of our staff. Recognizing sources of violence, and evaluation and implementation of controls to reduce risk to employees, are key components of any violence prevention program. This policy, will comply with applicable regulatory requirements under the Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) legislation and relevant collective agreement language.

BACKGROUND:

The specific roles and responsibilities of the various workplace parties as they relate to violence prevention are noted below.

Employer

- Establish and maintain a process for identifying, evaluating and controlling potential sources of violence.
- Provide the necessary human and financial resources to support the implementation of effective controls and corrective measures.
- Ensure that all violence-related incidents and accidents are thoroughly investigated to determine the causes and contributing factors.
- Ensure that identified controls and corrective measures are implemented on a timely basis.

School Principals, Managers and Supervisors

- Complete the violence risk assessment form on a yearly basis.
 - Review and update the violence risk assessment with employees at least yearly, or as conditions change.
 - Advise all workers to promptly report and document all violence-related incidents and accidents.
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- Develop and implement controls/corrective measures to reduce the potential of recurrences.
- Monitor the effectiveness of controls/corrective measures.
- Promptly forward all completed documentation (i.e., Form 6, Form 7 (if necessary); Accident/Incident Investigation Report) to the Human Resources Manager (OH&S).
- Co-operate with an OH&S Officer from Service NL (OH&S Division) who is exercising his/her duties under the OH&S legislation.

Workers

- Participate in the review of the violence risk assessment.
- Work within the identified controls to reduce the potential of a recurrence.
- Promptly report and document all violence related incidents and accidents, regardless of the severity, to the school principal, manager or supervisor.
- Help to identify what caused the incident/accident and suggest controls/corrective actions to reduce the potential of a recurrence.
- Co-operate with an OH&S Officer from Service NL who is exercising his/her duties under the OH&S legislation.

OH&S Committees

- Review and discuss potential for violence, and documented violence-related incidents during committee meetings.
- Participate in the investigation of violence-related incidents, when requested.
- Monitor the effectiveness of controls/corrective actions to prevent potential recurrence.

Human Resources Manager (OH&S)

- Maintain appropriate records/documentation (i.e., violence risk assessments; Form 6, Form 7, Accident/Incident Investigation Report, etc.) for all violence-related incidents and accidents.
- Conduct the investigation of a serious injury, as identified in the OH&S legislation, in consultation with the principal, supervisor/manager and OH&S committee. Complete the Serious Injury Investigation Report on a timely basis and copy it to the:
 - OH&S Officer with Service NL
 - CEO/Director of Education
 - Principal and respective supervisor(s)/manager(s)
 - Co-chairpersons of the OH&S committee

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SCOPE:

This policy is applicable to all employees of NLESD, students, parents/guardians of students, volunteers, and other persons who have cause to be present on NLESD property. This policy will comply with applicable regulatory requirements under the OH&S legislation and relevant collective agreement language.

DEFINITIONS:

Abuse

Abuse means to ill-use, to misuse, or to insult, in a manner that endangers an employee's job or reputation, undermines performance, or threatens the economic livelihood of an employee. Abuse includes, but may not be limited to, verbal or psychological abuse. (Physical abuse would be considered "violence" in accordance with the provisions of this policy.)

- Verbal abuse is any use of language to undermine someone's dignity or security through insults or humiliation.
- Psychological abuse is a form of mistreatment that causes mental or emotional pain or injury and includes, but is not limited to: statements or actions that humiliate or belittle; insults; and isolation.

Hazard

A hazard is a condition, substance, practice or behaviour that has the potential to cause injury, illness or property damage.

Risk

Risk is the chance or probability of danger, loss or injury.

Violence Risk Assessment

A Risk Assessment is an evaluation that is performed in a workplace when there may be a risk of injury to employees from violence arising out of their employment. A Risk Assessment identifies whether a risk exists, and if so, the nature and severity of that risk, as well as means for addressing that risk and the hazards to be controlled. It must consider previous experience in the workplace, occupational experience in similar workplaces, and the location and circumstances in which employees may be working.

Safety Plan

A Safety Plan is created when a risk of injury to employees from violence is identified by a Risk Assessment and controls are required to be implemented. It identifies controls such as

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procedures, policies and work environment arrangements to mitigate the risk to employees from violence.

Threat

A threat indicates the potential for harm or for someone to act out violently against someone or something. Threats may be verbal, written, drawn, posted on the Internet, sent electronically or by information/communication technology of any type, made by gesture or reasonably inferred from the surrounding circumstances of events. Threats may be direct, indirect, conditional or veiled.

Violence

Violence is the attempted or actual exercise by a person of physical force that causes or has the potential to cause injury to an employee, and includes threats or other behaviour which give an employee reason to believe that he or she is at a risk of injury.

POLICY DIRECTIVES

1. Violence Risk Assessment

- The violence risk assessment form must be completed. This outlines the potential for violence against employees. There are various sources of violence, including:
 - Students
 - Parents/guardians
 - Intruders

- All potential sources of violence must be recorded on this form. Names of specific individuals are not to be included.

- The sources of violence are to be assessed following directions included on the form and rated according to the scale (see violence risk assessment form for specific directions).

- Controls are to be identified and included on the violence risk assessment form. Typical controls include, but are not limited to:
 - Behavioural modification plans
 - Emergency response plans
 - Safe and Caring Schools Policy and procedures
 - Lock down procedures

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- The violence risk assessment form must be reviewed each year, or as conditions change (i.e., new student with known violent tendencies, result of an incident, etc.)
- The violence risk assessment form must be reviewed with employees and signed off that they have reviewed it.
- The violence risk assessment form must be kept on file at the school, and submitted to the manager of Human Resources (OH&S) yearly.

2. Violence Related Incidents

- All violence-related incidents and accidents are to be reported and investigated.

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