

- Procedure Number: 423
 - Procedure Name: Violence, Bullying and Harassment in the Workplace
 - Date of Original: 2014 03 12
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Violence, Bullying and Harassment in the Workplace**1. Definitions**

WorkSafe B.C. Policy defines **violence** as “improper behavior that includes the attempted or actual exercise ... of any physical force so as to cause injury, and includes any threatening statement or behaviour which gives the worker reasonable cause to believe he or she is at risk of injury ...” (Work Safe Policy R4.24)

WorkSafe B.C. Policy defines **bullying and harassment** as “any inappropriate conduct or comment by a person towards a worker that the person knew or reasonably ought to have known would cause that worker to be humiliated or intimidated, but excludes any reasonable action taken by an employer or supervisor relating to the management and direction of workers or the place of employment.” (WorkSafe Policy D3-115-2)

Incidents involving conflict between students of the type normally dealt with by employees without recourse to outside agencies are not considered acts of violence, bullying or harassment under this policy.

2. Reducing the Risk of Violence, Bullying and Harassment in the Workplace

- (a) The Board has a duty to ensure the health and safety of its employees. Employees have a duty to take reasonable care to protect the health and safety of themselves and other persons. As a result, all reasonable steps to prevent where possible or otherwise minimize workplace bullying and harassment will be taken. These steps include staff training to assist employees in identifying and responding to violence, bullying and harassment in the workplace.
- (b) Employees are expected to identify any situation that presents a risk. No employee shall be subject to reprisal or discipline as a result of filing a complaint which the complainant reasonably believes to be valid.
- (c) Identified situations of risk are to be reported immediately. Reports may be made directly to the Superintendent or designate, to the school principal, the work site supervisor and/or the District Health & Safety Supervisor. All parties involved in a complaint will deal with the complaint expeditiously and with respect to confidentiality.
- (d) When a risk has been identified, a committee composed of the school principal/work site supervisor, employee at risk, staff rep, shop steward, and/or the site Health and Safety representative as appropriate, shall develop a plan of action designed to eliminate or reduce the risk.
- (e) In most cases the school principal/work site supervisor shall be responsible for developing the plan of action and shall forward a copy to the Superintendent or designate and the District Health and Safety Supervisor.

3. Staff Training Related to Violence, Bullying and Harassment

- (a) The employer commits to:
 - informing all employees regards the Violence, Bullying and Harassment policy and procedures
 - providing training related to identifying and responding to violence, bullying and harassment in the workplace
 - reviewing all policies and procedures related to violence, bullying and harassment on an annual basis
- (b) Where employees are exposed to a risk of violence, bullying or harassment, direction and instruction on preventing and dealing with violent, bullying or harassing behavior shall be provided to the employee. Such instruction shall be approved by the District Health and Safety Supervisor. The school principal/work site supervisor shall be responsible for providing such training and for ensuring that the employee's work is performed without undue risk.
- (c) All new employees shall receive recommended training as soon as possible after hire.
- (d) The employer shall maintain a record of identified risks and a list of employees who have received direction and instruction in violence, bullying and harassment prevention procedures.

4. Responding to Incidents of Violence, Bullying and Harassment – Reporting

- (a) Employees shall respond, without delay, to all incidents of violence/potential violence, bullying or harassment which could threaten safety in the workplace. If appropriate, the employee may choose to speak to or correspond directly with the alleged perpetrator to express his/her feelings about the situation. Employees may report concerns to their staff rep, shop steward or school principal/work site supervisor in an effort to resolve the concern and/or to request assistance in resolving the matter.
- (b) Employees may choose to formally report concerns directly to the Superintendent or designate. Should the employee wish to file a formal complaint, specific behaviours which form the basis of the complaint and the definitions of violence, harassment and/or bullying which may apply must be included. The employer shall notify the alleged perpetrator of the complaint and provide notice of investigation in writing. The employer shall also notify the District Health and Safety Supervisor.
- (c) In the event that the perpetrator is the Superintendent, the formal complaint may, at the complainant's discretion, be referred directly to a Board member.
- (d) The employer shall advise the employee to consult a physician should an injury or other adverse symptoms occur (including emotional trauma) as a result of an incidence of violence, bullying or harassment.

5. Responding to Incidents of Violence, Bullying and Harassment – Investigating

- (a) All reported incidents of violence/potential violence, bullying or harassment shall be investigated as soon as possible by the employer and with respect to confidentiality. The investigation shall be conducted by a trained and/or experienced individual.
- (b) Where the investigation determines that violence, bullying or harassment has taken place the employer will ensure that corrective actions are taken without undue delay.