



THE ALGONQUIN AND LAKESHORE CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION GUIDE

PART A - GENERAL

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The primary focus of the Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic District School Board's *Violence Prevention Policy and Administrative Procedures (new number)* and *Workplace Violence Prevention Guide* is to assist in the prevention of violence in the workplace.

The Board shall:

- i. endeavor to create a working environment that is free from workplace violence; and
- ii. ensure that it deals effectively, quickly and fairly with situations involving claims or acts of workplace violence that come to its attention.

As defined by the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA), workplace violence is:

- i. the exercise of physical force by a person against a worker, in a workplace, that causes or could cause physical injury to the worker;
- ii. an attempt to exercise physical force against a worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to a worker;
- iii. a statement or behaviour that it is reasonable for a worker to interpret as a threat to exercise physical force against a worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to a worker.

Workplace violence includes Domestic Violence if the threat to a worker also has the potential to impact the safety of the worker and their co-workers in the workplace.

Workplace violence includes:

- i. threatening behaviour – such as shaking fists or destroying property;
- ii. verbal or written threats;
- iii. physical attacks – such as hitting, kicking, scratching or biting;
- iv. domestic violence – if the threat to a worker also has the potential to impact the safety of the worker and their co-workers in the workplace.

The purpose of the *Workplace Violence Prevention Guide* is to establish procedures in support of the Board's *Violence Prevention Policy and Administrative Procedures H-2011-01-1*.

This protocol will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Board's Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee.

2.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Principal/Supervisor

- Ensures that a plan of response for violent incidents is in place at the school and that a violence response team is identified;
- Ensures that an assessment of students takes place;
- Ensures that IEP's and safety plans are in place;
- Ensures that appropriate staff, including casual staff and occasional teachers, are aware of the plans;
- Consults with Student Services as needed;
- Consults with Human Resources as needed;
- Ensures the schools "Profile of Skills" is complete and up to date;
- Assesses the needs of staff in regard to training and the use of personal protective equipment;
- Ensures that an up to date assessment of the site has been carried out to assist in the identification of potential site risks;
- Ensures that all staff reporting to them have received up to date training on the Board's *Workplace Violence Prevention Guide*;
- Ensures that the proper forms and resources are available for employees to report incidences of workplace violence;
- Documents, investigates, and tracks violent incidents;
- Reviews the school wide response to violence annually or more frequently, if required;
- The Principal/Site supervisor will ensure that the details of any special risks associate with their work location are clearly communicated to all effected employees.

Student Services

- Provides assistance to schools as needed;
- Coordinates the purchase of personal protective equipment;
- Coordinates training and education for staff.

Worker

- Participates in the development of IEP and safety plans;
- Reports incidents to school administration;
- Will use the appropriate personal protective equipment as deemed necessary by the principal/supervisor;
- May participate on the school's violence response team.

Violence Response Team

- Assists principal/supervisor in responding to, and investigating, violent incidents in the school.

PART B - COMMUNICATION AND TRAINING

1.0 TRAINING

Training is an important aspect of the Workplace Violence Prevention Protocol. As part of this program, the Board will provide proactive training and education to all staff. Cyclical training opportunities will include:

- General training on the Board's Violence Prevention Protocol;
- Recommended specific training related to individual employment assignments;
- Site specific training in response to the needs of a particular site;
- Invitational opportunities for personal/professional growth or for recertification.

Training and educational topics may include:

- Crisis intervention;
- First Aid and CPR;
- BMS (Behaviour Management Systems);
- Training related to specific diagnoses;
- Violence Awareness Training;
- Standards of Behaviour and Disciplinary Practices;
- Training on applicable Board Policies including:
 - The Safe Schools Policy
 - Employee Harassment
 - Safe Arrival Program
 - Code of Conduct
 - Access to School Premises
 - Occupational Health and Safety
 - Police/School Board Protocol
 - Incident Reporting

Training plans for each individual staff member will vary and need to be developed to include the required components for each person.

2.0 COMMUNICATION PROTOCOL

The Principal/Supervisor will review the school/site wide response to violence annually or more frequently, if required.

The Principal will ensure that the details of the educational plan are shared with all new staff assigned to the student.

When the Principal receives information from a lawful authority (e.g. police, CAS) or through legal documentation (as found in OSR), that a student has demonstrated violent behaviour towards adults/caregivers, then the Principal shall disclose this to all staff, including information regarding behaviours, triggers, and a general strategy to follow when dealing with the student. This disclosure shall occur as soon as reasonably possible. Furthermore, the Principal shall meet with the staff immediately responsible for the student's program and discuss specific strategies to deal with the student's behaviour. All parties shall maintain confidentiality and privacy in such matters.

When a Principal receives information regarding a person other than a student who has a history of violence that could be an inherent risk in the workplace the Principal will notify the appropriate staff of the risk.

The Principal/Site supervisor will ensure that the details of any special risks associated with their work location are clearly communicated to all affected employees.

With the consent of the student's parents, outside agencies may be contacted to provide additional support to the school and the school response team.

With the assistance of Human Resources, provide additional information or support to deal with situations of domestic violence or threats to staff from co-workers or members of the public.

Student Services will share with the appropriate outside agencies the Board's *Violence Prevention Policy* and *Workplace Violence Prevention Protocol*.

Information gathering about students new to the Board will continue to be a partnership between Principals and Student Services, as appropriate.

PART C - GUIDELINES FOR MEETING AND RESPONDING TO THE SAFETY AND BEHAVIOURAL NEEDS OF STUDENTS WITH EXCEPTIONALITIES

1.0 DEFINITIONS

The Education Act defines an exceptional pupil as "a pupil whose behavioral, communicational, intellectual, physical or multiple exceptionalities are such that he or she is considered to need placement in a special education program." (Sec. 1(1)) Students are identified according to the categories and definitions of exceptionalities provided by the Ministry of Education and Training. The categories and definitions are found in the Board resource *Planning for Success: A Guide for Special Education*.

2.0 IDENTIFICATION AND PREVENTION

Pre-placement of students will ensure that the "Transition to School Information Record" (Form C) be completed and forwarded to Student Services. This information will be used in the development of individual educational plans for students with special education needs.

Individual educational plans will be developed to address the unique needs of students with exceptionalities. The details of the educational plan will be shared, as required and appropriate, with:

- i. Internal Board Staff – including administrators, teachers, educational assistants, custodians, secretaries and Student Services, supply teachers and supply educational assistants, as well as any other individual deemed appropriate by the principal;
- ii. External Individuals – parents and outside agencies such as Pathways for Children and Youth, Children's Mental Health, Children's Aid Society, Counseling Services of Belleville.

Information sharing with respect to students with exceptionalities should include the provision of specific characteristics and behavioral presentations of exceptionalities to the school response team. This information becomes the foundation of staff sharing sessions, identification of site specific training and the development of Individual Education Plans (including Behavioral Support Plans) for specific students. Parents' and students' right to privacy must be protected within the framework of current legislation.

In addition to information sharing with respect to students with exceptionalities positional risk assessments associated with the nature of work must be completed and used in training for hazards in the workplace.

Coordinated access to this information is a shared responsibility between the Principal(s) and Student Services. Information must be updated on a regular basis through consent and consultation with parents and outside agencies, where appropriate. The Special Education School Profile (Profile of Skills) (Form D) is completed annually by the Principal(s) and is forwarded to Student Services and Human Resources. This information will be used by Student Services and Human Resources in determining school staffing requirements.

In some cases, the Principal and/or staff may deem that Personal Protective Equipment is needed to ensure the safety of staff. Student Services will coordinate the purchase of these items and it is the responsibility of staff involved to comply with wearing the appropriate personal protective equipment. The Principal shall monitor compliance.

PART D - VIOLENT INCIDENT RESPONSE

A violent incident may occur even after the above mentioned preventative steps have been taken. In this case, the following *Violent Incident Assessment and Reporting Procedure* must be followed. All incidents of violence involving students with exceptionalities must also be reported to Student Services. Student Services and/or Human Resources will participate in de-briefing and planning next steps specific to risk assessment. Any student consequences must be consistent with the Board's Code of Conduct Policy (number) (i.e. mitigating circumstances). Any staff consequences must be consistent with the Board's appropriate practices.

1.0 VIOLENT INCIDENT INVESTIGATION AND REPORTING PROCEDURES

The purpose of the violent incident reporting procedure is to ensure that all violent incidents in the workplace are investigated, that appropriate steps are taken to ensure the safety of staff and visitors, and to prevent recurrence.

It is the responsibility of each Principal/Supervisor to ensure that the staff under his/her direct supervision has received the proper training and instruction, which allows this procedure to be implemented.

It is the responsibility of the Principal/Supervisor to ensure that each school/worksite has a plan of response for violent incidents, which includes the identification of a Violence Response Team.

Individuals who experience acts of violence against them that require immediate assistance need to follow the proper protocol illustrated in Appendix 2. It is the Principal, Manager or Supervisors responsibility to train staff on how to summons immediate assistance at their specific work site relating to said Appendix 2.

Individuals shall immediately report acts of violence against them or witnessed by them to their immediate supervisor. If the immediate supervisor is the source of the incident, the complaint shall be addressed to that supervisor's supervisor.

The Principal/Supervisor (or designate) must ensure that all incidents are reported to the Violence Response Team and the Joint Health and Safety Committee. The responsibility for investigating incidents rests with the Principal/Supervisor and the members of the school's Violence Response Team. The employee's Supervisor will conduct the initial incident investigation immediately, with support from the Violence Response Team as deemed appropriate.

The person receiving the complaint will immediately assess the situation and ensure that the immediate safety concerns are addressed. Appropriate First Aid and/or medical attention and/or emotional support/attention must be provided to the individual, if necessary. The victim and aggressor will be separated as deemed necessary.

In potentially serious situations, the Principal/Supervisor or designate will take any immediate action deemed necessary, which may include contacting the Police or the serving of a No Trespass Order. In the event of a violent incident resulting in a critical injury, an incident that had the potential of causing a critical injury (i.e. near miss), the investigation will be conducted by the Violence Response Team, the appropriate Supervisor, and a certified member of the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee.

After receiving notification of the incident, the Principal/Supervisor must ensure that a *Staff Violent Incident Report Form* (Form A) has been completed. Copies of the report will be given to the Co-chairs of the Joint Health and Safety Committee, Payroll and Benefits Clerk, and the appropriate Superintendent. The Staff Violent Incident Report Form shall be made available by blank copies being located at the OH&S bulletin boards at each location.

The Principal/Supervisor will review the Staff Violent Incident Report immediately, gather information and develop a *Plan of Action* (Form E). The Plan of Action will be made in compliance with the applicable policies and operating practices of the Algonquin and Lakeshore Catholic District School Board and the prevailing applicable regulations.

All incidents requiring health care by a health care professional and all lost time injuries must be reported to the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board through the completion of a Form 7 within three (3) days. The Payroll and Benefits Clerk must be informed of all of these incidents in order to ensure proper and timely reporting to the WSIB.

Following a detailed review of the incident, the Violence Response Team will follow the appropriate Board Policy and Administrative Practices such as, but not limited to:

- 1.1.1 The Safe Schools Policy (S-2010-09-1);
- 1.1.2 Standards of Behaviour and Disciplinary Practices;
- 1.1.3 Workplace Harassment (H-2008-01-2);
- 1.1.4 Safe Arrival Program (2000-01-5);
- 1.1.5 Code of Conduct (S-2010-09-1);
- 1.1.6 Access to School Premises (S-2010-09-1);
- 1.1.7 Health and Safety (A-2008-04-1; or,
- 1.1.8 Police/School Board Protocol (2001-08-7 (East); 2001-08-8 (West))

These policies allow for due process for the individual with regards to the information that has been obtained and provide procedures for resolution and appeals.

Domestic Violence

Domestic Violence occurs when a family member, partner or ex-partner attempts to physically or psychologically dominate another. Domestic Violence often refers to violence between spouses, or spousal abuse but can also include non-married intimate partners.

The Occupational Health and Safety Act requires the Board to take the appropriate steps to prevent domestic violence from posing a threat at the workplace to its employees.

Guiding Principles:

The Algonquin Lakeshore Catholic District School Board will:

- Commit to early intervention by identifying ways of creating a supportive environment;
- Create confidential mechanisms for employees experiencing domestic violence to seek help and information;
- Offer ongoing support to employees experiencing domestic violence including time off for counseling, visits to a solicitor or support agencies, for re-housing or re-organizing childcare;
- Relocate or redeployment, if possible, where this would be appropriate and supportive of the employee;
- Train and educate staff on domestic violence involving some basic awareness training for all staff and more detailed training for managers and supervisors;
- Provide resources within the workplace, such as posters, to raise awareness about domestic violence help-lines and other support services;
- Provide mechanisms for monitoring and reviewing the policy's effectiveness and for regularly updating information on help available and how to contact support services.

The Algonquin Lakeshore Catholic District School Board recognizes that it does not offer domestic violence counselors and therefore will not promise more than it is able to provide in the way of support particularly if it may be putting it or others into a dangerous situation.

Supervisors who are informed that there is a worker who may be subject to domestic violence in the workplace must gauge the nature and extent of the threat to the workplace. This may require the supervisor to interview both the source of the information about the threat, and the worker(s) who may be subject to the risk of domestic violence in the workplace. It may also require more detailed investigations conducted by the Manager of Human Resources or designate. It is the responsibility of the supervisor to make this contact.

Identifying Domestic Violence in the Workplace:

Signs of violence should not be ignored, but Employees should not be pressured into disclosing any personal information that they do not feel comfortable sharing

Possible signs of domestic violence include, but are not limited to:

- Late or high absenteeism rate without explanation;
- Uncharacteristic depression, anxiety, distraction or problems with concentration;
- Changes in the quality of work performance for no apparent reason;
- The receipt of repeated upsetting calls/faxes/e-mails, or the individual being a victim of vandalism or threats;
- Obsession with time;
- Needing regular time off for appointments;
- Repeated injuries, or unexplained bruising or explanations that do not fit the injuries displayed;
- Increased hours being worked for no apparent reason.

With the assistance of Human Resources, the supervisor will put in place a safety plan for high risk situations. This includes:

- Creating an environment where employees feel safe and able to talk about issues facing them;
- Providing information about the policy and/or special site requirements to staff;
- Prioritizing safety through exploring the appropriate steps to increase the safety of the worker and their colleagues to appropriately address the situation.
- Making the local authorities aware of potentially high risk situations.