

# Workplace Violence

- “**violence**” means any of the following:
  - threats, including a threatening statement or threatening behaviour that gives an employee

- **Security procedures and practices**, for example: sign-in/out systems, PIN security access systems, notifying Security Services if working late, locking internal and external doors, door bells and peepholes in doors, use of Security Services/Tiger Patrol (phone 6400), use of alarm systems;
- **Location of the workplace within the University and larger community**, for example: buildings or workplaces that are isolated, buildings in downtown areas that may have a higher number of non-University visitors.

The Administrative Head or designate must conduct a new Workplace Violence Risk Assessment for each facility or activity for which they are responsible:

- at least every 5 years;
- where the Administrative Head or designate becomes aware of a type of violence occurring in similar workplaces that was not considered when the existing Workplace Violence Risk Assessments was conducted;
- when there is a significant change in any of the following:
  - the circumstances in which work takes place,
  - the interactions that occur in the course of performing work,
  - the physical location or layout of the workplace (ex: renovations or new construction); or
  - when the Administrative Head or designate is instructed to do so by the President of the University or designate.

Administrative Heads will retain one copy of completed Workplace Violence Risk Assessments. Copies must be provided to the University Environmental Health and Safety Office and the University Environmental Health and Safety Committee.

### **Preparing a Violence Prevention Plan**

Where the Workplace Violence Risk Assessment indicates that one or more significant risks of violence exists, the Administrative Head or designate must prepare a Violence Prevention Plan to address those significant risks. A sample Violence Prevention Plan, as may be amended from time to time, is attached as Schedule B.

As part of the Violence Prevention Plan, the Administrative Head or designate must:

- take and document reasonable measures to lessen, and where possible, eliminate the risk of violence; and
- provide training to employees who are exposed to a significant risk of violence regarding:
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Where a significant risk of violence is posed by an individual, the extent of personal information disclosed to an employee must be balanced against the privacy rights of the individual. This determination should be made in consultation with University Legal Counsel.

Administrative Heads or designate should ensure employees under their authority who are not exposed to a significant risk of violence, receive or have received general training regarding the following issues:

- employee rights and responsibilities with respect to workplace violence;
- recognizing potentially violent situations and how to respond to them; and

Any person who receives a report of potential workplace violence will contact the Director of Security Services or designate, at 494-6400.

### **Investigation**

All reports of incidents or potential incidents of workplace violence will be investigated. The form of any investigation will depend largely on the circumstances and may involve Security Services, Human Resources, the Office of Environmental Health and Safety, employees and other individuals involved, and, as appropriate, external law enforcement agencies.

If an investigation discloses that an incident or potential incident of workplace violence occurred, the matter will be dealt with in accordance with applicable University rules and regulations or collective agreements/handbooks.

## Policy on Preventing and Responding to Workplace Violence

### A. University Violence Prevention Statement

Dalhousie University operates in accordance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act and regulations thereunder, including the Violence in the Workplace Regulations

Physical violence in the workplace is a rare but serious occupational health and safety hazard that may

eliminating the risk of violence in the workplace, and to responding appropriately if workplace violence does occur.

### B. Application and Scope

This Policy applies to employees while engaged in an activity under the auspices of Dalhousie University.

This Policy outlines procedures for preventing, reporting, investigating and responding to violence or threats of violence in the workplace.

Dalhousie University has separate policies on sexual harassment and personal harassment, and complaints of this nature should be addressed in accordance with the provisions of Dalhousie

“Administrative Head” means the Deans, Vice Presidents, and the President, as appropriate.

The physical layout of the workplace for example: open work spaces, closed offices, counters or kiosks to provide service, separation of public versus private areas, proximity to other employees;

Workplace organization and practices for example: handling money and other valuables, dealing with people in distress, working hours, working alone during regular hours and after hours, access to phones;

Security procedures and practices for example: sign-in/out systems, PIN security access systems, notifying Security Services if working late, locking internal and external doors, door bells and peepholes in doors, use of Security Services/Tiger Patrol (phone 6460) alarm systems;

Location of the workplace within the University and larger community for example: buildings or workplaces that are isolated, buildings in downtown areas that may have a higher number of non University visitors.

4. The Administrative Head or designate must conduct a new Workplace Violence Risk Assessment for each facility or activity for which they are responsible:
  - (a) at least every 5 years;
  - (b) where the Administrative Head or designate becomes aware of a type of violence occurring in similar workplaces that was not considered when the existing Workplace Violence Risk Assessments was conducted;
  - (c) when there is a significant change in any of the following:
    - (i) the circumstances in which work takes place,
    - (ii) the interactions that occur in the course of performing work, the physical location or layout of the workplace (ex: renovations or new construction); or
    - (iii) when the Administrative Head or designate is instructed to do so by the President of the University or designate.
5. Administrative Heads will retain one copy of completed Workplace Violence Risk Assessments. Copies must be provided to the University Environmental Health and Safety Office and the University Environmental Health and Safety Committee.

#### Preparing a Violence Prevention Plan

6. Where the Workplace Violence Risk Assessment indicates that one or more significant risks of violence exists, the Administrative Head or designate must prepare a Violence Prevention Plan to address those significant risks. A sample Violence Prevention Plan, as may be amended from time to time, is attached as Schedule B.
7. As part of the Violence Prevention Plan, the Administrative Head or designate must
  - (a) take and document reasonable measures to lessen, and where possible, the risk of violence; and



- (b) provide training to employees who are exposed to a significant risk of violence regarding:
  - (i) employee rights and responsibilities with respect to workplace violence;
  - (ii) the type of violence and the amount ~~is~~ they may encounter;
  - (iii) the steps taken to minimize or eliminate the risk of violence to the employee being trained;
  - (iv) recognizing potentially violent situations and how to respond to them; and



Schedule "A"

# Workplace Violence Risk Assessment

## Dalhousie University

Organization/Department Name:

Assessment Date:

Name of Assessor(s):

Describe the department/work area that you are assessing

Number of employees:

Physical location:

Areas you are considering as the workplace for those employees who are your responsibility:

Describe the types of activities/functions performed by employees in the department:

Additional Details:

### SECTION 1

#### Risk Identification

Have you engaged your Health & Safety committee or member and/or considered bringing together a cross functional group to identify and assess the risks? Yes No N/A (Please explain):

Have you used brainstorming techniques to identify the risks impacting your workgroup?  
Yes  
No

If you have answered "No" to any of these questions please consider performing these options.

Consider and answer the following when identifying the risks:

- a. Have there been any past violent incidents? This could range from employees having

Additional Details:

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Interpretation of Risks

What additional steps would you recommend or suggest?:



## Schedule "B"

# Violence Prevention Plan Template

Description of each position, the Violent Act at Risk of Occurring & Risk Rating:

Describe or list the current procedures in place to help minimize or eliminate the risk of violence within the Unit.

How are employees presently being informed of or trained in the current procedures in place to help minimize or eliminate the risk of violence?

How are incidents of violence currently being reported, documented, and investigated?

What actions will be taken to manage the risk?

Who is responsible for these actions and what is the timeline?