



SAFETY: VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE

Background

The District is committed to providing and maintaining a safe environment for its employees. This includes but is not limited to its responsibility to provide appropriate services and support to those employees within the system whose behaviors may threaten injury or cause injury to employees of the District.

The District believes that it is the responsibility of all employees, including administrators, to identify situations of risk so that appropriate planning for prevention, intervention and follow-up can be put in place.

The District's Safety Committee is to ensure that the procedures established under this Administrative Procedure apply to all operations within the District. This Committee will provide ongoing reports to the Superintendent.

All District employees have a right to work in an environment free from intimidation, threats or acts of violence. The Superintendent will develop procedures and guidelines in accordance with WCB Occupational Health and Safety Regulations to help minimize the risk associated with workplace violence.

Definition

Workplace violence: The attempted or actual exercise by any person of any physical force to cause injury to a worker, including any threatening statement or behaviors which gives a worker reasonable cause to believe that the worker is at risk of injury.

Procedures

1. Risks Identification

- 1.1. Identification of situations of risk of violence is the responsibility of all District employees. They are to be immediately reported to the site Supervisor/Principal who will report the situation(s) to the Superintendent.
- 1.2. Upon identification of risk, each site supervisor will ensure that a risk assessment and plan, specific to that workplace, has been formulated. The document will include the consideration of:
 - 1.2.1. Previous experience in that place of employment.
 - 1.2.2. Occupational experience in similar places of employment.
 - 1.2.3. The location and circumstances in which work will take place.



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- 1.3. The results of the Risk Assessment will be reported to the District Safety Committee as well as to the Supervisor/Principal. If an urgent need for action is required, the Secretary-Treasurer will take all necessary steps to immediately reduce the risk.
2. Situation of Risk of Violence
 - 2.1. Employees working with students with diverse needs are also to refer to **Administrative Procedure 354 – Physical Restraint and Seclusion of Students.**
 - 2.2. In the case of risks involving students with -diverse needs the site supervisor will inform the school-based team. The school-based team will review the incident and adjust the I.E.P. and/or safety plan accordingly.
 - 2.3. Once a risk has been identified, an action plan will be developed as soon as practical by the safety committee under the direction of the site Supervisor/Principal. Committee members will include:
 - 2.3.1. Site Supervisor/Principal.
 - 2.3.2. Employee at risk.
 - 2.3.3. Support person for employee (employee at risk to designate).
 - 2.3.4. Appropriate resource personnel as required.
 - 2.4. The Action Plan will include but not be limited to the following:
 - 2.4.1. Name(s) of person(s) creating the risk.
 - 2.4.2. Name(s) of person(s) directly at risk.
 - 2.4.3. A description of the behavior which is creating a risk.
 - 2.4.4. A description of the expected behavior.
 - 2.4.5. Efforts in the past, if any, to change behavior of the person(s) creating the risk.
 - 2.4.6. Procedures/strategies to effect desired behavior and to eliminate or minimize risk to workers.
 - 2.4.7. At risk personnel to be notified and provided with information related to the risk of violence from persons who have a history of violent behavior and with whom such personnel are likely to encounter in the course of their work.
 - 2.5. Principals/Supervisors are responsible for filing all Action Plans at the work site with a copy forwarded to the District Safety Committee. The Committee will review the Action.
 - 2.6. The site Supervisor/Principal is responsible for ensuring the Action Plans are implemented and that sources of financial support are identified, if needed to implement an Action Plan.
3. Informing Staff of Identified Risks
 - 3.1. Where employees are at risk as a result of a reported incident, the Principal/Supervisor shall meet with affected staff to apprise them of the situation and to discuss:
 - 3.1.1. Identity of person(s) who may display violent behaviors (also see clause 2.3).



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- 3.1.2. Current action plans.
- 3.1.3. Reporting procedures.

4. Dealing with an Emergency

- 4.1. When an incident involving violence occurs, the first action of employees will be to secure the safety of students, themselves, and other staff.
- 4.2. In the event of a sudden potentially high-risk violent incident by a child or youth (not including students with diverse abilities and disabilities) occurring, the VTRA protocol will be enacted. (see **Administrative Procedure 358 – Violent Risk Threat Assessment**).
- 4.3. Employees shall use whatever means necessary to remove themselves from or to defuse the situation and shall then call for assistance using their best judgment, balancing the severity of the incident with the most appropriate response. Assistance may be obtained from:
 - 4.3.1. Immediate Supervisor.
 - 4.3.2. District staff.
 - 4.3.3. Other employees.
 - 4.3.4. Community agencies, such as: R.C.M.P., ambulance, fire department.
- 4.4. As soon as practical after an incident of violence, the Principal/Supervisor will complete a “Violent Incident Report” (Form 175-1) of the incident for filing with the District Safety Committee.
- 4.5. Any worker who reports an injury or adverse symptom resulting from an incident of violence will be advised to consult a physician of the worker's choice - for treatment or referral and will complete an “Employee Incident/Injury Report” (Form 165-1) within 48 hours.
- 4.6. The Principal/Supervisor will arrange for a critical incident debriefing session for those directly involved and for those who express a need.

5. Employee Education

- 5.1. These workplace violence prevention procedures shall be included in new employee orientations and shall be discussed once each year by all employee groups under direction of the Supervisor/Principals.

Reference: Sections 20, 22, 65, 85 *School Act*

Adopted: March 1997

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