



**DURHAM CATHOLIC
DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD**
Learning and Living in Faith

POLICY – PO324

Workplace Violence

Area: Human Resource Services
Source: Chief Human Resources Officer

Approved: January 24, 2011
Revised: November 12, 2012; May 6, 2019; January 11, 2021; March 6, 2023
Reviewed: Annually

1. Introduction

The Durham Catholic District School Board (the “Board”) is committed to promoting the values of dignity and fairness for all consistent with the faith traditions, beliefs and teachings of the Catholic Church. The Board believes that in adhering to these values there can be no tolerance of violence in the workplace or learning environment. The Board acknowledges that violence and threat of violence are a serious hazard to its workers and is committed to protecting workers from workplace violence from all sources, preventing and controlling such risks in its workplace.

2. Definitions

Reprisal (*Ontario Human Rights Commission*) – an action, or threat, that is intended as retaliation for claiming or enforcing a right under the Code.

Supervisor (*Occupational Health and Safety Act*) – a person who has charge of a workplace or authority over a worker.

Worker (*Occupational Health and Safety Act*) - any person included in the definition of “worker” under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* including but not limited to regular, temporary, probationary employees, co-op students, contract employees and volunteers.

Workplace (*Occupational Health and Safety Act*) – any land, premises, location or thing at, upon, in or near which a worker works.

Workplace Harassment (*Occupational Health and Safety Act*) – engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct against a worker in a workplace that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome and includes workplace sexual harassment.

Workplace Violence (*Occupational Health and Safety Act*) – (a) the exercise of physical force by a person against a worker in a workplace that causes or could cause

physical injury to the worker; (b) an attempt to exercise physical force against a worker, in a workplace that causes or could cause physical injury to the worker; (c) a statement or behaviour that is reasonable for a worker to interpret as a threat to exercise physical force against the worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker.

3. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to support a safe working environment through implementation of effective measures to prevent and address violence in the workplace.

4. Application / Scope

- 4.1 This policy applies to all Board workers as well as other individuals including clients of the Board, parents/guardians/caregivers, volunteers, permit holders, contractors and workers of other organizations not related to the Board but who work on or are invited onto Board premises.
- 4.2 This policy is to be interpreted and applied in conjunction with all other applicable Board policies and practices having to do with worker conduct, including, but not limited to workplace harassment and school safety.

5. Principles

- 5.1 The Board recognizes:
 - 5.1.1 the requirements set forth by the Occupational Health and Safety Act and the applicable regulations.
 - 5.1.2 that all forms of violence, harassment or discrimination are unacceptable behaviours.
 - 5.1.3 the need for working and learning environments that are free of any form of violence and that are safe, secure, harmonious and sensitive to the needs and well-being of all workers, students, volunteers and visitors.
 - 5.1.4 that victims of violence will be supported by the provisions of enacted legislation and the requirements of Board policy and administrative procedures.
 - 5.1.5 that workplace violence adversely affects healthy relationships, the school climate, and other working environments.
 - 5.1.6 that workplace violence will not be accepted on school property, at school/Board-related activities, on school buses, or in any other circumstances.
- 5.2 The Board will comply with Privacy and Access legislation in protecting confidentiality of the Workplace Violence process and of all parties involved to the extent possible.

6. Requirements

- 6.1 The Director of Education shall issue administrative procedures to support this policy and amend them thereafter as the need may arise.
- 6.2 The Board, in consultation with the Joint Health and Safety Committee, will develop, implement, and maintain a workplace violence prevention and intervention program, which will include training and educating workers. This program will include:
 - 6.2.1 a workplace violence risk assessment protocol which will identify and mitigate areas of potential risk of workplace violence;
 - 6.2.2 procedures to follow in order to control risks of workplace violence identified through the risk assessment, as likely to expose a worker to physical or other form of injury;
 - 6.2.3 procedures to summon immediate assistance when workplace violence occurs or is likely to occur;
 - 6.2.4 measures that workers must take to report incidents of workplace violence to the Board or their supervisor;
 - 6.2.5 Board process for investigating and responding to incidents or complaints of workplace violence.
- 6.3 The Board, in consultation with the Joint Health and Safety Committee, will assess the risks of workplace violence that may arise from the nature of the workplace, the type of work and the conditions of work in accordance with the provisions of the Occupational Health and Safety Act. The risks of workplace violence will be reassessed as often as necessary to ensure that this policy and the related program continue to protect workers from workplace violence.
- 6.4 The Board will consult with and advise the Joint Health and Safety Committee of the results of the assessment and reassessment, and provide a copy, if the assessment or reassessment is in writing.
- 6.5 The Board will clearly define roles and responsibilities of stakeholders, including Board/school administrators, principals/vice principals, managers, supervisors and workers in preventing, reporting and responding to workplace violence.
- 6.6 The Board will provide a worker with information and instruction that is appropriate for the worker on the contents of the policy and program with to workplace violence and any other prescribed information or instruction.
- 6.7 The Board will not disclose more personal information than is reasonably necessary to protect workers' safety and security. The information provided to a worker may include personal information related to a risk of workplace violence from a person with a history of violent behaviour if the worker can be expected to

encounter that person in the course of his or her work and the risk of workplace violence is likely to expose the employee to physical injury.

- 6.8 The Board will take every reasonable precaution to protect the worker if the Board becomes aware or ought reasonably to be aware of domestic violence that is likely to expose a worker to physical injury that may occur in the workplace.
- 6.9 This policy and the Occupational Health and Safety Act prohibit reprisals against individuals, acting in good faith, who report incidents of workplace violence or act as witnesses. The Board will take all reasonable and practical measures to prevent reprisals, threats of reprisals, or further violence. False, malicious and vexatious accusations, however, will face corrective and remedial action, up to and including disciplinary action for just cause.
- 6.10 As part of an internal responsibility system, individuals engaging in unsafe behaviour will be held accountable for their actions.
- 6.11 With respect to workers, the Board's progressive discipline may be applied concerning any unsafe behaviour and particularly concerning behaviour that is described in the definition of "workplace violence" above.
- 6.12 All complaints and reports of violence will be treated seriously, will be investigated thoroughly and fairly, and will be dealt with accordingly. Every attempt will be made to maintain confidentiality and all investigations will be conducted adhering to any applicable provisions of the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.
- 6.13 The policy concerning workplace violence will be posted on the Health and Safety bulletin board in the workplace.
- 6.14 The Board will review the policy with respect to workplace violence as often as is necessary, but at least annually in consultation with the Joint Health and Safety Committee.
- 6.15 All workers will be required to acknowledge their review of the Workplace Violence policy and administrative procedure on an annual basis in accordance with the Policy Development and Implementation Administrative Procedure (AP210-1).

7. Sources

- 7.1 [Ontario Human Rights Code](#)
- 7.2 [Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act](#)
- 7.3 [PPM 120 Reporting Violent Incidents to the Ministry of Education](#)
- 7.4 [PPM 128 The Provincial Code of Conduct and School Boards Code of Conduct](#)
- 7.5 [PPM 144 Bullying Prevention and Intervention](#)
- 7.6 [PPM 145 Progressive Discipline and Promoting Positive Student Behaviour](#)
- 7.7 [Ontario Ministry of Labour, Health and Safety Guidelines, Workplace Violence](#)

- and Harassment: Understanding the Law, March 2010
- 7.8 Ontario Education Services Corporation, Resources for Implementing Bill 168, April 2010
 - 7.9 Catholic Consortium, Workplace Violence Policy – General, March 26, 2010
 - 7.10 Ontario Ministry of Labour: Workplace Violence in School Boards: A Guide to the Law, March 2017

8. Related Policies and Administrative Procedures

- 8.1 Occupational Health and Safety Policy (PO318)
- 8.2 Workplace Harassment and Workplace Sexual Harassment Policy (PO320)
- 8.3 Workplace Harassment and Workplace Sexual Harassment Administrative Procedure (AP320-1)
- 8.4 Code of Conduct Policy (PO610)
- 8.5 Code of Conduct Administrative Procedure (AP610-1)
- 8.6 Student Discipline Policy (PO611)
- 8.7 Student Discipline Administrative Procedure (AP611-1)
- 8.8 Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy (PO612)
- 8.9 Bullying Prevention and Intervention Administrative Procedure (AP612-1)
- 8.10 Workplace Violence Prevention – General Administrative Procedure (AP324-1)
- 8.11 Workplace Violence Prevention – Students Administrative Procedure (AP324-2)