



**West Point Grey  
Community Association**

The West Point Grey Community Association supports the  
City of Vancouver and Board of Parks and Recreation  
**Making All Recreation Safe (M.A.R.S) Policy**

**This document has been abbreviated and extracted from  
that document.**

<http://citywire.city.vancouver.bc.ca/departments/parks/riskmanagement/pdf/MARS.pdf>

Original MARS Document Prepared by:

Make All Recreation Safe Committee  
Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation



# DEFINITIONS

**Abuse** means any intentional treatment of a person that results in harm or injury, or may result in harm or injury. This includes physical abuse, sexual abuse or emotional abuse. Although neglect is often considered abusive, it differs in that abuse is an action, where neglect is the lack of one or a series of actions.

**Emotional Abuse** is an attack on one's sense of self. Humiliation, rejection and constant reiteration that a person is stupid or bad can actively undermine his or her sense of worth and self-confidence. Other acts include forced isolation, intimidation, exploitation, terrorizing or routinely making unreasonable demands of a person.

**Harassment** is unwanted comment, conduct, or gesture directed towards an individual or group, which is intimidating, malicious, degrading, or offensive. It creates negative and uncomfortable feelings for the person, or group of person, to whom it is directed. Such a person may feel anything from a discomfort or embarrassment in the presence of the person or group of people displaying the behaviour, to a feeling of terror or even fear for their safety. Harassment is considered a form of discrimination.

**Neglect** is a failure to act, including meeting physical health, self-esteem, development or safety needs of a vulnerable individual.

**Physical Abuse** is the use of force to any part of one's body, which results in, or may result in, a non-accidental injury.

**Sexual Abuse** refers to sexual exploitation of a person, involving the exposure of that person to sexual contact, activity or behaviour. It may include invitation to sexual touching.

**Staff** includes supervisors, employees and volunteers of the Park Board, paid Association staff and volunteers supervised by Park Board staff, contractors of the Park Board or Community Association sponsored services and practicum students.

**Standard of Care** is a legal principle, which identifies the obligation of individuals and organizations to take reasonable measures to care for and protect their clients.

**Vulnerable Individuals** are individuals who, because of age or emotional, mental or physical difficulties or communication barriers, are restricted in their ability to remove themselves from an abusive situation.

# PREVENTING VIOLENCE GUIDELINES

Together with the Vancouver Park Board, the West Point Grey Community Association (WPGCA) provides residents with opportunities to participate in recreational activities in a safe and positive environment. We are committed to providing facilities and services, which try to achieve an atmosphere where all can enjoy participating in activities and which values participation, safety and fair play. In addition, the WPGCA and Park Board are committed to providing staff/volunteers and patrons an environment that is protected from violence or threat of violence from the public.

**Violence** is seen to be the following behaviour:

- Loud verbal assaults;
- Threats and attempts to intimidate;
- Throwing of articles in a deliberate or aggressive manner;
- Aggressive approaches to another individual;
- Physical striking of another individual;
- Attempts to goad or incite violence in others.

All patrons, volunteers and staff have the right to be safe and feel safe when in Park Board facilities. With this right comes the responsibility to be law abiding citizens and to be accountable for one's actions. **Employees and volunteers of the WPGCA and the Vancouver Park Board as well as the public participating in programs and services are expected to adhere to a Code of Conduct which sets standards for behaviour. The Code of Conduct focusses on the following statements:**

- **Treat patrons and staff/volunteers with respect and dignity. Do not tolerate abusive or disrespectful language.**
- **Appreciate that programs and facilities are provided for the enjoyment of everyone.**
- **Respect public property and the property of others.**
- **Enjoy Recreation in your City!**

## OBJECTIVES

To reduce or eliminate violence and anti-social behaviour from Vancouver Park Board facilities and services (both indoor and outdoor).

To ensure a positive, safe and encouraging environment for spectators, volunteers, staff and participants – a culture which supports safety, fair play and positive experiences for all.

To give staff and volunteers the authorization to deal with unruly and violent behaviour with appropriate sanctions.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Violent, abusive or anti-social behaviour, such as verbal threats and insults, attempts to intimidate as well as physical assault and battery have no place in Park Board facilities or programs.

The West Point Grey Community Centre is driven by hard-working, committed staff members and volunteers and the Board is committed to providing them a safe and positive work environment.

Recreational activities teach participants important social skills such as teamwork, goal setting, and fair play and promote healthy lifestyles. Violence, harassment and anti-social behaviour can turn a positive experience into a negative one.

A “Code of Conduct” outlines appropriate behaviour for all those involved in WPGCA programs, services and facilities. The “Code of Conduct” will be posted in all Park Board facilities.

Promotion of this policy will assist in the reduction of violent behaviours and contribute to a safer and fun experience for those using WPGCA and Park Board programs and facilities.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The responsibility of local government to maintain safe facilities comes from the Occupiers Liability Act. All owners and occupiers of land and buildings are required to provide a “standard of care” which ensures that persons will be reasonably safe when using their premises. Staff are given the authority to remove individuals who jeopardize the safety of either patrons or staff under a Park Board By-law.

For incidents involving assault and battery, the Criminal Code of Canada would apply.

## **CONSEQUENCES**

Incidents of a verbal nature may be tolerated initially with a warning from facility staff. **Incidents of a more serious or persistent nature (e.g. failure to follow directions from staff, etc.) will result in an immediate ejection from the facility by a designated on site supervisor.** Serious and physical assault incidents will be reported to the local police authorities. Subsequent violent behaviours by individuals using facilities may prohibit themselves or their organization from future facility access.

Restricted facility access beyond immediate ejection requires that management staff and Board of Directors be consulted to determine the scope and length of the ban. The restricted facility access will be documented in the form of a letter to the individual or organization.

## **WORK PLACE HARASSMENT**

The West Point Grey Community Association and the City of Vancouver are firmly committed to providing a workplace free of harassment or discrimination. Harassment or discrimination that is based on grounds prohibited by BC Human Rights Legislation are as follows:

- Race
- Colour
- Ancestry
- Place of origin
- Political belief
- Religion
- Marital status
- Family status
- Physical or mental disability
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Age