



CITY OF VANCOUVER CORPORATE POLICY

SUBJECT: Preventing Violence in the Workplace	
CATEGORY: Employment	POLICY NUMBER: AE-010-01

PURPOSE

This policy is general in nature and is intended as a minimum guideline to assist the individual City Departments in developing their own specific violence protection policies and procedures.

SCOPE

All City staff.

DEFINITIONS

“Violence” means the attempted, threatened or actual exercise by a person of any physical force so as to cause injury to an employee.

A “threat” includes any threatening statement or behaviour which gives an employee reasonable cause to believe that the employee is at risk of physical injury.

POLICY STATEMENTS

1 General

All City of Vancouver employees have the right to work in an environment that is protected from violence or the threat of violence from the public they serve. This policy is governed by the British Columbia [Workers Compensation Act](#).

2 Elimination or Minimization of Risk

To eliminate or minimize the risk to City employees from violence identified by an assessment performed under [WCB Regulation 4.28](#) (see sections 3 and 4 of this Policy) the following shall be in effect:

2.1 All incidents of violence and/or threats or violence and/or risk of violence shall be reported and investigated in accordance with the WCB regulation. Staff should use the [WCB Claims Form](#) and the [Accident/Near Miss Investigation Form](#) and investigate each incident promptly. A copy is to be sent to the Manager, Employee Health and Safety for review.

2.2 As a result of the Accident/Incident investigation, corrective action shall be initiated in accordance with WCB regulation. Personal property destroyed during a violent incident in the course of an employee's work will (within reason) be replaced by the City.

- 2.3 All employees who work alone must have access to a telephone or radio device in order to contact fellow employees and/or emergency services as required.
- 2.4 Employees working alone must be periodically checked upon as per [WCB Regulation 4.21](#), and have access to a secure area where they can call for Emergency Service (i.e., Office/Staff Room/Vehicle with a phone or radio device).
- 2.5 A buddy system may be established for those employees who have cause to believe they are at risk and in those areas where the previous history indicates there is a risk. Work involving supervision of individuals and groups shall have assigned sufficient staff or communication devices to permit staff to work safely.
- 2.6 Employees reporting injuries or adverse symptoms as a result of an incident of violence must be advised to consult with the Vancouver Civic Employee Assistance Program for counselling or to their family physician for treatment or referral.
- 2.7 As part of an employee initial orientation, each employee should be informed of their exposure to, or risk of violence in their workplace(s) including the nature and extent of the risk. Information provided to the employee shall include information related to the risk of violence from persons who have a history of violent behaviour and whom employees are likely to encounter in the course of their work.
- 2.8 Initial and on-going training shall be provided, by Human Resource Services and the Departments, in:
 - the means for recognition of the potential for violence (e.g., how to recognize potentially violent situations/individuals/groups);
 - the procedures, policies and work environment arrangements which have been developed to minimize or effectively control the risk to employees from violence;
 - the appropriate response to incidents of violence, including how to obtain assistance (e.g. self-defense/protection techniques, find a secure location, police back-up procedure);
 - procedures for reporting, investigation and documentation of incidents of violence; and
 - awareness of the Vancouver Employee Assistance Program available to staff who encounter violence.

3 Risk Assessment

In accordance with [WCB Regulation 4.28](#), a risk assessment is to be performed by the individual departments on a regular basis in workplaces where a risk of injury to employees from violence arises out of their employment. This assessment shall be updated from time to time as required.

The risk assessment must include consideration of:

- prior experience in that workplace;
- occupational experience in similar workplaces; and
- the location and circumstances in which work will take place.

4 Risk Areas

All work areas of the City have the potential for contact with the public either in person or over the phone. The following are examples but not an exclusive list of areas involved in direct contact with the public where violence may be a risk.

- Inspections - By-law, Engineering
- Enforcement - By-law, Police, Fire
- Emergency Response - Police, Fire, Disaster Teams
- Reception - In person, Telephone
- Counter/Office Service - Clerical, Supervisory, Food and Beverage
- Facility Attendants - Indoor, Outdoor (Parks)
- Direct Program Providers - Recreation, City Clerk's Department (Council Meeting, Public Hearings)
- Outdoor Maintenance/Development - Engineering, Parks
- Non-market Operations - Lodges, homes, and centers.

5 Risk Factors

The City provides services involving work in a wide variety of locations and circumstances. Prior experience has indicated that the following, or a combination of the following factors, add to the potential for violence:

- Evening and/or night work
- Working alone
- Limited access to backup assistance
- Remoteness of work site
- Type of activity being supervised
 - Age groups involved
 - Active or passive activities
 - Liquor (drugs, etc.)
 - Direct or indirect supervision (our own program vs. rental groups)
- Transportation of money to bank deposit
- Proximity to vehicle traffic
- Amount of cash and product (i.e.; liquor at location/robbery)

6 Evaluation

The City of Vancouver's [Occupational Health and Safety Committees](#) will regularly evaluate this policy and procedures through meetings where individual employee accident reports and investigations are reviewed, as well as through City or Department-wide safety audits done either internally or externally.

REFERENCE

[Workers Compensation Act](#)
[Workers Compensation Act Regulations](#)
[Violent Incident Report Form](#)
[Violence Prevention Program and Implementation Guide](#)
[WCB Claims Report Form](#)
[Accident/Near Miss Investigation Form](#)

RELATED POLICIES

[AE-010-02](#) Occupational Health and Safety

APPROVAL HISTORY

ISSUED BY:	General Manager, Human Resources	APPROVED BY:	General Manager, Human Resources	DATE:	1994/09/30
REVISED BY:	General Manager, Human Resources	APPROVED BY:	General Manager, Human Resources	DATE:	1999/06/02