



Workplace Violence and Harassment



Everyone has the right to a respectful workplace.

HHF is committed to maintaining work environments free from violence, harassment, and discrimination for our employees.

We also want to promote mutual respect and appreciation for the dignity, uniqueness, and worth of everyone at our sites including staff, residents, visitors, and contractors.



Let's review

The definitions of violence and harassment (AB OHS)

Identify our responsibilities relating to workplace Violence and Harassment

Section 1

Workplace Harassment



What is Harassment?

*“...any single or repeated incident of **objectionable or unwelcome** conduct, comment, bullying or action by a person that the person knows or ought to reasonably know will or would cause **offence or humiliation** to a worker or **adversely affect** the workers health and safety.”*

“...behavior intended to intimidate, offend, degrade or humiliate a particular person or group.”



Examples

- ✓ Making degrading or offensive remarks
- ✓ Making gestures or threats that seek to intimidate
- ✓ Discrediting someone by spreading malicious gossip or rumours
- ✓ Isolating the person by no longer talking to them or ignoring their presence
- ✓ Making fun of his or her beliefs or values, mocking his or her weak points
- ✓ deliberate misgendering – referring to a person using terms or pronouns that do not align with the person's affirmed gender

What is **NOT** Harassment?

- ✓ Management activities ex. performance management, assignment of tasks, disciplinary action
- ✓ Personal conflict between work peers
- ✓ Work related stressors ex. Workload, difficult tasks for role
- ✓ Organizational changes including restructuring
- ✓ Social relations regularly welcomed by individuals
- ✓ Gestures regularly considered friendly such as a pat on the back

Section 2

It's Not Harassment...but



Toxic Work Environments

Although not harassment, the following can create an unwelcoming and toxic work environment:

- **Throwing objects or slamming doors**
- **Yelling and offensive language**
- **Using negative tone or body language, rolling eyes**
- **Talking over others or ignoring others when they are speaking**
- **“Glass half empty” perspective / general negativity**
- **Gossip**



Section 3

Violence in the Workplace



What is Violence in the Workplace?

Defined in the Alberta OHS Code:

*“whether at a work site or work related, means the threatened, attempted or actual conduct of a person that causes or is likely to cause **physical or psychological injury or harm**, and includes domestic and sexual violence.”*

Examples

- ✓ Hitting or pushing a worker
- ✓ Verbally threatening to physically injure a worker
- ✓ Written threats, notes or e-mails
- ✓ Intentional property damage in the workplace
- ✓ Wielding a weapon
- ✓ Attempting to run down or threaten an employee using a vehicle or machinery

Section 5

Roles and Responsibilities



Harassment prevention plan

If an employee is in a potential/actual harassing situation they must

- Make it clear to the individual that their actions are unwelcome and attempt to resolve the issue
- Report the event to their manager, HR, or HSE if the issue cannot be resolved, and/or when the harassment was intentional
- When reporting the event, provide your name, the alleged harasser, any witnesses, and the date/time that the event occurred.

Violence prevention plan

If an employee is in a potentially violent situation they must

- If it's safe to do so, try to de-escalate the situation, if the offender persists;
- Let them know violent behaviors will not be tolerated and remove yourself from the situation until the individual can act in a respectful manner
- Immediately remove yourself from a situation where you feel your safety is in jeopardy due to violent behaviors
- Report the event to their manager, HR or HSE as soon as it is safe to do so
- When reporting the event, provide your name, the offender, any witnesses, and the date/time that the event occurred.

Harassment and Violence Prevention

The Employer must

- Develop and implement Harassment and Violence Prevention Plans that workers can follow to address and report events
- Ensure the plans/investigative procedures are kept current and in alignment with Human Rights and AB OHS legislation
- Investigate complaints and address events on a case-to-case basis
- Provide ongoing training to workers and supervisors in workplace harassment and violence prevention

References

Alberta OHS – Violence and Harassment Legislation

<https://www.alberta.ca/workplace-harassment-violence.aspx>

HHF HR Policy Manual

- HR 5.1 Employee Relations Principles
- HR 5.3 Harassment, Violence, and Discrimination
- HR 5.5 Conduct and Behavior