



TOWN OF ERIN

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION POLICY

PURPOSE:

To create and foster a work environment free from violence in the workplace, to provide a definition of workplace violence, to establish and detail the responsibilities of all persons in the Town of Erin's workplaces, to ensure workplace risk assessments are conducted, to maintain a workplace free of actual, attempted or threatened violence, to ensure that incidents of workplace violence are reported to management and /or law enforcement as appropriate, and to ensure that complaints of workplace violence are handled in a timely and equitable manner by the Town.

POLICY:

A. Scope

1. To ensure the Town of Erin is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace free from actual, attempted or threatened violence.
2. To recognize that any form of workplace violence is a health and safety issue within the Occupational Health and Safety Act.
3. To ensure that the Town of Erin takes reasonable precautions to prevent workplace violence and protect employees engaged in work-related activities.

4. To apply to all Town of Erin employees and elected officials regardless of position, classification or employee membership.
5. To apply to all persons who attend a Town workplace including, but not limited to, all visitors, contractors, vendors and delivery persons.
6. For purposes of this policy the workplace includes all places where the Town of Erin does business, including:
 - All Town facilities (whether owned or leased) and surrounding perimeters including parking lots, sidewalks and driveways;
 - Town vehicles;
 - Off-site locations where Town business occurs;
 - Town-sponsored functions and recreational or social events, whether taking place on Town grounds or elsewhere; and
 - Travel for Town business.

B. Definition

Workplace violence includes but is not limited to mean:

- The exercise of physical force by a person against a worker, in a workplace, that causes or could cause physical injury to the worker;
- An attempt to exercise physical force against a worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker;
- A statement or behavior that it 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.

C. Zero Tolerance

The Town of Erin values the health and safety of its employees and expects that its workplaces will be free of workplace violence and harassment.

The Town will not tolerate incidents of workplace violence perpetrated against or by any employee, customer, vendor, contractor, visitor or any other person at a Town workplace or involved in Town business.

D. Workplace Violence Program

There is a workplace violence program that implements this policy. It includes measures and procedures to protect workers from workplace violence, a means of summoning immediate assistance and a process for workers to report incidents, or raise concerns.

Town of Erin, as the employer, will ensure this policy and the supporting program are implemented and maintained and that all workers and supervisors have the appropriate information and instruction to protect them from violence in the workplace.

E. Responsibilities and Obligations

1. It is the responsibility of the Town of Erin:
 - To take reasonable preventive measures to protect employees and others in Town workplaces from workplace violence;
 - To ensure that a workplace violence risk assessment is conducted;
 - To develop procedures to address the workplace violence risks identified in the violence risk assessment;
 - To ensure that all employees are trained in this policy;
 - To post this policy in a conspicuous place in the workplace;
 - To ensure that this policy is communicated to contractors and other persons who attend Town workplaces;
 - To establish a process for reporting and responding to incidents of workplace violence;
 - To ensure the process for reporting and responding to incidents of workplace violence is communicated, maintained and followed;
 - To inform the Health & Safety Team if a person is killed, critically injured, disabled from performing their usual work or requires medical attention due to workplace violence, and
 - To ensure that this policy is reviewed annually.

2. It is the responsibility of managers and supervisors:
 - To understand and abide by the requirements of this policy;
 - To communicate and review this policy with the employees they supervise or manage;
 - To verify that all contractors and others who attend Town workplaces are aware of this policy;
 - To adequately train employees in Town procedures that address the workplace violence risks applicable to the employee;
 - To encourage employees to report complaints or incidents of workplace violence;
 - To respond to all complaints or incidents of workplace violence in a professional manner appropriate for the circumstances of the complaint or incident;
 - To promptly report all complaints or incidents of workplace violence they receive or witness to the Town Manager.

3. It is the responsibility of employees:
 - To comply with this policy at all times to protect themselves and others in the workplace from workplace violence;
 - To immediately notify their supervisor or other designated person of any incident of workplace violence whether the notifying worker is the victim or not. In the case of an extreme or imminent threat of physical harm to themselves or any person from workplace violence, the worker should contact the police;
 - To participate in training regarding this policy and Town procedures directed at workplace violence risks in the workplace; and
 - To fully cooperate in any investigation of complaints or incidents of workplace violence or breaches of this policy.

4. It is the responsibility of the Health & Safety Team, and Health & Safety representatives:
 - To understand their roles and obligations under the Occupational Health & Safety Act, including workplace violence.
 - To understand their roles in work refusals, as outlined in the OHS Act.
 - To provide recommendations resulting from incidents of workplace violence and risk re-assessments.

F. Domestic Violence

Any employee experiencing violence outside of the workplace (i.e. domestic violence) that may create a risk of danger to themselves or others in the workplace is encouraged to report such violence so that the Town can take reasonable preventive steps. The Town shall take precautions, reasonable in the circumstances, for the protection of the employee.

G. Reporting and Investigating Workplace Violence

1. Reporting threats of workplace violence:
 - All incidents of workplace violence or reprisal must be immediately reported to management or the Town Manager.
 - Any person subjected to workplace violence should, where appropriate, go to a safe location at the workplace and report the incident to their supervisor;
 - All complaints and incidents are to be recorded in writing by the reporting person / employee, the supervisor or manager receiving the report and the Town Manager. The date, time, location, potential witnesses and nature of the incident should be documented.
 - If the police have not previously been summoned, management or the Town Manager will report all incidents of workplace violence to police;
 - If an incident of workplace violence involves a person who is not an employee of the Town, management or the Town Manager will report the incident to that person's employer and/or such other person as the Town determines is appropriate in the circumstances.
2. Investigation:
 - All complaints or incidents of workplace violence or reprisal will be promptly investigated by management or the Town Manager. Where the perpetrator is a Town employee, the investigation will be conducted as quickly and confidentially as possible in the circumstances.
 - The management or Town Manager investigation will include:
 - (a) A documented interview with the complainant and/or victim;
 - (b) A documented interview with the alleged perpetrator(s);
 - (c) A documented interview with any witnesses with relevant information to provide; and
 - (d) Any other step the investigator(s) deem(s) necessary to fully and fairly investigate the complaint or incident.

- At the conclusion of the investigation into an incident or complaint, management and/or the Town Manager will prepare a written report of the findings of fact and – after evaluating existing policies, procedures, physical premises and devices, employee training – any suggestions to prevent a recurrence.
- Where the perpetrator is a Town employee, the supervisor of the perpetrator, in consultation with management and/or the Town Manager, will take any necessary disciplinary action. The severity of the disciplinary action, which may include dismissal from employment, will be consistent with the seriousness of the conduct at issue such that more significant discipline will follow more serious conduct or repeated violations of this policy.
- If the allegations are deemed to be serious, an outside investigator may be consulted to conduct an investigation.

H. No reprisal

Workplace violence and this policy are serious matters. This policy prohibits reprisals against employees who have made good faith complaints or provided information regarding a complaint or incident of workplace violence. Employees who engage in reprisals or threats of reprisals may be disciplined up to and including dismissal from employment.

Reprisal includes:

- Any act of retaliation that occurs because a person has complained of or provided information about an incident of workplace violence;
- Intentionally pressuring a person to ignore or not report an incident of workplace violence; and
- Intentionally pressuring a person to lie or provide less than full cooperation with an investigation of a complaint or incident of workplace violence.

An employee who makes a false complaint or otherwise abuses this policy may be disciplined up to and including dismissal from employment. Such discipline is not a reprisal or breach of this policy.

I. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Date: June 2010

The Workplace Violence Prevention Policy should be consulted whenever there are concerns about Violence in the workplace.”