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Title: Safe Work Practices & Procedure Workplace Harassment/Violence		<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: 100%;">Approved By:</div>
Issue Date:	Risk Level: MED	Page Number: 1 of 8

Description of Work:	
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**This information does not take precedence over Saskatchewan Employment Act and the Occupational Health & Safety Regulations.*

	Potential Hazards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical/Aggressive Intimidation • Psychosocial Harm • Physical Harm • Stress • Abuse • Harassment • Violence/Threats of violence/Bullying
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Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Required *(Check the box for required PPE):*

 Gloves	 Face Masks	 Eye Protection	 Welding Mask	 Appropriate Footwear	 Hearing Protection	 Protective Clothing
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other PPE:

Definitions:

- **Abuse of Authority** - a form of harassment which occurs when a person, usually a supervisor or manager, uses his/her authority in a manner which serves no legitimate work purpose. It includes misuses of power which are intimidating, coercive or demeaning.
- **Bullying** - a form of harassment which often consists of actions or verbal comments that are intended to intimidate, offend, or humiliate a particular person or group of people.
- **Complainant** - any employee who has brought forward or filed a complaint under this Policy alleging harassment or discrimination.
- **Discrimination** – the refusal to employ or continue to employ, or to intentionally or unintentionally deny a right, benefit or opportunity on the basis of an actual or perceived prohibited ground of discrimination as outlined in the Human Rights Act, 2010. Discrimination imposes burdens, obligations, or disadvantages on an individual or group not imposed upon others.
- **Harassment** – comments or conduct which is abusive, offensive, demeaning or vexatious that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome. Harassment may be intended or unintended

<i>INSERT LOGO</i>		No.
		Authorized By:
		Approved By:
Issue Date:	Risk Level: MED	Page Number: 2 of 8

- **Procedural Fairness** - includes the right to be heard, the right to be treated without bias, the right to be informed of allegations being made and to be provided with an opportunity to respond to them and the right to information regarding the status of the complaint.
- **Respectful Behaviour** – the universal duty to respect all people and accept the differences that diversity brings to a workplace.
- **Sexual Harassment** - unwanted and unwelcomed behaviour of a sexual nature.
- **Violence** - the attempted, threatened or actual conduct of a person that causes or is likely to cause injury, and includes any threatening statement or behaviour that gives a worker reasonable cause to believe that the worker is at risk of injury
- **Workplace** – areas where workers carry out their work, work-related social events, external sites.

1. Understanding Harassment

- Workplace harassment can involve unwelcome words or actions that are known or should be known to be offensive, embarrassing, humiliating or demeaning to a worker or group of workers, in a workplace. It can also include behaviour that intimidates isolates or even discriminates against the targeted individual(s).
- This may include:
 - making remarks, jokes or innuendos that demean, ridicule, intimidate, or offend;
 - displaying or circulating offensive pictures or materials in print or electronic form;
 - bullying;
 - repeated offensive or intimidating phone calls or e-mails; or
 - Workplace sexual harassment.
- What isn't workplace harassment?
 - A reasonable action taken by an employer or supervisor relating to the management and direction of workers or the workplace
 - Reasonable management actions would be part of a manager's or supervisor's normal work function, and could include changes in work assignments, scheduling, job assessment and evaluation, workplace inspections, implementation of health and safety measures, and disciplinary action.
 - If these actions are not exercised reasonably and fairly they may constitute workplace harassment. For example, if a worker was not scheduled for shifts solely because of his or her sexual orientation, this would likely be workplace harassment.
 - Differences of opinion or minor disagreements between co-workers would also not generally be considered workplace harassment.



<i>INSERT LOGO</i>		No.
Title: Safe Work Practices & Procedure Workplace Harassment/Violence		Authorized By:
		Approved By:
Issue Date:	Risk Level: MED	Page Number: 3 of 8

- Workplace Bullying:

- Bullying is usually seen as acts or verbal comments that could 'mentally' hurt or isolate a person in the workplace. Sometimes, bullying can involve negative physical contact as well. Bullying usually involves repeated incidents or a pattern of behaviour that is intended to intimidate, offend, degrade or humiliate a particular person or group of people. It has also been described as the assertion of power through aggression.
- Examples include:
 - Spreading malicious rumours, gossip, or innuendo.
 - Excluding or isolating someone socially.
 - Intimidating a person.
 - Undermining or deliberately impeding a person's work.
 - Physically abusing or threatening abuse.
 - Removing areas of responsibilities without cause.
 - Constantly changing work guidelines.
 - Establishing impossible deadlines that will set up the individual to fail.
 - Withholding necessary information or purposefully giving the wrong information.
 - Making jokes that are 'obviously offensive' by spoken word or e-mail.
 - Intruding on a person's privacy by pestering, spying or stalking.
 - Assigning unreasonable duties or workload which is unfavourable to one person (in a way that creates unnecessary pressure).
 - Underwork - creating a feeling of uselessness.
 - Yelling or using profanity.
 - Criticizing a person persistently or constantly.
 - Belittling a person's opinions.
 - Unwarranted (or undeserved) punishment.
 - Blocking applications for training, leave or promotion.
 - Tampering with a person's personal belongings or work equipment.



<i>INSERT LOGO</i>		No.
Title: Safe Work Practices & Procedure Workplace Harassment/Violence		Authorized By:
		Approved By:
Issue Date:	Risk Level: MED	Page Number: 4 of 8

- Workplace Sexual Harassment:
 - Engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct against a worker, in a workplace because of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression where the course of comment or conduct is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome, or
 - Making a sexual solicitation or advance where the person making it is in a position to confer, grant or deny a benefit or advancement to the worker and the person knows or ought reasonably to know the solicitation or advance is unwelcome.



2. Understanding Violence:

- Most people think of violence as a physical assault. However, workplace violence is a much broader problem. It is any act in which a person is abused, threatened, intimidated or assaulted in his or her employment.
- Workplace violence includes:
 - Threatening behaviour - such as shaking fists, destroying property or throwing objects.
 - Verbal or written threats - any expression of intent to inflict harm.
 - Verbal abuse - swearing, insults or condescending language.
 - Physical attacks - hitting, shoving, pushing or kicking.
- Workplace Violence Examples:
 - Rumours
 - Swearing & verbal abuse
 - Pranks/sabotage
 - Arguments
 - Property damage/vandalism
 - Pushing, & physical assaults
 - Theft/arson
 - Psychological trauma/anger-related incidents
- Workplace violence is not limited to incidents that occur within a traditional workplace. Work-related violence can occur at off-site business-related functions (conferences, trade shows), at social events related to work, away from work but resulting from work (a threatening telephone call to your home from a customer).

**ZERO
TOLERANCE
POLICY**

<i>INSERT LOGO</i>		No.
Title: Safe Work Practices & Procedure Workplace Harassment/Violence		Authorized By:
		Approved By:
Issue Date:	Risk Level: MED	Page Number: 5 of 8

3. Dealing with Harassment or Violence from other Personnel:

- Don't ignore the feeling that you are being harassed or threatened. If you feel singled out unfairly, or as if you're being picked on a disproportionate amount, it can be tempting to come up with excuses. "Everyone gets treated this way" or "I deserve it" are common guilt trips that aggressors help you think everyone is alright. Don't fall for this trap or self-loathing, if you feel you are being treated unfairly then below are some actions you can take to help stop this treatment.
 - Tell the person to stop. This is, of course, more difficult than it sounds, but you can keep a few simple gestures and statements in mind to bring out when you're feeling mistreated.
 - Put your hand up in a non-threatening manner. This will create a barrier between you and your aggressor.
 - Say something short that communicates your frustration. Saying something like "please stop and let me work" or "I need you to stop so I can concentrate." This will help you to stand up to the behaviour and give you a way out of the conversation.
 - Never retaliate. Shouting counter insults or yelling back might end up getting you in trouble or making the situation worse. Use a calm, collective tone of voice and tell the person to stop with a dominant voice.
 - Keep a record of all the behaviours. Record the name of your tormentor and the method of aggression. Record specific times, dates, locations, and the names of any witnesses to the events. Provide and gather as much information as you can. Collecting documentation is the most important and concrete way to get the behaviour to stop.
 - Record the date and time of each event
 - Who was there
 - What people said, including who said it
 - What order things happened in
 - Any injuries you had
 - Any steps you took to try to fix the problem
 - What you told your supervisor and when you told them
 - NOTE: Some instances do not require documentation before it needs to be brought up to your supervisor. If you are unsure speak to your Human Resources Manager for guidance and protocol.
 - Even if you're not sure you're being tormented, journaling about your feelings in a diary can help you to get your feeling out and figure out for yourself what you're dealing with. As a result of writing down your feelings and your frustrations, you might decide you don't have an issue or that you certainly do need to make a report.
 - Consult with your fellow co-workers any time you feel mistreated and make sure they'll back you up by corroborating your evidence. Have them write it down for future reference. Pick someone who works near you and you are comfortable to speaking to with this matter.
 - **Report all harassment, violence or threats of violence to your supervisor or manager.**
 - Complete the Violent Incident report if the situation has become physical or you feel threatened physically. If you are uncomfortable with speaking to your manager/supervisor consult your Human Resources Department for more advice.
- Look after yourself. Speak with a doctor or psychiatrist for further methods to heal from your ordeal. Remember that you are not alone in this struggle and there is hope.

<i>INSERT LOGO</i>		No.
		Authorized By:
		Approved By:
Issue Date:	Risk Level: MED	Page Number: 6 of 8

4. Dealing with Harassment or Violence from Customers:

- Always remain calm and watch your tone of voice. Tone of voice can change the impression or meaning of words more than you realize. There is a fine line between sounding interested and helpful or bored and condescending. Take deep breaths, smile, and make sure you don't speak in a monotone voice.
- Ensure the other staff members are aware of the irate customer.
- Contact a first contact personnel trained in handling individuals that are aggressive if required.
- Greet the customer with a smile. A smile can often defuse and potentially negative confrontation.
- Whenever possible use their name.
- Listen to all of their issues and allow them to discuss first. Most of the time the person just wants to vent. Give the customer an opportunity to say what is on their mind and resist interrupting. Listen carefully to what the customer is saying so you can identify the real problem.
- Attempt to diffuse the customer's anger. It is easy to become flustered when a customer is yelling. Diffuse the situation as quickly as possible by focusing on the customers' needs and wants, not their anger.
- Be empathetic and sincere with your response (example is "I understand, I would feel the same way..."). Apologize for the inconvenience. At this point in the conversation, you don't know if the issue is yours or not. If does not matter. The customer is upset and is taking it out on you. Say "I can tell that you are upset. I am sorry you have to deal with this. Let me see what I can do to help."
- Do not fake your response.
- Ask questions, as to "why" they may be felling this way (example "were you aware of the guidelines prior to coming here?"); this will help you gain control of the discussion, it shows you are interested and listening to the individuals concerns, and you are gathering information for a quicker solution. Make sure you clarify the problem by restating the issue back to the customer to show you understand the situation.
- Gently explain the reasons behind your answers. Do not assume the customer already knows.
- When possible disengage from the customer (example "I will go find the information for you"). This will give the customer an opportunity to change their mind or calm down without feeling like they have 'lost'.
- If you do not know the answer make an effort to go "find out", like:
 - Refer to your supervisor or ask the supervisor to speak with the person.
 - Direct the customer (example "A lot of people have said the same thing. Let me give you the name and phone number of the person to talk to"). This shows you are supportive of their feelings
 - Explore alternatives. Giving them choices or options can assist with their problem and ask for their suggestions.



<i>INSERT LOGO</i>		No.
		Authorized By:
		Approved By:
Issue Date:	Risk Level: MED	Page Number: 7 of 8

- If customer becomes hostile:
 - Do not provoke the person by belittling, lecturing, moralizing or screaming
 - If you feel the situation escalating or you are not making any progress try to remove yourself from the situation and find a manager or supervisor.
 - If you cannot remove yourself from the situation signal to closest co-worker for help without disrespecting the person. The other co-worker should contact a management/supervisor for assistance. If no one is close by utilize your cell phone by texting your supervisor/manager.
 - Respect personal space. Do not speak from a distance because it is disrespectful and shows disinterest. Do not speak too close as it increases anxiety and reduces safety.
 - If you feel threatened by possible physical confrontation remove yourself immediately. Ensure that you have a barrier between yourself and the person (desk, chair, etc.)
 - **If you are attacked or a weapon is drawn on you – remove yourself from the situation (if safe to do so) and contact local police or call 911 and notify your manager/supervisor immediately.**
 - Follow directions of anyone who has drawn a weapon on you – do not attempt to be hero.



- Remember:
 - Follow through on all promises you are now accountable for. When a problem arises, try your best to resolve it. Avoid placing blame on another department or employee. When you blame someone else for the problem in front of the customer, it only generates more ill feeling toward you and your organization. The customer wants the issue resolved, so be accountable for your organization and provide alternatives in order to fix the problem.
 - Resolve the conflict immediately. If possible, address a conflict when it arises in order to douse ill feeling before they develop. When you delay the resolution of a conflict, it allows more time for people to let the situation fester and create negative feelings.
 - Try to stay positive and use positive language. Say what you can do, not what you cannot do. For example, Instead of saying “we don’t accept checks” say “ we gladly accept cash or credit card”
 - Be proactive. Do not wait to take action. Customers are anxious to resolve issues. Look for positive solutions to challenging situations. When you delay, it generates more frustration and anger, if you exhibit a genuine concern and a willingness to take immediate action, the customer will remember your positive attitude longer than any negative feeling will last.

<i>INSERT LOGO</i>		No.
		Authorized By:
		Approved By:
Issue Date:	Risk Level: MED	Page Number: 8 of 8

- Agree on a solution. Clearly explain your solution and gain the customers agreement. If there is more than one potential solution, explain each option and let the customer choose the option he/she likes best.
- If you are threatened, ensure you notify your supervisor/manager immediately.
- Document incident on a Violent Incident Report and submit to management.



5. Other Controls or Preventions:

- Have first contact personnel trained in handling individuals that are aggressive.
- Conduct a Violence Hazard Assessment/Inspection Checklist. Choose furnishing with care and thought for their potential to be used as a weapon (example light chairs are easily picked up and thrown). Select furniture that can be secured to the floor or wall. Where glass is used choose shatterproof glass.
- Design the workstation to provide security for all employees. Make sure area is well lit and walkways are clean and clear of obstructions.

Forms Associated with this Policy

- Violent Incident Report
- Violence Hazard Assessment / Inspection Checklist