



Polar Knowledge Canada (POLAR)

Workplace Violence and Harassment Prevention Policy

Effective Date

This policy takes effect on September 12, 2019

Application

This policy applies to all workplaces controlled by POLAR, including the Triplex living accommodations, and to workplaces that are not under the control of POLAR but where POLAR employees are engaged in work activities on behalf of POLAR and POLAR controls the activities of those employees.

As required by the *Canada Labour Code Part II* and the *Canada Occupational Health and Safety Regulations (COHSR) Part XX Violence Prevention in the Work Place*, a copy of this policy will be posted in all workplaces under POLAR's control.

Policy Statement

POLAR is committed to providing a work environment that is safe, healthy, respectful and violence and harassment-free for all employees regardless of where their work is conducted. Violence and harassment in the workplace will not be tolerated.

POLAR is also committed to providing living accommodations for visitors to the CHARS Campus that are violence and harassment free and based on mutual respect. Any incidents of violence, harassment or any inappropriate behaviour by a visitor will not be tolerated and will be investigated and may result in termination of the accommodation. POLAR will notify the employer/employing organization of a visitor who is the subject of an investigation.

POLAR will dedicate sufficient attention, resources and time to address factors that contribute to workplace violence and harassment, to prevent and protect against it.

POLAR will communicate to its employees information in its possession about factors contributing to workplace violence and harassment, and assist employees who have been exposed to workplace violence and harassment.

POLAR promotes the prevention of workplace violence and harassment through relevant policies, programs, education and training of its employees. It also provides mechanisms for the prompt resolution of occurrences of workplace violence and harassment, and ensures privacy and confidentiality are respected.



Any acts of violence or harassment in the workplace may be considered misconduct, and appropriate disciplinary measures may be imposed, up to and including termination of employment. Appropriate action will also be taken against any employee who commits an act of reprisal against an employee who reports an incident of workplace violence or harassment.

Objectives

- To promote and support a safe, healthy, respectful, violence and harassment-free workplace as an integral part of POLAR's corporate culture.
- To prevent workplace violence and harassment, and address and resolve any incidents in a timely manner.
- To ensure compliance with its employer obligations under the *Canada Labour Code - Part II* and *Part XX Violence Prevention in the Work Place* of the *Canada Occupational Health and Safety Regulations* and to the *Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS) Policy on Harassment Prevention and Resolution*.

Definitions

Harassment (definition from the [TBS Policy on Harassment Prevention and Resolution](#))

Improper conduct by an individual, that is directed at and offensive to another individual in the workplace, including at any event or any location related to work, and that the individual knew or ought reasonably to have known would cause offence or harm. It comprises objectionable act(s), comment(s) or display(s) that demean, belittle, or cause personal humiliation or embarrassment, and any act of intimidation or threat. It also includes harassment within the meaning of the [Canadian Human Rights Act](#) (i.e. based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, disability and pardoned conviction).

Harassment is normally a series of incidents but can be one severe incident which has a lasting impact on the individual.

Workplace Violence (definition from the [Canada Occupational Health and Safety Regulations \(COHSR\) Part XX Violence Prevention in the Work Place](#))

Constitutes any action, conduct, threat or gesture of a person towards an employee in their work place that can reasonably be expected to cause harm, injury or illness to that employee, including, but not limited to, bullying, teasing, and abusive and other aggressive behaviour.

Conflict

Conflict is the perception or actual occurrence of diverging, opposing, competing or incompatible differences between two or more people. Unresolved, it can escalate into



a dispute and/or violence. (Definition from Innovation, Science, and Economic Development's (ISED) Conflict Prevention and Early Resolution program)

Competent Person

A competent person is defined by *Part XX Violence Prevention in the Work Place* of the *COHSR* as a person who

- is impartial and is seen by the parties to be impartial;
- has knowledge, training and experience in issues relating to workplace violence; and
- has knowledge of relevant legislation.

When cases of workplace violence remain unresolved, a **competent person** must be appointed to investigate the workplace violence and provide a written report with conclusions and recommendations to POLAR. Selection of the competent person must be acceptable to both parties.

Workplace

The workplace is any place where employees are engaged in work for POLAR.

Policy Application - Roles and Responsibilities

President and Chief Executive Officer

The responsibility, accountability and authority for application of this policy rests with the President and Chief Executive Officer of POLAR.

The President and Chief Executive Officer is ultimately responsible for:

- ensuring the development of a workplace violence and harassment prevention policy and program, in consultation with both the CHARS Campus Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Committee and the Ottawa Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Committee;
- ensuring information is available to all employees about factors contributing to workplace violence and harassment; and
- ensuring the review and implementation of the policy in accordance with *Part XX* of the *COHSR*.

Members of Senior Management Committee

Members of the Senior Management Committee are responsible for the application of this policy in their area of responsibility by:

- ensuring the resolution of incidents and/or complaints of workplace violence and harassment;



- ensuring that the Director responsible for Human Resources (HR) is consulted and kept informed of the resolution of incidents and/or complaints;
- providing the necessary support, information and education to managers, supervisors and employees in the prevention and resolution of workplace violence and harassment incidents;
- keeping the President and Chief Executive Officer informed of any reported incidents of workplace violence and/or harassment.

Supervisors and/or Managers

Supervisors and/or Managers are responsible for maintaining a safe, healthy, violence and harassment-free workplace by:

- ensuring employees undertake all mandatory training;
- communicating to employees information about factors contributing to workplace violence or harassment;
- exercising reasonable and respectful conduct with employees in the execution of their supervisory responsibilities, including performance management;
- familiarizing themselves with and following this policy by:
 - addressing and resolving informally (where possible) any incidents of workplace violence or harassment that they are made aware of with the employee(s) involved as soon as possible;
 - reporting any incidents of workplace violence or harassment to their Director;
 - ensuring that employees are informed of the procedures for reporting incidents of workplace violence and/or harassment;
 - following-up to ensure that employee assistance is offered to those exposed to workplace violence or harassment;
- ensuring that response procedures related to workplace violence and harassment comply with this policy and the requirements set out in the *COHSR*, including protocols for investigation and the appointment of a competent person as outlined in the resolution process;
- consulting with the Director responsible for HR and keeping them informed of any incident and/or complaint and enlist their assistance as required in the resolution process, including any corrective and/or disciplinary action that may be required, and
- ensuring that the workplace OHS Committee is kept informed of incidents of workplace violence, including their resolution.

Employees

Employees must:

- contribute to maintaining a safe, healthy, violence and harassment-free workplace by completing all mandatory training as required;



- treat persons respectfully and not subject any other person to workplace violence or harassment, including sexual violence and harassment, or intentionally contribute to violence and harassment in the workplace; and
- report any incidents of workplace violence or harassment, including factors that may contribute to violence and harassment in the workplace to their immediate supervisor or any other person designated by POLAR.

Workplace OHS Committees

Both the CHARS Campus OHS Committee and the Ottawa OHS Committee shall be consulted on all aspects of preventing workplace violence in their areas of responsibility as well as for matters affecting all of POLAR as follows:

- the development of the Workplace Violence and Harassment Prevention Policy and Program;
- the identification and assessment of factors that may contribute to workplace violence and harassment;
- the development and implementation of controls to eliminate or minimize the risks of workplace violence and harassment;
- the program for the education and training of employees in the prevention of workplace violence and harassment;
- the review of the Workplace Violence and Harassment Prevention Policy and Program.

The Workplace OHS Committees may also be consulted in the resolution of complaints of workplace violence as outlined in the *COHSR Part XX Violence Prevention in the Work Place*, but must ensure that privacy and confidentiality are maintained. No personal information will be provided to the OHS Committee unless agreed by the parties involved.

Human Resources

Human Resources provides advice and guidance to managers and supervisors for the resolution of workplace conflict, violence and harassment, including any corrective and/or disciplinary action required, as part of the continuum of workplace conflict.

Human Resources may negotiate contractual agreements with external service providers to assist POLAR with the resolution of workplace conflict, including violence and harassment.

Program Elements

The following program elements must be addressed in consultation with the workplace OHS Committee. For program elements applicable to Cambridge Bay, this would be the CHARS Campus OHS Committee; in Ottawa, this would be the Ottawa OHS



Committee. There may be situations that affect all of POLAR. In such cases, both OHS Committees must be consulted.

Risk Identification and Assessment

Factors that may contribute to workplace violence and harassment must be identified and assessed to determine the level of risk to employees.

Preventive Measures and Controls

Preventive measures and appropriate controls must be developed and implemented to eliminate or minimize risks of factors that contribute to workplace violence and harassment.

Training/Education

All POLAR employees will be made aware of this policy through communication to staff and mandatory training.

POLAR shall provide information, instruction and training on the factors and risks that contribute to workplace violence and harassment that are appropriate to the workplace of each employee.

Resolution Process

Considerations for the resolution of complaints include the following:

- Informal resolution between the supervisor and/or manager and the employee, with assistance from HR, shall be the first attempt in the resolution of a complaint;
- If the complaint cannot be resolved informally, the supervisor and/or manager will implement measures to manage the situation and co-ordinate the appropriate response action in consultation with HR;
- The Conflict Prevention and Early Resolution (CPER) process, a service provided to POLAR through a Memorandum of Understanding with ISED, may be utilized or any other service which may be negotiated with other external service providers;
- Harassment complaints will be dealt with using the *TBS Policy on Harassment Prevention and Resolution* with the assistance of HR; involvement of the OHS Committee is not required;
- In cases of workplace violence where early resolution is not successful, an employee may opt to follow the prescribed procedures under *Part XX Violence Prevention in the Work Place* of the *COHSR*; in such cases, a competent person, acceptable to all parties, must be appointed to investigate the complaint and provide suggestions for resolution.
- Employees affected by a workplace violence or harassment incident will be offered assistance either through the Employee Assistance Program or any other service acceptable to the employee;



- Employees will be assured protection against reprisal for reporting an incident;
- In all cases, the Director responsible for HR and the Director responsible for security, shall be informed;
- Physical assault (including sexual assault) is covered by the Criminal Code and in such cases Police must be contacted immediately and measures taken to ensure the safety of individuals involved, including all employees present in the workplace.

Confidentiality/Privacy

POLAR will ensure that privacy, confidentiality and discretion are respected and maintained when dealing with reports of workplace violence and harassment.

In the resolution of cases involving workplace violence and/or harassment, it is paramount to respect an individual's privacy by not disclosing any personal information to a third party unless required by law (e.g., police investigation).

The names of individuals involved cannot be identified in a competent person's investigative report without permission from those individuals.

Review

The policy will be reviewed once the new *COHSR on Violence and Harassment* supporting the *Canada Labour Code Part II* are in force in consultation with HR, both of POLAR's OHS Committees and POLAR's Senior Management Committee.

Following this initial review the policy shall be reviewed at least once every three years.

This policy will also be reviewed and updated:

- in the event of any subsequent regulatory changes; or
- when new information on the risk of workplace violence and/or harassment becomes available.

The effectiveness of the workplace violence and harassment prevention and control measures shall be reviewed and updated whenever there is a change that compromises the effectiveness of those measures and at least once every three years.

Enquiries

Enquiries about this policy should be directed to your supervisor/manager or to the Director responsible for HR or any other person designated by POLAR.