

Workplace Violence Policy and Procedure	Section: Occupational Health and Safety
Effective Date: May 25, 2021	Original Date: April 2000 Revision Dates: 07/19, 08/20, 05/21 Review Date: 01/23

Purpose

Headwaters Health Care Centre (Headwaters) is committed to providing a safe, healthy and supportive work environment that is free from violence by familiarizing all workplace parties with the related terminology, as well as their individual responsibilities for prevention and corrective action.

This policy is a companion policy to any other Headwaters policies that include conduct, violence, or harassment that is known, or ought to be known, to be unwelcome.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees of Headwaters and to all persons who attend any Headwaters facility including, but not limited to, patients, physicians, midwives, dentists, volunteers, visitors, contractors, vendors and delivery persons. This policy applies to locations where corporate business occurs and includes corporate buildings and the surrounding perimeter, including parking lots, sidewalks, driveways, the grounds, off-site locations where corporate business occurs, and corporate-sponsored functions, recreational or social events, and travel for business purposes. This policy also applies to interpersonal and electronic communications.

Definitions

Headwaters, we or us: Headwaters Health Care Centre

Domestic Violence: Any employee experiencing violence outside of the workplace that may create a risk of danger to themselves or others in the workplace.

Staff Member(s): Board of Directors of the corporation, employees, physicians/medical/midwifery/dental staff, midwives, dentists, volunteers and students.

Weapon: a device that can be used with intent to inflict damage.

Workplace: Any place where business or work related activities are conducted. It includes, but it not limited to, the physical work premises, work-related social functions (parties, golf-games, etc.), work assignments outside of Headwaters facilities, work-related travel, conferences and/or training sessions.

Workplace Violence:

- a) The exercise of physical force by a person against a worker, in a workplace, that causes or could cause physical injury to the worker;
- b) An attempt to exercise physical force against a worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker;
- c) An action, statement (or series of statements), or behaviour that it is reasonable for a worker to interpret as a threat to exercise physical force against a worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker;

- d) Bringing a weapon of any kind to the workplace or possessing a weapon of any kind, or threatening to bring a weapon to the workplace for the purposes of causing harm.

Workplace Violence can be categorized under four categories:

1. Type I (Random Criminal Intent) - committed by a perpetrator who has no relationship to the workplace
2. Type II (Patient/Visitor) - the perpetrator is a client/visitor at the workplace who becomes violent towards a worker or another client
3. Type III (Worker to Worker) - the perpetrator is an employee or past employee of the workplace
4. Type IV (Personal Relationship) - the perpetrator usually has a relationship with an employee (e.g. domestic violence)

For specific examples of workplace violence, please refer to Appendix A.

Policy

Headwaters is committed to providing a workplace free from actual, attempted, or threatened violence. Headwaters' management team recognizes the potential for violence in the workplace and will make every reasonable effort to identify all potential sources of such risk to eliminate or minimize them through our Workplace Violence program. The program will be regularly monitored by the Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC).

Headwaters is committed to preventing workplace violence. This policy defines behaviour that constitutes workplace violence and explains procedures for reporting, following up and resolving such incidents.

Violence in the workplace can have devastating effects on employees' quality of life and organizational productivity. Headwaters takes all reported incidents of violence seriously and will not ignore, condone or tolerate disruptive, threatening or violent behaviour by any member of the organization.

Accordingly, Headwaters:

- Will not tolerate any type of violence within the workplace or during work-related activities
- Is committed to allotting whatever time, attention, authority and resources necessary to ensure a safe and healthy working environment for all staff members
- Will take every reasonable precaution to protect staff members from physical injury, threatening behaviour/verbal attacks if we become aware, or believe, that domestic violence is a risk. Please also refer to Headwaters Code of Conduct and Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Policy.
- Will investigate all reported violence incidents for the purpose of ensuring the health and safety of all staff members
- in the event of a substantiated claim of abusive or aggressive behaviour, Headwaters will implement corrective measures where appropriate, up to and including; termination of employment, termination of volunteer status, or loss of privileges with the possibility of police involvement and criminal charges being laid

All supervisory personnel are responsible for ensuring that safe and healthy conditions are maintained in the area of the workplace they manage or supervise. Workers also have a responsibility to interact with others in the workplace in a professional manner. Recognizing that health and safety is a shared responsibility between management and workers, the achievement of this policy requires the full cooperation of everyone in the workplace.

Roles and Responsibilities of Workplace Parties

Employer is responsible for:

- Ensure that measures and procedures in the Workplace Violence prevention program are carried out
- Ensure compliance with the Workplace Violence prevention program by all who have a relationship with the organization, such as physicians, contractors, volunteers, etc.
- Post a copy of this policy in the workplace on the Health and Safety Board
- In consultation with the JHSC, conduct regular risk assessments
- In consultation with the JHSC, establish control measures
- In consultation with the JHSC, establish and deliver training and education for all employees.
- Integrate safe behaviour into day-to-day operations
- Develop a reporting process for incidents of Workplace Violence
- Investigate and respond to all reports or threats of violence in a prompt, objective and sensitive way, and take corrective actions if necessary
- Hold management accountable for responding to and investigating all complaints of violence filed
- Report incidents of workplace violence to the JHSC within four days if an employee is disabled from performing their own work or receives medical attention as a result of an incident
- Facilitate medical attention and support for those involved directly or indirectly
- Ensure any fatalities or critical injuries are reported to a Ministry of Labour, the police (as required), JHSC and union, as well as investigated with the JHSC
- Ensure the Workplace Violence prevention program is reviewed at least once a year

Leaders of departments/units are responsible for:

- Understand and abide by this policy
- Enforce the Workplace Violence Prevention Policy and Procedures and monitor worker compliance
- Conduct reviews, when appropriate, of the New Hire Checklist with new employees to ensure alignment and awareness to Headwaters Workplace Violence Policy and Procedure, Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Policy and other resources or supports
- Identify and alert staff to violent persons and hazardous situations
- Encourage employees to report complaints or incidents of workplace violence
- Manage all such issues brought to their attention with sensitivity, fairness and impartiality
- Privacy and confidentiality considerations shall apply at all times when dealing with such issues
- Investigate all workplace violence, leveraging the Workplace Violence Flagging Procedure and other relevant policies and procedures and contact the police as required
- Facilitate medical attention for employee(s) as required/requested
- Debrief those involved in the incident either directly or indirectly
- Contact Occupational Health to review if a critical incident debriefing through the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is required
- Notify the Occupational Health in the event of workplace fatalities or critical injuries and initiate the investigation of the incident immediately

- Track and analyze incidents for trending and prevention initiatives
- Notify Occupational Health and Leader in the event of an incident or circumstances that would give rise to the need for a Safety Plan to be developed and implemented to prevent a worker from being injured or harmed. This may include a personal safety plan, worker safety plan or patient safety plan
- Advise a worker of the existence of any potential danger or actual danger to the health and safety of the worker including history of violent or aggressive behaviour

Occupational Health and Safety Nurse is responsible for:

- Immediately report all workplace fatalities and critical injuries to the Ministry of Labour and the JHSC, and Area Leader/designate, to ensure the incident is investigated, corrective action implemented, and the risk of future reoccurrences is mitigated
- If the workplace violence incident results in lost time and/or the worker seeking medical attention, ensure the Worker's Compensation and Insurance Board (WSIB) is notified
- If a worker believes that there is a threat to their personal safety, work with the area Leader to ensure that a personal safety and/or accommodation plan is developed and implemented to mitigate the risk of injury or harm to the worker
- Track and analyze workplace violence incidents for trending and prevention initiatives and report at a minimum annually to the senior management team

Employees are responsible for:

- Understand and comply with this policy and related procedures at all times and to protect themselves and others from workplace violence
- Not engage in violence in the workplace
- Immediately report all incidents or injuries of violence or threats of violence to your Leader/designate. Complete the Safety and Quality Information System Report (SQIS)
- Participate in education and training programs so assistance and response can be summoned suitably to any incident of workplace violence
- Participate in education and training programs to inform des-escalation strategies effectively
- Inform the JHSC and leader/designate about your concerns regarding the potential for violence in the workplace
- Fully cooperate in any investigation of complaints or incidents of workplace violence or breaches of this policy
- Seek support if confronted with violence or threats of violence
- Off-site workers have the same rights and responsibilities under this policy. The employer will treat the reported incidents with the same degree of seriousness and in accordance with the same procedures that apply to incidents that occur on the premises

Joint Health and Safety Committee is responsible for:

- Participate in the development and implementation of the Workplace Violence Policy and Procedure
- Participate in the annual review of the Workplace Violence Policy and Procedure
- Make recommendations to the employer for developing, establishing and providing training in violence prevention measures and procedures
- Investigate fatalities and critical injuries in partnership with the Leader/designate
- Immediately review reports of critical injury or death. Outline in writing the circumstances and particulars within 48 hours of the occurrence

- Within four days, review written notices of injuries where any person is disabled from performing their usual work or requires medical attention

Emergency Response Measures

- In an emergency situation involving violence and/or threatening behaviour, the first priority is the safety of individuals who are at risk. Personal safety takes precedence over property. Wherever possible, individuals at risk should get to a safe location, warning others who are in the vicinity. Steps to assist in optimizing safety include;
- Code White and Call Bell systems are available in all clinical areas of the hospital. Upon pushing the button, Switchboard will be notified of the nature of the call and location. Switchboard will page the nature of the event and location overhead per the Emergency Code Policies and Procedures and responders will respond immediately per the Emergency Code Policies and Procedures
- In non-clinical areas, please use the telephone to contact Switchboard using extension 5555 and state the emergency and location
- Engage Emergency Preparedness procedures, including “code white”, “code purple” and “code silver”
- Notify Security department 3900, if applicable
- Telephone (9) 911 (Police and Other Emergency Services), as required. Paramedics will use their emergency notification buttons as required.
- Summons for assistance, giving the location and as many other details of the situation as possible
- The Leader/designate will ensure first aid and/or need for medical attention is managed
- Security/Police, as applicable will be the lead in managing the response to an emergency situation and for liaising with the local police
- Security personnel must ensure that a trained delegate is always available to respond in the case of an emergency
- Security/Police may initiate measures that may lawfully be taken to deal with the emergency, including, but not limited to:
 - Excluding all or specified persons from all or any part of the workplace
 - Closing or evacuating all or any part of the workplace
 - Ordering the cessation or curtailment of any activity

Nature of the Workplace

Certain areas of work within Headwaters have been deemed high risk for violence, as determined by both the patients they service and their more frequent potential for working alone, these areas are: the Emergency Department, Diagnostic Imaging, the Laboratory and the Paramedics. The following procedures apply with respect to Emergency Response Measures for these areas:

Emergency Department Staff and Laboratory Staff working alone on the Night Shift:

- May utilize ‘screamers’ Personal Alarm Pendants to their uniform (worker to contact Occupational Health to request a screamer)
- Push the alarm in an emergency situation
- The alarm will ring at Switchboard
- The Security Staff will respond immediately

Diagnostic Imaging Staff:

- Emergency call systems are available in each room of the Diagnostic Imaging Department
- Staff will make every effort to position themselves close to the call bell button, code white button and/or close to the door; whichever is safest in the situation
- Push the code white button or pull the emergency call cord in the room
- The alarm will sound in the Emergency Department (ED)
- One or more ED staff members will respond immediately to the Diagnostic Imaging department
- ED staff will contact Security as needed

Paramedics:

- Wear a portable radio equipped with Emergency Button (all Ambulance vehicles have an Emergency Button available as well)
- Push the button in an emergency. The call will go automatically to dispatch
- Dispatch will call the police as required

Reporting

- Any Headwaters staff member who believes that they have been a victim or witness to Workplace Violence as defined within this policy is expected to promptly report to their Leader/designate. This report can be made confidentially at the staff member's request, however, sharing information to ensure the safety of others and prevent recurrence may be necessary (e.g. contents of a police report)
- The reporting staff member may make the report confidentially on SQIS (located on the Hospital intranet, SQIS logo) indicating the need for confidentiality to their direct leader/designate. When threatening or violent behaviours are connected to Headwaters or carried out on hospital property, the employee should report incidents immediately to their Leader/designate. If the employee's direct Leader is involved in the act, the employee contacts the Human Resources department. In all cases the employee independently or with Human Resources must complete the (or in conjunction with HR) SQIS Report (located on the Hospital intranet, SQIS under Useful Links)
- The Leader/designate notifies and/or consults with hospital Security and the Human Resources department in regards to threats or violence-related incidents
- The police are to be called regarding incidents involving critical, life-threatening injuries to any patient or employee
- For additional resources contact Security 3900. Someone is on-call twenty-four hours per day, seven days a week
- In the event of immediate danger initiate Code White or dial (9) 911 if necessary

Workplace violence may extend off the property and may occur outside of normal working hours. Therefore, this procedure will apply for any behaviour that is determined through investigation to stem from, or is related to, or can be linked back to, the staff member's employment with Headwaters.

Investigations will:

- Be undertaken promptly, diligently, and be as thorough as necessary, given the circumstances
- Be fair and impartial, giving both the complainant and the respondent equal treatment in evaluating the allegations

- Be sensitive to the interests of all parties involved and maintain confidentiality.
- Be focused on finding facts and evidence, including interviews of the complainant, respondent and any other witnesses
- Incorporate, where appropriate, any need or request from the complainant or respondent for assistance during the investigation process.
- Include interviews with the alleged target, the alleged perpetrator and any witnesses. If the alleged target and the alleged perpetrator agree on what happened, Headwaters will not investigate any further and will determine what corrective action (if any) is to be taken if necessary. The investigator will also review any evidence, such as emails, handwritten notes, photographs or physical evidence like vandalized objects

Investigation Roles and Responsibilities:

- The Leader/designate must investigate all reports of violence and warn all staff who might be affected about dangerous situations. They also tell the reporting employee about the outcome of the investigation to help minimize the chance of similar incidents. In cases of non-life-threatening staff-to-staff, staff-to-leader, or leader-to-staff incidents contact the Human Resources department
- Staff members are expected to cooperate with investigators and provide any details of incidents they have experienced or witnessed
- If a violent incident results in a critical injury to a worker, the JHSC representative or worker-designate investigates the incident or injury along with the Leader/Designate (Section 9(31) OHSA) and reports to the Ministry of Labour and JHSC
- Investigations may be conducted by selected response team members who will be assembled at the direction of the Leader/designate
- Human Resources may suspend an employee pending an investigation. Where an employee is suspended, the suspension will be non-disciplinary and will be a paid suspension pending conclusion of an investigation of the incident. Disciplinary and/or corrective actions may be imposed only upon conclusion of the investigation
- Persons engaged in violent or threatening behaviour that could reasonably be expected to result in serious bodily injury shall be removed from the premises as quickly as safety permits. The person will be banned from access to Headwaters premises pending the outcome of the investigation. If Security is involved in the removal, they shall be notified at the earliest reasonable opportunity
- If the staff member involved believes the matter has not been resolved in a satisfactory manner, the individual may file a grievance in accordance with the terms of their collective agreement or seek the assistance of the Human Resources department

Complainant	Alleged Perpetrator	Investigation Conducted By (in consultation with HR)
Worker	Co-worker	Leader
Worker	Leader	2nd level Leader (i.e. Director/Vice President)
Worker	Patient	Leader and support from the Quality, Planning and performance Team

Worker	3rd party (i.e. contractor, vendor, family members)	Leader
Worker	Domestic Partner or family members	Leader and Human Resources Director
Volunteer	All parties	HR Director
Medical Students/Residents	All parties	Chief of Department/Chief of Staff
Physician	All parties	Chief of Staff & Chief Executive Officer
Leadership/Medical Advisory Committee (MAC)	All parties	Chief of Staff & Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

Note:

At the discretion of the CEO, the HR Director may utilize a 3rd party to conduct a workplace investigation. Other internal resources who may be called on to assist and/or support the investigation include: Risk Management, Professional Practice, Security and Occupational Health.

Reprisal

- Under no circumstances will any person who in good faith reports an incident of threats, intimidation or violence, or assists in its investigation, be subject to any form of retribution, retaliations or reprisal
- Any staff who makes or participates in such retribution or retaliation, directly or indirectly, will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. Staff members who believe they have been or are being subjected to retribution or retaliation should immediately notify the Director of Human Resources

Confidentiality

- Under no circumstances will any person who in good faith reports an incident of threats, intimidation or violence, or assists in its investigation, be subject to any form of retribution, retaliations or reprisal
- Any staff who makes or participates in such retribution or retaliation, directly or indirectly, will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. Staff members who believe they have been or are being subjected to retribution or retaliation should immediately notify the Director of Human Resources

Domestic Violence

- Headwaters shall take every precaution reasonable for the protection of an employee involved in domestic violence that may expose them to physical injury occurring in the workplace
- Headwaters shall whenever possible provide guidance and instruction for employees and management to address the occurrence of domestic violence that may expose them to physical injury occurring in the workplace and its effects on the workplace
- Headwaters shall make assistance available to employees involved in domestic violence that may expose them to physical injury occurring in the workplace. This assistance may include:
 - Confidentiality when coming forward for help

- Resource and referral information
- Special considerations at the workplace for employee safety
- Work schedule adjustments
- Leave necessary to obtain medical, counseling, or legal assistance
- Workplace relocation if available
- Development and implementation of a personal safety and/or accommodation plan

Support for Workers affected by Workplace Violence

Leaders will respond promptly, assess the situation and ensure that these interventions are considered:

- Facilitation of medical attention
- Consultation with local police, including Victim Services
- Debriefing (by skilled professional)
- Referrals to community agencies, treating practitioner and Employee Assistance Program (see below)
- Referral to union
- Completion of SQIS reports, WSIB reports, reports to Ministry of Labour, if applicable and Team debriefing
- Critical Incident Debriefing (CISD) by 3rd party
- Establishment of an individualized Safety Plan for the individual

Headwaters provides a confidential Employee Assistance Program (EAP), known as Guidance Resources which offers assistance to all employees with immediate, confidential assistance and guidance. Call toll-free, 24 hours a day, seven days a week: 1-844-819-4770.

Risk Assessment

- Leaders (with worker involvement) assesses workplace violence hazards in all jobs, and in the workplace as a whole. It reviews risk assessments annually, as well as when new jobs are created, or job descriptions are changed substantially
- The assessment may be conducted through the use of a survey developed to address the specific hazards e.g. workplace and/or work environment
- Not more than every five years, in consultation with the JHSC, Occupational Health and the Human Resources department will review the need for a Risk Assessment of the workplace. This assessment may include an assessment of the workplace, work environment and/or specific departments

Controls

Headwaters shall develop and maintain measures and procedures to control the risks that have been identified in the assessment as likely to expose a worker to physical injury on a case-by-case basis. The measures and procedures may include, but are not limited to:

Workplace Design, including, where appropriate:

- Installation of security surveillance equipment
- Alarm systems
- External security lighting
- Workplace lay-out
- Use of signs
- Locks or physical barriers

- Positioning work locations so that they are visible to fellow employees or members of the public passing by
- Positioning office furniture so that the employee is closer to a door or exit than the alleged violent perpetrator so that the employee cannot be cornered

Administrative Controls, including, where appropriate:

- Regular inspections of all access points, such as external doors and windows
- Regular inspections of all Call Bell systems and Screammers
- Minimizing the amount of money kept on the premises and reviewing cash handling, storage and transfer
- Display of signage to indicate the presence of security systems and to indicate that no money is kept on the premises
- Storing valuables in locked storage areas
- Providing employees with additional training on client aggression, conflict resolution and communication skills to help employees to communicate effectively with bereaved or highly emotional persons
- Monitoring the whereabouts of staff when conducting off-site business
- Securely locking doors to unoccupied areas when not in use
- Limit or control access to private areas
- Have a call-in schedule for employees working off-site
- In potential high-risk situations, have employees work in pairs when working off-site
- Keep MS Outlook calendar up to date with offsite location they can be found at and include contact information

Education

- New employees will receive both general and site-specific orientation to the Workplace Violence Policy and Procedure. In addition, all employees will receive an annual review of the program's general and site-specific components
- Education will be refreshed when there are significant changes to the policy and where circumstances indicate additional instruction or training is required
- Any training developed, established and provided will be done in consultation with, and in consideration of, the recommendations of the JHSC

Program Evaluation

The effectiveness of the Workplace Violence Policy and Procedure is evaluated annually by the JHSC to ensure legislative compliance (e.g. *Occupational Health and Safety Act, Criminal Code of Canada, Ontario Human Rights Code, Compensation for Victims of Crime Act, Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, Regulated Health Professions Act* and other relevant legislation) and a report submitted to the senior management team.

Accountability

All workplace parties are accountable for complying with the policy, program, measures and procedures related to Workplace Violence Policy and Procedure.

Records

All records of reports and investigations of workplace violence are maintained in the Occupational Health and Safety office and/or in SQIS in accordance with policy.

Policy Review

This Workplace Violence Policy and Procedure will be reviewed annually.

Prevention Programs

Headwaters provides a confidential Employee Assistance Program (EAP) known as Guidance Resources to assist all employees with personal problems.

The Director of Human Resources or their designate will conduct exit interviews when employees retire, resign or are transferred or terminated, to help identify potential workplace violence-related threats or problems.

Resources

- Headwaters Code of Conduct
- Headwaters Discrimination and Harassment Policy
- Headwaters Code White Policy
- Headwaters Code Purple Policy
- Headwaters Code Silver Policy
- Headwaters Level of Observation Policy
- Headwaters Critical Injury Protocol
- Headwaters Workplace Violence Prevention Flagging Procedure
- Headwaters Work Refusal Policy and Procedure
- Headwaters Illness, Hazard Reporting and Investigation Policy
- Occupational Health and Safety Act*
- Ontario Human Rights Code*
- Criminal Code of Canada*
- Workplace Violence: Complying with the Occupational Health & Safety Act, Public Services Health & Safety Association

Appendix A – Workplace Violence Chart

Approval Date	Approval Body	Approval Signature: Kim Delahunt, President and CEO
May 2021	Endorsed by JHSC	
May 25, 2021	Approved by Senior Management Team	

Appendix A

