



**GP 02**

**Violence Prevention Policy**

|                        |                    |
|------------------------|--------------------|
| Classification:        | Governance Policy  |
| Responsible Authority: | Board of Directors |
| Author:                | Richard Roulx      |
| Approval Authority:    | Board of Directors |
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**PURPOSE**

To outline the AIDS Committee of Ottawa (ACO) Violence Prevention Policy and to implement a prevention program to prevent and respond to incidents of workplace violence in accordance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA).

The ACO promotes a violence and harassment-free workplace and believes in the prevention of oppression in the community. The ACO is committed to providing a safe, healthy, and supportive working environment by treating everyone with integrity, respect, caring, and sensitivity.

**SCOPE**

All workers at the AIDS Committee of Ottawa (ACO), regardless of tenure or positions, including without limitation all members, participants, volunteers, employees, supervisors, managers, Board members and executives. This Policy applies to all activities that occur while on ACO property or while at other location(s) where a worker may be assigned or is engaging in ACO business, activities or social events.

**DEFINITIONS**

| <b>Word/Term</b>   | <b>Definition</b>   |
|--------------------|---|
| Board              | A group of individuals established at the ACO Annual General Meeting who are legally bound with the governance of the ACO.  |
| Complainant        | Person who files a formal complaint in writing under this Policy.   |
| Director           | A member of the Board.  |
| Employee           | A paid worker of ACO.   |
| Executive Director | The staff member of the ACO who is authorized with daily operational management of the ACO. Also known as the ED.           |
| Member             | A person, firm, corporation or other organization who is admitted to membership in the corporation pursuant to the by-laws. |



|                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| Participant          | Any individual who is receiving a service, participating in a service, or attending a service by the ACO.  |
| Respondent           | Individual against whom allegations that could constitute a violation of this Policy have been made.   |
| Supervisor           | A person who has charge of an ACO workplace or authority over a worker.  |
| Victim               | A person harmed, injured, or killed as a result of an act of violence.   |
| Volunteer            | An unpaid person who is working for the ACO under the guidance of the Volunteer Coordinator.   |
| Witness              | A person who is present at an event so as to be able to say who did it.  |
| Worker               | Person who performs work for the ACO or supplies services to the ACO for monetary compensation (OHSA).   |
| Workplace            | Any ACO building or location where a worker works or where work-related activities are conducted. It includes, but is not limited to, the physical work premises, work-related social functions, work assignments off ACO premises, work-related travel and work-related conferences or training sessions.   |
| Workplace Violence   | As defined by OHSA:<br>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,<br>b. an attempt to exercise physical force against a worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker,<br>c. a statement or behaviour 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. |
| Workplace Harassment | Engaging in a course of vexatious comments or conduct against a worker in a workplace that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome.   |

## POLICY

1. The ACO is committed to provide a working environment free of violence and to implement measures to prevent acts of workplace violence.
2. The ACO subscribes to a zero tolerance approach to any occurrences of workplace violence. Actions taken by the ACO in dealing with workplace violence relate to both response and prevention measures.
3. No employee or any other individual affiliated with the ACO shall subject a worker to workplace violence or allow or create conditions that support workplace violence. Employees are expected to understand and comply with this Policy and all related procedures.



4. Members of the ACO community are to report to their supervisors incidents of workplace violence, and concerns about risk behaviour they may experience or witness. Members of the ACO community are also to report to their supervisors circumstances where a threat of domestic violence may exist that would likely expose a worker to physical injury in the workplace. Finally, members of the ACO community must cooperate with any efforts to investigate and resolve matters arising under this Policy.
5. The Chair and the Executive Director are responsible for establishing a Behaviour Risk Assessment Group to review reported behaviour which poses a concern for the safety of members of the ACO community. The group has the mandate to undertake the necessary risk assessment to determine the most suitable approach to intervene and manage the situation within the context of ACO policies and practices.
6. An employee of the ACO that subjects a worker to workplace violence or otherwise violates this Policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including immediate dismissal with cause. Employees who have engaged in workplace violence may be subject to sanctions by applicable regulatory bodies and professional associations, and may also be subject to criminal or civil proceedings.
7. An employee of the ACO who makes a false accusation under this Policy, knowingly or in a malicious or bad faith manner, may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including immediate dismissal with cause.
8. A volunteer, participant or member of the ACO who makes a false accusation under this Policy, knowingly or in a malicious or bad faith manner, may be subject to corrective action up to and including the lost of privilege.
9. The ACO will not tolerate reprisals or retaliatory measures against a member of the ACO community who, in good faith, raises a complaint of workplace violence within the meaning of this Policy. These protections apply to anyone who cooperates in the investigation of a complaint. Disciplinary action may be taken against any employee who commits a reprisal or retaliatory measure against a person who reports workplace violence or who cooperates in an investigation.
10. Confidentiality is required to properly investigate an incident and to offer appropriate support to all parties involved: only those who “need to know” will be advised of the complaint and/or investigation. The ACO will endeavour to maintain confidentiality to the extent possible within the limits of the law; employees are advised that engaging in spreading rumours, speculation or conjecture about an incident will not be tolerated. Those with questions or concerns should speak to their immediate supervisor or the Executive Director.
11. The ACO will provide workers with information, including personal information, about a person with a history of violent behaviour if the worker can be expected to encounter that person in the course of his or her work and the risk of workplace violence is likely to expose the worker to physical injury. The ACO will not disclose more information than is reasonably necessary for the protection of a worker from physical injury pursuant to the act.



12. While the ACO is committed to taking action to maintain an environment free of workplace violence, it recognizes that no workplace is immune from the risk of workplace violence.
13. The required actions and form of investigation will in all cases depend on the circumstances, taking into consideration the nature of the workplace violence and the concerns of worker(s) who experienced or witnessed the workplace violence. In some cases, not all steps will be required and in other cases, additional steps may be taken.'

## PROCEDURE

| <u>Action</u>  | <u>Responsibility</u>                       |
|--|---|
| <b>1. Response Measures: Immediate Threat</b>  |   |
| 1.1 Report an urgent incident immediately by dialling 911 and follow emergency procedures.   | Victim or Witness                           |
| 1.2 Provide emergency response and invoke necessary emergency procedures such as the evacuation of the premise.  | Supervisor                                  |
| 1.3 Support the investigation of criminal matters in consultation with the Police, where necessary.  | ED / Board Chair / Supervisor               |
| 1.4 Notify the Executive Director if circumstances exist where the behaviour of an individual may continue to represent a potential concern for the safety of other members of the ACO Community.  | Employee / Member / Participant / Volunteer |
| 1.5 Consult and make recommendations to the affected person's immediate supervisor regarding the outcome of the investigation.   | ED / Board Chair                            |
| 1.6 Determine whether any action is required, which may include preventive, corrective and/or disciplinary action.   | ED / Board Chair                            |
| 1.7 Document findings and actions taken.   | ED / Board Chair                            |
| <b>2. Response Measures: Non-Immediate Threat</b>  |   |
| 2.1 Report in writing, using the Accident / Incident Report Form (Appendix 5), incidents which do not require emergency response to the Supervisor. If the Supervisor of the affected person is involved in the incident, make the report to the their supervisor. Include detailed notes of the incident(s), including date, time and nature of the incident(s) as well as the name of any witnesses. | Victim or witness                           |
| 2.2 Investigate the incident or seek investigative guidance from the Executive Director. Such guidance may include assigning the investigation to an internal or external person to  | Immediate Supervisor                        |



investigate. The investigation may include interviewing the complainant and the respondent as soon as possible, interviewing any witnesses, reviewing relevant documents and other materials and producing a final report of findings.

2.3 Request, if a potential concern for the safety of other members of the ACO community exists and time permits, a meeting of the Behaviour Risk Assessment Group as soon as practicable to assess the incident. Executive Director

2.4 Follow procedures outlined in GP-03 Anti-Harrasment Policy if the incident relates to harassment or discrimination. Immediate Supervisor

2.5 Following the investigation, make a finding of: Immediate Supervisor  
 a. sufficient evidence to support a finding of violation of this Policy;  
 b. insufficient evidence to support a finding of violation of this Policy; or  
 c. no violation of this Policy.

2.6 Where applicable, respond in writing to the complainant within five (5) working days or as soon as practicable. Immediate Supervisor

2.7 Determine whether any action is required, which may include preventive, corrective and/or disciplinary action. Immediate Supervisor

2.8 Document findings and actions taken. Immediate Supervisor

**3. Review of Policy**

3.1 The ACO will review this Policy annually as required by legislation. Board

**SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

- Appendix 1 Incident Reporting Form
- Appendix 2 Behaviour Risk Assessment Group Terms of Reference

**RELATED POLICIES**

- GP-03 Anti-Harrasment Policy
- GP-04 Complaints Policy

**RELATED MATERIALS**

Occupational Health and Safety Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. O.1 <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90o01>

Algonquin College Workplace Violence Prevention  
<http://www.algonquincollege.com/policies/policy/workplace-harassment-violence-prevention/>



**GP 02: APPENDIX 1**

**VIOLENCE INCIDENT REPORTING FORM**

**Section 1 – Identifying Information**

|  |  |                    |  |
|--|--|--------------------|--|
| Your Name:   |  | Incident Date:     |  |
| Your Position:                                     |  | Incident Time:     |  |
| Phone Number:                                      |  | Incident Location: |  |
| Are you the victim or did you witness the incident |  |                    |  |

Was medical attention required and obtained? YES NO

If YES, describe the medical attention provided:

**Section 2 – Incident Details**

Provide a description of the event or incident:

**Section 3 – Witnesses**

|                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| Witness # 1 name and number: |  |
| Witness # 2 name and number: |  |
| Witness # 3 name and number: |  |
| Witness # 4 name and number: |  |

**Section 4 – Additional Relevant Information (please use reverse side if needed – and be as clear about the circumstances as possible):**



## GP 02: APPENDIX 2

### BEHAVIOUR RISK ASSESSMENT GROUP TERM OF REFERENCE

#### 1. Membership

The membership of the Behaviour Risk Assessment Group will vary depending on the incident under review:

##### 1.1 If the behaviour of an employee is of concern, the members will be:

- Board Chair
- Board Secretary
- Executive Director
- Immediate Supervisor

##### 1.2 If the behaviour of a member of the ACO Community, with the exception of an employee, is of concern, the members will be:

- Board Chair
- Executive Director
- Volunteer Coordinator
- Immediate Supervisor

#### 2. Mandate

2.1 Meet as soon as is practicable after a report of an incident of concern is received.

2.2 Formally review the reported information.

2.3 Undertake an internal investigation to determine the most suitable approach to intervene and manage the situation within the context of ACO policies and practices.

2.4 Undertake an assessment of the potential risks involved.

2.5 Consult additional internal and external resources as necessary, within the context of confidentiality practices and privacy legislation, to address the risks and provide direction to resolve the situation in the interests of the safety of the ACO community. Depending on the circumstances, resources may include:

- support staff and employee union,
- Ottawa Police Services,
- mental health professionals,
- physicians,
- family members etc.

2.6 Document all findings and measures taken.