

LONDON PUBLIC LIBRARY POLICY

Title of Policy: Workplace Violence Prevention

Policy Type: Board Operational Linkage

Policy No.: OR-L-03

Effective Date: June 27, 2019

Review Date: June 2023

PURPOSE:

London Public Library (“LPL”/“the Library”) is committed to providing a violence-free environment and recognizes that workplace violence is a health and safety and human resources issue. LPL cannot absolutely ensure that unanticipated acts of violence will never occur so it is important and necessary to take practical and reasonable measures to protect people in the workplace, plan an effective response should violence occur, and to provide direction for recovery should such an event occur.

The purpose of this Policy is to:

- Foster the safety and security of London Public Library Employees, Volunteers, Board Members and those who attend the Library’s work sites and
- Establish a framework for preventing/mitigating and responding to occurrence of violence in the workplace.

This policy articulates the Library’s commitment to prevent and address violence in accordance with the Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act; Criminal Code of Canada; Ontario Human Rights Code; Workplace Safety Insurance Act; and Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

SCOPE:

This Policy applies to all LPL Employees, Volunteers, Library Board members, any person having business with the Library, and members of the public.

Contractors, visitors and other individuals conducting business on the Library’s premises are also expected to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with this policy. Allegations of workplace violence and/or sexual violence by such individuals will be dealt with by the Library and, if substantiated, may be considered a breach of the individual’s contract with the Library or affect the person’s right to be present on the Library’s premises or participate in any of its activities.

DEFINITIONS:

Close Calls are incidents which did not result in actual physical harm but, except for circumstance, had the potential to result in physical harm.

Critical Incident is a traumatic or extraordinary event that is sudden, overwhelming and often dangerous, affecting an individual or group. A critical incident is distinct from a critical injury as defined by the Occupational Health and Safety Act.

Domestic Violence is a pattern of coercive behaviour that is used by one person to gain power and control over another which may include, but is not limited to, physical violence, sexual, emotional and psychological intimidation, verbal abuse, stalking and use of electronic devices to harass and gain control.

Employee means a person who is employed by the Library and includes all Employees, including Page and Casual staff.

Volunteer means a person who voluntarily extends his or her services to actively support the Library, and who does so without remuneration.

While Library Board Members volunteer their time and do not receive remuneration, for the purposes of this policy they will be referred to as Board Members as they have roles and responsibilities that are different from those of other volunteers.

Minor Incident is an incident in which no one is physically harmed in any way and which was resolved through employee or supervisory mediation.

Threats to Safety means threats to safety including both physical and non-physical harm.

Serious Incident is as an incident in which someone was physically harmed (whether requiring medical attention or not), or which continued or escalated after supervisory mediation.

Unacceptable Behaviour means physically or psychologically aggressive behaviours including but not limited to:

- Hitting, kicking, punching, shoving, slapping, pinching, grabbing, biting;
- Carrying or brandishing weapons of any sort;
- Throwing objects at an individual with a view to cause physical injury or fear;
- Destruction of workplace or co-workers' property;
- Threats of violence;
- Sexual violence;
- Threats of sexual violence;
- Intimidating behaviour that causes the recipient to have a fear of physical violence; and
- Obscene or harassing telephone calls, e-mails or other forms of communication.

Workplace means in or on the property of London Public Library or away from London Public Library property if the Employee is engaged in work-related activities. This includes all facilities and worksites and vehicles.

Workplace Violence is defined as:

- 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 a worker;
- A statement or behaviour that 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; and/or
- Sexual violence and/or threats of sexual violence.

POLICY STATEMENT:

London Public Library is committed to working towards a safe work environment. The Library does not tolerate violence in the workplace perpetrated by or against Employees, Volunteers, Board Members, the public or other third parties. This includes domestic violence and sexual violence acts perpetrated in the workplace. The Library will comply with the following legislation governing workplace violence in Ontario:

- The Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act;
- The Criminal Code of Canada;
- The Ontario Human Rights Code;
- The Workplace Safety Insurance Act; and
- The Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

LPL is committed to the prevention of workplace violence. The Library will establish programs and procedures to reduce the risk of violence; sexual violence and unacceptable behaviour in the workplace.

The Violence Prevention Program includes:

- A risk assessment process;
- Policies and procedures;
- Control measure in place/evaluation and implementation of corrective action;
- Communication process/instruction to Employees, Volunteers and Board Members;
- Training and education;
- Reporting and investigation process; and
- Taking corrective action and review of policy and procedures after major events.

Violations of this policy may result in corrective action/disciplinary action, which could include suspension or termination, the issuing of patron banning notices and/or the filing of criminal charges.

A complaint filed under this Policy does not preclude an Employee from filing a complaint with the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario or pursuing other appropriate

avenues under the grievance process or any other applicable policy, or action under statute.

Responsibilities

Employees, Volunteers, Supervisors, Management and the Library Board are responsible for promoting and maintaining a work environment free of workplace violence.

Each Employee and Volunteer has the responsibility to:

- Inform their Supervisor of any violence, potential risk of violence or unacceptable behaviour they have experienced or witnessed. This includes issues in the Employee's or Volunteer's non-work life that may impact on the Employee's and Volunteer's or their co-worker's safety;
- Report to their Supervisor any incidents of violence or close calls, according to Library procedures;
- Document incidents within the assigned work area; and
- Attend any training or information sessions provided by the Library, as the Employer, to reduce violence or risks of violence and apply the information provided.

An Employee or Volunteer may refuse to work or do particular work where the person has reason to believe that workplace violence is likely to endanger them.

The Supervisor also has the responsibility to:

- Assess the risk of violence to Employees or Volunteers within their assigned work area, minimizing those risks where necessary or reasonably possible and informing any affected Employee or Volunteer of such risk or potential risk;
- Communicate workplace violence prevention procedures to Employees or Volunteers within the assigned work area;
- Provide information, including personal information that is reasonably necessary related to risk of workplace violence from a person with a history of violent behaviour to an Employee or Volunteer if the worker can be expected to encounter that person in the course of the person's work and the risk of workplace violence is likely to expose the worker to physical injury;
- Respond to any complaint or incidence of violence within the assigned work area;
- Ensure proper medical care is provided for anyone involved in an incident within the assigned work area;
- Secure the safety of Employees or Volunteers, before investigating the incident or taking reports;
- Report and document incidents within the assigned work area;
- Encourage Employees and Volunteers to report incidents of potential violence or unacceptable behaviour; and

- Cooperate with police, Library investigators or other authorities, as required during any investigation related to workplace violence.

Management has the additional responsibility to:

- Inform all Employees and Volunteers, including new hires, of this Policy;
- Post this Policy to ensure it is readily accessible to all Employees and Volunteers;
- Review the Policy and related procedures as often as necessary and at least annually;
- Develop and maintain a program to implement the Policy with respect to workplace violence, including:
 - Measures, procedures and related policies to control risks identified as likely to expose an Employee or Volunteer to physical injury;
 - Measures and procedures for summoning immediate assistance when workplace violence occurs or is likely to occur;
 - Measures and procedures for Employees and Volunteers to report workplace violence to the Supervisor and Management; and
 - The process the Library uses to investigate and deal with incidents or complaints of workplace violence.
- Assess the risks of workplace violence as often as necessary and at least annually;
- Advise the Joint Health & Safety Committee of the results of the assessment and any reassessment;
- Take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances for the protection of the Employee or Volunteer, if it becomes aware, or ought reasonably to be aware, that domestic violence which would likely expose a person to physical injury may occur in the workplace;
- Provide Employees and Volunteers with education and training related to the workplace violence prevention program and procedures;
- Take appropriate corrective action, including discipline and Management of infractions by the public and others to ensure that such activity does not continue;
- Monitor any case of violence until there is satisfaction that corrective measures have been implemented;
- Track and monitor all incidents of workplace violence, including close calls, minor and serious incidents.
- Follow the Occupational Health & Safety Act regarding workplace violence incident reporting.
- Take necessary action to protect confidentiality of those involved in complaints.

Management will also provide additional crisis follow up/support with personnel in the event of a critical or serious incident.

The Library Board has the additional responsibility to:

- Receive, assess and investigate complaints about the CEO or Board Members;
- Consult with external experts as appropriate; and
- Ensure that all appropriate actions based on findings are undertaken.

Reprisal

All individuals have a right to be free of reprisal or threat of reprisal as a result of being involved in a complaint of workplace violence. Reprisal will be deemed to be a form of violence and will be dealt with in accordance with the Library's *Workplace Violence Prevention Policy*.

Malicious Complaints

If, as a result of an investigation, it is determined that an otherwise unfounded complaint of workplace violence was intended to be malicious, it will be considered a form of violence and will be dealt with in accordance with the Library's *Workplace Violence Prevention Policy*.

Confidentiality

Except where disclosure is required by law or agreed to by consent of the parties, all records relating to a workplace violence complaint will be kept confidential and released only on a need to know basis to authorized personnel. Where an Employee or Volunteer has been disciplined as a result of a substantiated complaint, a record of complaint will be maintained in the Employee's or Volunteer's personnel file. When a complaint has been found to be unsubstantiated and the Policy has been used in a vindictive or frivolous manner, a record will be maintained in the complainant's personnel file. Investigative files will be retained permanently, separate from personnel files, with measures to protect confidentiality.

BACKGROUND:

INQUIRIES:

Manager, Human Resources
CEO & Chief Librarian

KEYWORDS:

RELATED DOCUMENTS:

LPL Rules of Conduct Policy
LPL Workplace Harassment and Sexual Harassment Prevention Policy
Guiding Principles for Working Relationships

Workplace Violence Prevention Procedures
Working Alone Procedures
Incident Report Procedures
Workplace Safety: Personal Safety
Alarms: Guidelines for Use of Panic Alarms
Alarms: Guidelines for use of Pendant Alarms
Incident Report Procedures

DOCUMENT CONTROL:

Approved: June 8, 2010
Reviewed: June 23, 2011 (L11/49)
Reviewed: June 14, 2012 (L12/40.2)
Reviewed: June 27, 2013 (L13/36)
Reviewed: June 26, 2014 (L14/36.1)
Reviewed: June 23, 2015 (L15/41.1)
Reviewed: May 26, 2016 (L16/32)
Reviewed: May 25, 2017 (L17/32)
Reviewed: May 24, 2018 (L18/29.2)
Reviewed: June 27, 2019 (L19/38.3)