

**Policy & Procedure Manual**

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**WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION – HR-XI-23**

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**POLICY:**

The management of OPTIONS NORTHWEST is committed to the prevention of workplace violence and is ultimately responsible for employee health and safety. OPTIONS NORTHWEST will take whatever steps are reasonable to protect our employees from workplace violence from all sources.

Violent behaviour in the workplace is unacceptable from anyone. This policy applies to all employees, all management personnel, students, volunteers, visitors and any member of the public who conducts business or has contact with OPTIONS NORTHWEST employees are encouraged to report any concerns or fear that domestic violence may enter the workplace. Everyone is expected to uphold this policy and to work cooperatively together to prevent workplace violence.

OPTIONS NORTHWEST will ensure this policy and the supporting program are implemented and maintained and that all employees, all management personnel have the appropriate information and instruction to protect them from violence in the workplace. All management personnel will adhere to this policy and the supporting program and ensure such measures and procedures are followed by employees. Employees must work in compliance with this policy and the supporting program. This includes measures and procedures to protect employees from workplace violence, a means of summoning immediate assistance and a process for employees to report incidents or raise concerns.

The Occupational Health and Safety Act defines Workplace Violence as:

- the exercise of physical force by a person against an employee, in a workplace, that causes or could cause physical injury to the employee,
- an attempt to exercise physical force against an employee in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the employee,
- a statement or behavior that a employee could reasonably interpret as a threat to exercise physical force against the employee, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the employee.

Workplace Violence may include but are not limited to the following:

- verbally threatening to attack a employee
- leaving threatening notes at or sending threatening emails or text messages to a workplace

- threatening telephone calls/voice mail message to a employee
- physical gestures or behaviors made towards a employee that may be interpreted as offensive by that employee
- wielding a weapon at work
- throwing an object at an employee
- hitting or trying to hit an employee
- kicking an object that an employee is using
- trying to run down an employee using a vehicle or equipment
- destruction of an employee's property

Sources of workplace violence may include any of the following:

- person receiving service to employee
- employee to person receiving service
- employee to employee
- member of the public to employee
- employee to member of the public

Management pledges to investigate and deal with all incidents and complaints of workplace violence in a fair and timely manner, respecting the privacy of all concerned, as much as possible.

NOTE: The workplace harassment policy, HR-III-19, should be consulted whenever there are concerns about harassment, including sexual harassment in the workplace.

**PURPOSE:**

1. To maintain a workplace that provides every employee with freedom from behaviour that constitutes workplace violence.
2. To foster a work environment of safety and security for all employees, and people supported, all management personnel, students, visitors and members of the public and where co-employees and management personnel are supportive of an employee's psychological concerns and respond appropriately as needed.
3. To establish procedures to minimize and/or prevent workplace violence.
4. To inform all employees of OPTIONS NORTHWEST that they are responsible for helping ensure that individuals do not suffer from any form of violence.
5. To provide all employees with information and guidelines for reporting workplace violence or fears/concerns of violence (including domestic violence) in the workplace and to ensure effective, timely action from management.

6. To respond quickly and effectively to investigate and remedy any complaints of or actual reported incidences of workplace violence.

**POSTING:**

Supervisors/Managers/Directors will ensure that this policy is and remains posted in a conspicuous location in each residential work location.

The Coordinator, Health and Safety Designate will ensure that this policy is and remains posted in a conspicuous location in the Administrative offices.

**PREVENTION PROGRAM:**

**PROCEDURES:**

While in the course of their employment, any employee who believes that another person's actions or words constitute workplace violence has a responsibility to report the situation to a designated person, as soon as it is safe to do so, following the procedures, as outlined below:

1. As you are able, ask the offender to stop and inform the offender that the comments and/or actions are unwelcome and constitute workplace violence. As necessary, seek immediate assistance by contacting your immediate supervisor or any available management personnel. If you feel threatened, call 911.
2. In a situation of workplace violence that leads to physical threats or assault, immediately call or direct someone else to call 911 for police assistance if needed immediately or The Police Non-Urgent Line for less urgent matters if warranted. Seek immediate first aid/medical attention as necessary.

Report the incident to a designated person, (as outlined below), assigned to investigate alleged allegations of violence:

- your immediate Supervisor/Manager/Director
- any Supervisor/Manager/Director
- Manager of Human Resources or the Human Resources Coordinator/Health & Safety Coordinator
- Executive Director

Once reported, the designated person is responsible for ensuring immediate support/medical attention, including offering an additional service such as EAP, receipt of the incident report, documenting your discussion with the complainant in detail, and initiating a timely investigation of the incident and for notifying the

Director, Human Resources. The Director of Human Resources will lead, assist with or delegate HR Assistance with the investigation.

3. Document the incident as soon as possible on an agency incident report form, to be able to recall the specifics of the incident. Include date, time, place, name(s), what was said and describe the behaviour and provide any names of witnesses.
4. All complaints/incidents will be thoroughly investigated in a consistent fashion, the results documented and confidentiality respected. This will include interviewing employees involved, including witnesses who may have another affiliation with the agency. Information obtained about an incident or complaint of violence, including identifying information about any individuals involved, will not be disclosed unless the disclosure is necessary for the purpose of investigating or taking corrective action with respect to the complaint/incident or is otherwise required by law.
5. Where it has been determined that an employee's behaviour constituted workplace violence, the employer will determine the appropriate disciplinary action to be taken. Depending on the situation, discipline may include but is not limited to a verbal warning, written warning, suspension and/or termination of employment. Transfer to another work area/area of assignment may also occur. For non-employees, the employer will determine the appropriate course of action, up to and including severing the working relationship.

Following the investigation, the employer will meet separately with the complainant and the alleged offender, and inform them of the results of the investigation and any corrective actions that have been or will be taken as a result of the investigation. Such results and any corrective actions shall be provided in writing.

**NOTE: disciplinary action taken for a specific individual will not be shared by the employer.**

6. Follow-up assistance/counseling for the victim and the offender, as appropriate, shall be offered through available internal and external supporting services (i.e. EAP).
7. Follow-up debriefing for those involved in the incident and any others indirectly involved will be arranged and offered by the employer.

**RESPONSIBILITIES:**

**OPTIONS NORTHWEST:**

1. It is the responsibility of OPTIONS NORTHWEST to provide a violence free workplace which includes the development of a policy with procedures to direct employees on how to deal with workplace violence. This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.
2. It is the responsibility of OPTIONS NORTHWEST to ensure that all employees are informed of this policy and Supervisors/Managers/Directors are aware of the proper procedures to follow if they are involved in or witness an incident or receive a complaint of workplace violence.
3. OPTIONS NORTHWEST shall ensure:
  - a. all complaints of workplace violence are investigated promptly and shall only disclose personal information that is reasonably necessary to protect employees from physical injury.
  - b. there are no reprisals against either the complainant or witnesses that are involved in the incident.
  - c. that individuals who make false complaints of a violent incident shall be subject to disciplinary actions.
4. OPTIONS NORTHWEST is responsible for:
  - a. assessing the risks of workplace violence that may arise from the nature of the workplace, the type of work or the conditions of work.
  - b. reassessing the risks of workplace violence as often as necessary to ensure the employees continued protection from workplace violence.
  - c. ensuring that appropriate control measures are put into place to minimize risks of workplace violence.
  - d. advising the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee or the Work Area Health and Safety Representative of the results of the assessment and for providing a copy to them if the assessment is in writing.
5. OPTIONS NORTHWEST is responsible to ensure that the appropriate training/education/information is provided to all employees.
6. If an employee is critically injured or killed because of a workplace violence incident, the employer will follow the procedures outlined in the Employee Critically Injured or Killed at Work policy, HR-III-3.

Employees:

1. It is the responsibility of all employees to read, understand and sign off on the Workplace Violence Prevention policy annually.
2. Employees are responsible for adhering to the policy at all times while at work and are expected to co-operate with the agency investigators, the police, or other authorities as required during any investigation related to workplace violence.
3. Employees are responsible for informing their Supervisor/Manager/Director of any violence, potential risk of violence or unacceptable behavior they may experience or witness while at work. This includes violence issues in the employee's home life that may impact the safety of the employee or co-employee's safety.
4. Employees are responsible for completing an agency incident report according to the Incident Reporting and Follow-Up policy, AD-1-6, for any workplace violence incidents, potential or actual. See Appendix A – Incident Report
5. Employees are responsible for attending workplace violence prevention training as directed and for providing input into worksite violence risk assessments as directed by the employer.

Management Personnel:

1. It is the responsibility of:
  - a) the Manager, Human Resources to ensure that this policy is reviewed on an annual basis, with appropriate consultation and to make any recommendations for amendment to the Executive Director.
  - b) the Executive Director to approve the Workplace Violence Prevention policy annually.
  - c) all management personnel to review, understand and enforce the Workplace Violence Prevention policy annually.
2. Management personnel are responsible for establishing and maintaining a work environment that is free from any form of workplace violence, which includes acting as a role model for accepted behaviour and informing associates, visitors, etc. to our workplace of the expectations of this policy.
3. Management personnel are responsible for assessing the risk of potential/actual violence and recognizing incidents or situations for employees in their jurisdiction, minimizing risks where necessary or reasonably possible and informing any affected employee of potential or actual workplace violence risks.

4. Whether brought to their attention or personally observed, immediate and appropriate action must be taken. Management personnel are responsible for ensuring appropriate support/medical care is provided for anyone involved in a violent incident and for securing the safety of employees before investigating the incident or taking formal reports. All situations are to be handled confidentially and in compliance with this policy. Under no circumstances shall a legitimate complaint be dismissed or downplayed or the complainant told to deal with it personally.
5. Once an incident report has been received, the management personnel is responsible for initiating an investigation of the incident in a timely manner, notifying and involving the Manager, Human Resources and the Executive Director.
6. Management personnel are responsible for adhering to the policy at all times while at work and are expected to co-operate with the police, agency investigators or other authorities as required during any investigation related to workplace violence.
7. Management personnel are responsible for informing their Director/Executive Director and the Manager, Human Resources of any violence, potential risk of violence or unacceptable behavior they may experience or witness while at work. This includes violence issues in the employee's home life that may impact the safety of the employee or co-employee while they are working. It is the responsibility of the Director, Human Resources to provide assistance/direction/resources for the investigation of all agency incident reports involving a violent nature.
8. Management personnel are responsible for completing/following up on an agency incident report according to the Incident Reporting and Follow-Up policy, AD-1-6, for any workplace violence incidents, potential or actual.
9. Management personnel, with assistance from Human Resources, shall ensure debriefing for those involved in the incident and any others indirectly involved.
10. Management personnel are responsible for investigating any Employee injuries/accidents that occur as a result of workplace violence, according to the procedures outlined in the Investigation of Employee Accident/Injury/Incident policy, HR-XI-10 and any agency incident reports involving violence, following the same investigative principles.
11. Management personnel are responsible for responding to any recommendations made by the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee or Health and Safety Representative in accordance with policy HR-XI-15.
12. Management personnel are responsible for attending any workplace violence prevention training or information sessions as directed.

13. If an employee is critically injured or killed because of a workplace violence incident, the management personnel must follow the procedures outlined in the Employee Critically Injured or Killed at Work policy, HR-III-3.

Coordinator, Health and Safety:

The Coordinator, Health and Safety is responsible to review, understand and enforce this policy.

The Coordinator, Health and Safety is responsible for reviewing all Employee Accident/Injury/Incident Reports dealing with workplace violence according to the procedures outlined in the Investigation of Employee Accident/Injury/Incident policy, HR-XI-10 and for consulting with the Joint Health and Safety Committee or Area Health and Safety representative.

The Coordinator, Health and Safety is responsible to coordinate an annual review of all work areas for violence risks and retain copies of all violence Risk Assessments. The Coordinator is responsible to ensure the Risk Assessment for the Cumberland Office is posted.

**CONFIDENTIALITY:**

OPTIONS NORTHWEST shall only disclose personal information that is reasonably necessary to protect employees from physical injury. Violence complaints shall be kept in strict confidence to ensure effective enforcement of this policy. The name of the complainant, the offender, and the circumstances related to the complaint, will be disclosed only where it is: a) necessary to investigate the complaint, b) take disciplinary action, or c) respond to any legal proceedings that may arise out the complaint.

**WORK REFUSALS:**

1. The right to refuse unsafe work under the Occupational Health and Safety Act and per policy HR-XI-9, now includes workplace violence, **however**, the Act sets out that such right does not apply to an employee when involved in a circumstance [at a workplace who is employed in the operation of a residential group home or other facility for persons with behavioural or emotional problems or a physical, mental or developmental disability] that is inherent in the employee's work or is a normal condition of the employment. Further the right to refuse does not apply when the employee's refusal to work would directly endanger the life, health or safety of another person



2. Employees exercising their right must notify their Supervisor/Managers/Director or designate immediately and follow the procedures outlined in the Right to Refuse Unsafe Work policy, HR-XI-9.
3. Until the investigation into a work refusal is complete, the employee must remain in a safe place as close to her/his workstation as possible (unless assigned other work) and remain readily available for the employer's investigation.

### **INSTRUCTION AND TRAINING**

1. New employees will complete the online Violence and Harassment Prevention training program upon hire. Annually thereafter, employees shall complete a WHMIS and Health and Safety Awareness Quiz, which shall include questions on Violence and Harassment Prevention.
2. All employees directed to maintain current certification in Nonviolent Crisis Intervention shall do so as outlined in the Nonviolent Crisis Intervention policy, AD-III-8.

### **PROHIBITION AGAINST REPRISALS:**

1. OPTIONS NORTHWEST prohibits any form of reprisal against employees bringing forth bona fide complaints, or providing information about violence in the workplace or that may come into the workplace.
2. Reprisals or threats of reprisals shall be considered a serious violation of employee rights, and will be treated as serious misconduct.
3. Alleged offenders shall also be protected from any retaliatory action from the complainant or other employees.
4. Regardless of the outcome of a complaint made in good faith, the complainant, as well as anyone providing information, shall be protected from any form of retaliation by either co-employees or superiors. This includes demotion, denial of opportunities within the Agency, as well as harassment of the individual as a result of his/her having made a complaint or having provided evidence

**RECOMMENDED BY:** Manager, Human Resources

**APPENDICES:** 1

**OPERATIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY:** Administration, Finance, Human Resources, Supportive Living Services (all)

**ORIGINAL POLICY DATE:** June 2003

**AUTHORIZED BY:** Executive Director

**SIGNATURE:** \_\_\_\_\_





**- OPTIONS NORTHWEST -  
INCIDENT REPORT**

Appendix A  
Policy HR-XI-23

LOCATION: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>BOX A</b>	<b>TYPE OF INCIDENT</b> (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY) <b>Immediately call Supervisor/On-Call for any of the following:</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> DEATH	<input type="checkbox"/> SERIOUS INJURY	<input type="checkbox"/> SERIOUS ILLNESS
<input type="checkbox"/> SUICIDAL BEHAVIOUR	<input type="checkbox"/> ALLEGED/SUSPECTED ASSAULT	<input type="checkbox"/> MISSING PERSON
<input type="checkbox"/> INAPPROPRIATE USE OF TECHNOLOGY	<input type="checkbox"/> SERIOUS CHARGES	<input type="checkbox"/> RESTRICTIVE INTERVENTION
<input type="checkbox"/> CONTRABAND/SAFETY RISK	<input type="checkbox"/> MEDICATION ERROR	<input type="checkbox"/> SERIOUS COMPLAINT
<input type="checkbox"/> EMERGENCY/DISASTER	<input type="checkbox"/> BREACH OF CONFIDENTIALITY	

<b>BOX B</b>	<b>TYPE OF INCIDENT</b> (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)	
<input type="checkbox"/> PRN ADMINISTRATION	<input type="checkbox"/> PROPERTY	<input type="checkbox"/> BEHAVIOUR
<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER – I.E. HAZARDOUS SITUATION		
<input type="checkbox"/> SPECIFY _____		

DATE & TIME OF INCIDENT: \_\_\_\_\_

NOTIFICATION PROVIDED TO:

Supervisor/On Call: _____	DATE & TIME _____
Janzens by Phone: <input type="checkbox"/> _____	DATE & TIME _____
Janzens by Fax: <input type="checkbox"/> _____	DATE & TIME _____
_____	DATE & TIME _____
_____	DATE & TIME _____

PERSON/PEOPLE SUPPORTED INVOLVED: \_\_\_\_\_



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**DETAILS OF INCIDENT AND ACTION TAKEN/DEBRIEFING DOCUMENTED IN PERSONAL BINDER**

Yes       N/A

\_\_\_\_\_  
REPORTER'S NAME  
(PRINT)

\_\_\_\_\_  
SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE & TIME

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PREVENTION:**

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**SUPERVISOR'S FOLLOW-UP:**

**ADDITIONAL REPORT ATTACHED & SIGNED:**

Yes

No

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**SERIOUS OCCURRENCE REPORT DONE:**

Yes

No

**FORWARDED TO:**

HUMAN RESOURCES

CRT

FINANCE

PHARMACY (FAXED)

**TOTAL ATTACHMENTS:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
SUPERVISOR'S SIGNATURE

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

**DIRECTOR/MANAGER REVIEW**

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\_\_\_\_\_  
DIRECTOR/MANAGER

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

**COPY OF MEDICATION INCIDENT TO COMPLIANCE REVIEW FOLDER:**

YES

NO

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REVIEW**

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\_\_\_\_\_  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

**UPDATES:**

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