



ONA Workplace Violence Safety Plan

Checklist

This Safety Plan checklist provides clear and concise information to assist workplace parties (employers, supervisors, joint health and safety committees (JHSCs), unions, workers, HR departments, and occupational health and safety departments) develop an individualized safety plan. It should be used as a foundational checklist to ensure workers receive the best possible safety plan to feel safe and supported from work-related violence. All suggested controls need not be implemented.

ONA believes it is the right of all its members to work in an environment free from all forms and sources of violence/harassment and that employers must strive to eliminate risks of violence/harassment.

ONA believes that violent incidents are NOT part of the job and that there is zero tolerance for workplace violence. We encourage members to take action in addressing violence/harassment by exercising their rights and pressing for enforcement of the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) and collective agreements.

Members should know that there are four main categories of workplace violence to be aware of:

- **External** – (violence by a person with no relationship to the workplace).
- **Client/Customer** – (physical or verbal assault towards an employee by a client/family member or customer).
- **Employment related** – (the violent person has or had some job-related involvement with the workplace).
- **Domestic Violence** (violence from a domestic/intimate relationship that may spill into the workplace).

Definitions:

“workplace harassment” means,

- a) engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct against a worker in a workplace that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome, or
- b) workplace sexual harassment

“workplace sexual harassment” means,

- a) engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct against a worker in a workplace because of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, where the course of comment or conduct is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome, or
- b) making a sexual solicitation or advance where the person making the solicitation or advance is in a position to confer, grant or deny a benefit or advancement to the worker and the person knows or ought reasonably to know that the solicitation or advance is unwelcome.

“workplace violence” means,

- 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) 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 may escalate to threats or acts of physical violence. It is essential for employers to recognize these behaviours and to deal with them promptly because they could lead to workplace violence.

The employer should implement control measures to mitigate the risk of workplace violence. These measures should cover three different stages:

1. At the source- removing the hazard altogether
2. Along the path- placing a “barrier” between the hazard and the worker
3. At the worker- least desirable control; relying on equipment, training, etc., to control risk once the hazard is already present

	Individualized Safety Plan Options	Action Taken	Notes
At the source	Relocate the patient to another facility, particularly when a no contact order is in place.		
	Trespass order - patient/family member/intimate partner to not attend facility unless seeking medical attention		
	Avoid contact with the perpetrator by accommodating (where practical) alternative work arrangements, e.g. schedule flexibility, change in start/end time, unit/department location.		
	To avoid potential communications with the perpetrator, establish safety by reviewing practices regarding work e-mail, phone calls and social networking.		
	The worker's name tag only shows the first name.		
	Secured/controlled access to workplace/unit (e.g. Key card access)		
	No assignment of a patient to at-risk workers (e.g. patient's aggressive behaviour is triggered by a specific worker)		
Along the Path	Assess the suitability of the care plan (e.g. at admission, transfer, or Transfer of Accountability)		
	Buddy system working in pairs while providing care either with workers or security.		
	Utilizing physical/environmental restraints (e.g. 5-point, Pinel)		
	Identify a safe room/place for workers to go into if necessary.		

	<p>Review the design or layout of the work area to ensure a safe physical environment (e.g. enclosed nursing stations, deep counters with bullet-proof/shatter-resistant glass in reception areas).</p>		
	<p>Emergency numbers are readily available (e.g. next to the phone or programmed into the phone).</p>		
	<p>Establish leave provisions that allow the worker to deal with legal issues, find alternate housing or childcare, and take time to heal.</p>		
	<p>Advise the worker to chronologically document all domestic violence incidents, including any injuries sustained, safety concerns, actual or implied threats, concerning behaviours currently and in the past.</p> <p>When there is a risk of domestic violence, educate staff never to confirm whether a worker is present. Staff should always take the name/number of the caller and let them know you will pass on a message to the worker.</p> <p>Discuss how ONA will support the employee (Provide information for emergency medical attention, counselling, local resources, etc.)</p>		
	<p>Develop a response system for the worker if they do not show up for work.</p>		
	<p>Develop check-in procedures</p>		
	<p>Flag the perpetrator and communicate the risk of violence.</p>		

	<p>Notification of staff regarding the potential for violence in the workplace Communicate response plan for actual threat (e.g. perpetrator arrives on the unit)</p> <p>Implement mock drills</p>		
	<p>Increased security patrols/check-ins</p> <p>Constant observation by security or other trained workers (e.g. orderly)</p> <p>Security escorts for the worker(s). Establish safe entrance and exit procedures and exit to and from their car (if applicable)</p>		
	<p>Utilize security cameras</p> <p>Implement security devices such as metal detectors and wands.</p> <p>Provide a photo of the perpetrator.</p> <p>Install a panic alarm system.</p>		
At the Worker	<p>Provide personal safety response system devices (e.g. personal panic alarms for all workers, screamer alarms)</p>		
	<p>Provide workers with additional training in recognizing and managing assault, resolving conflict, hazard awareness and self-protection (e.g.</p>		

	de-escalation/self-protection training, high-risk violence training)		
	Set regular meetings to review this individualized safety plan. The employee should inform their manager if safety concerns escalate at any time.		

Employee Signature

Manager Signature

Date

Date

Reference Material

ONA Website: Violence & Harassment (<https://www.ona.org/member-services/health-safety/violence-harassment/>)

Workplace Violence and Harassment: A Guide for ONA Members (https://www.ona.org/wp-content/uploads/ona_guide_workplaceviolenceandharassment.pdf)

Workplace Violence and Harassment: Understanding the Law (https://files.ontario.ca/wpvh_guide_english.pdf)

Occupational Health and Safety Act, RSO 1990 (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90o01>)

Public Services Health & Safety Association (<https://workplace-violence.ca>)