Workplace Violence Prevention Program

Policy or Program Category: Administration
Policy or Program ID: n/a
Policy or Program Name: Workplace Violence Prevention Program

Policy or Program Details

Violence in the workplace can affect all business sectors and occupations. Customers, clients, students, workers, intimate partners, or family members may hurt or threaten workers while they are on the job. The University of Guelph recognizes the right of all employees to work without fear or concern for their personal safety. The University is committed to providing a safe and productive learning and working environment. The University will make reasonable efforts to minimize the risk of violence and to ensure that reasonable safeguards are in place to protect members of its community from incidents of violence in the workplace. This program applies to all employees of the University while on University property or while performing duties on behalf of the University.

Legislation:

The Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) requires all employers to take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances to protect workers against the risk of workplace violence.

Workplace Violence:

The Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) defines workplace violence 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;
- attempt to exercise physical force against a worker in the workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker;
- a statement or behaviour that a worker could reasonably interpret as a threat to exercise physical force against the worker in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker.

Domestic Violence:

Domestic Violence is behaviour used by one person to gain power and control over another person with whom he/she has or has had an intimate relationship. This may include physical violence, sexual, emotional, and psychological intimidation, verbal abuse, stalking and using electronic devices to harass and control.

Under the OHSA employers who are aware or who ought reasonably to be aware that domestic violence that would likely expose a worker to physical injury may occur in the workplace must take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances to protect a worker. Workers are encouraged to report their concerns to their supervisor if they fear domestic violence may enter the workplace.

The University will make available to all employees a pamphlet, published by the Occupational Health and Safety Council on Ontario titled, “Domestic Violence Doesn’t Stop When You Go To Work: How to Get Help or Support a Colleague Who May Need Help.” The pamphlet will be available for download via the University of Guelph’s Environmental Health and Safety website. Printed copies available upon request.

Reporting:

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All employees have a responsibility in maintaining a violence free working and learning environment by not engaging in acts of violence and by reporting incidents of violence promptly.

1. Any employee who has been exposed to an act of violence while on university property shall:
   - immediately notify University of Guelph Campus Community Police at extension 2000 and
   - report the incident to his/her supervisor

2. The supervisor shall ensure that prompt first aid treatment is obtained, if necessary.
3. The supervisor shall promptly confirm that the incident has been reported to Campus Community Police at extension 2000.
4. Acts of violence are investigated by the Campus Community Police and/or Guelph Police Service.
5. The supervisor shall ensure that an Incident Report is completed by the employee(s) subjected to an act of violence and faxed to the Occupational Health and Wellness at (519) 780-1796 within twenty-four (24) hours of the supervisor learning of the incident.

It is an offence for any person to take reprisal against any individual because he/she has participated in a process using this policy. A written allegation of reprisal will be treated as a complaint under this policy.

**Emergency Response:**

In case of an immediate emergency, call the Campus Community Police at extension 2000 and/or 911. Provide the location and details of the incident. Inform your supervisor and others in the immediate area.

Campus Community Police can also be contacted through:

- blue emergency phone
- "UofG Police" button on Bell payphones
- Other security alarm devices
- Emergency phone located in all elevators

**Work Refusals:**

The University recognizes a worker’s right to execute a work refusal when workplace violence is likely to endanger him or herself. The University will refer to the Environmental Health and Safety policy 851.01.12 Work Refusal Policy.

**Investigation:**

The Campus Community Police and/or the Guelph Police Service are responsible for all investigations into incidents of or threats of violence.

**Threat Assessment Procedure:**

The Threat Assessment procedure is determined on a case by case basis. The Threat Assessment Team may include, but is not limited to, the Director, Campus Community Police; Director, Student Counselling Services, AVP Student Affairs; AVP Human Resources, Director, Student Health Services, and other site specific experts.
Information, Instruction and Communication of Threat Assessments:

Communications in regards to threat assessment and outcomes will be dealt with on a case by case basis. Any communication on a threat assessment will be completed in compliance with Section 32.05(3) of the OHSA.

Measures for Assessing Risk of Violence in the Workplace:

A Workplace Violence survey was conducted across all units at the University of Guelph in August 2010 and will be updated on a two (2) year basis. Incident based safety audits based on Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) concepts are conducted by Campus Community Police. These audits are also conducted upon request.

Testing of blue emergency phones and other emergency alarms are conducted on a regular basis. Upgrades in the quality and number of blue emergency phones and other emergency alarms are ongoing.

Regular patrols of the main campus are conducted by Campus Community Police.

Information and Instruction:

The University will provide information and implement preventative measures to minimize the risk of violence, which may include:

1. Appropriate instruction and information on violence prevention to employees provided by the Campus Community Police based on the level of risk identified. More information can be found on the Campus Police website, Environmental Health and Safety website and Human Resources website.
2. Through safety audits based on Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) concepts, the need for and implementation of physical or administrative controls in the work area to reduce the risk of violence.
3. General awareness training will be made available to all university faculty, staff and students through the Environmental Health and Safety website.

Identified Risks:

1. Working Alone: The University has a working alone policy Environmental Health and Safety Policy 851.06.06. The intent of the policy is to ensure appropriate supervisory due diligence and to promote safe work procedures for the health and safety of persons working alone.
2. Travel to remote locations or hazardous regions: The University has a Field Work policy, Environmental Health and Safety Policy 851.06.04. The Centre for International Development has the Safe Travel Advisory Services (STAS) program available. These programs require individual to consider warnings from the Federal government on travel to specific areas of the world and to create plans for various types of emergencies.
3. Dealing with highly sensitive or controversial personal matters: The University has established multiple programs and action groups for dealing with both students and workers in crisis. The University has an established Employee Assistance Program (EAP) to aid employees in crisis. Individuals may also choose to seek attention from their family physician or other professional.
4. Handling or Securing Cash or Other Valuables: On the main campus, Revenue Control currently provides services for the handling of cash or other sensitive items. Audit Services and Campus Community Police are available for audit and risk assessment.
5. Patrolling and Responding to Security Conditions and Providing Protective Services: On the main campus, regular patrols are conducted by Campus Community Police. Supervision of
the card access system and video surveillance is conducted by the Campus Community Police.

6. Making Decisions which Impact Academic or Employment Status: Prior to making decisions that impact academic status, employees should consult their immediate supervisor for guidance. Human Resources Services may provide specific guidance to area management who are making decisions that impact employment status. Campus Community Police may then be asked to perform a risk assessment.

7. Dealing with Unstable/Volatile Individuals: Campus Community Police should be contacted for support and assistance in dealing with unstable or volatile individuals who are violent or pose a threat of violence. Counselling Services provides a program for faculty and staff on dealing with students in crisis.

University Resources - Violence in the Workplace

1. Internal

University of Guelph Campus Community Police are responsible for protection of persons and property with the University of Guelph main campus community.

Methods and approaches to assist in achieving a safe and secure environment are developed through prevention programs and law enforcement in partnership with the community. Campus Community Police provides regular patrols, emergency response and other crime prevention services upon request. Campus Community Police is responsible for monitoring all emergency response devices including fire alarm systems, emergency poles, panic buttons, and the extension 2000 emergency number. The Campus Community Police also provides monitoring of the CCTVs located around campus.

The Campus Community Police respond immediately to all reported threats or acts of violence. Campus Police will also request the assistance and response of Guelph Police Services when needed. www.police.uoguelph.ca [1]

Counselling Services: Counselling Services provides information for staff and faculty on responding to students in crisis. www.counselling.uoguelph.ca/counselling/ [2]

Environmental Health and Safety (EHS): is a team of health, safety and risk management specialists committed to supporting the University’s commitment to creativity, innovation and excellence, and strive to achieve these standards in the areas of environmental health, safety, risk management and risk mitigation. www.uoguelph.ca/ehs/ [3]

Employee Assistance Program: confidential counselling services for regular full time employees and their immediate family members. www.uoguelph.ca/hr/managers/employee-health-wellness/employee-assistance-program [4]

Multi-Faith Resource Team: is a team of leaders or representatives from a number of different faiths, all working together to meet the religious and spiritual needs of the university community. www.faith.uoguelph.ca/ [5]

Judicial Affairs: Judicial Affairs is a unit that promotes student rights and responsibilities through the administration of the Student Code of Conduct and academic discipline through the rules of Senate. www.uoguelph.ca/judicial/ [6]

Residence Life: Residence Life supports residence students’ success by encouraging growth, educating character and enhancing the University experience. www.housing.uoguelph.ca/ [7]

Wellness Centre: is a student-driven, Peer Helper-staffed safe space where students can seek information and support about health and well-being. www.uoguelph.ca/studenthealthservices/wellness [8]

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First Response Team (FRT): The First Response Team is a volunteer organization on call 24 hours a day during the weekends and from 1700 hours to 0800 hours Monday to Friday during the academic year. It responds to any medical emergency on campus. Responders are certified as Canadian Red Cross Emergency Medical Responders. [9]

SafeWalk: Student volunteer teams provide safe, friendly accompaniment for any member of the University of Guelph community (students, staff, faculty, visitors) who calls for a walk. Their hours are 1930 hours to 0230 hours nightly during the academic year. [10]

Campus Control Group (CCG): The Campus Control Group is composed of members of the University senior administration who determine and implement all appropriate measures in response to any crisis that may affect the University. The CCG is chaired by the Vice-President (Finance and Administration), and when convened in response to an actual or perceived crisis, has total decision-making powers regarding University response.

2. External

Guelph Police Services: provides patrol, back up and specialized services when requested.


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