



## **STEP 3 – Workplace Violence Prevention Resource Policy and Procedure Templates**

*The Workplace Violence Prevention Resource “Steps” were developed to support workplaces in their efforts to reduce incidents of workplace violence. These resources are intended to assist Employers to ensure a comprehensive violence prevention plan is developed and to help share practices to minimize risk factors associated with workplace violence.*

### **1.0 Let’s review what we have done to date – STEP 1 & STEP 2**

‘**Step 1**’ of the workplace violence prevention resource was launched in March 2014 and includes a narrative and two tools for workplaces to apply; the **Workplace Violence Prevention-Program Review** and the **Workplace Violence Prevention-Employee Perception Survey**. The purpose of the **Program Review** tool is to provide an opportunity for Employers to evaluate their organization’s compliance with the Nova Scotia Workplace Violence Regulations. In addition, the **Employee Perception Survey** provides an assessment of an organization’s safety culture as it relates to workplace violence prevention (<http://bit.ly/MpAT6D>).

“**Step 2**” was launched in May 2014 and includes a narrative on **leadership responsibilities** and **risk assessment** along with a comprehensive **workplace violence hazard risk assessment** tool. This step is intended to reinforce that **safety leadership commitment** extends to addressing hazards such as workplace violence. In addition, the supplementary tool is an interactive document to allow employers to enter the assessment data and maintain the document as a component of due diligence compliance (<http://bit.ly/MpAT6D>).

### **2.0 Policies and procedures – STEP 3**

The application of the resources and tools provided in Step 1 and Step 2, may have resulted in the identification of some deficiencies and/or opportunities to update your organization’s workplace violence prevention program.

The next series of Steps will provide a number of templates and resources to address the workplace violence prevention program requirements, commencing with those legislative compliance elements, in an effort to **prevent** workplace violence. In particular the Workplace Violence Prevention Statement/Policy and the procedures are designed to address the “significant and unacceptable risks” related to:

- physical aspects of the workplace (e.g. exterior lighting),
- sector of work and activities that workers perform (e.g. dispensing medications, providing care,
- transporting people), and
- conditions of work (e.g. working alone or in isolation, working in congested workspaces).

#### **2.1. Workplace Violence Prevention Statement / Policy**

A Workplace Violence Prevention Statement or Policy should be your organization’s “plan of action” describing how the workplace violence prevention program will be managed. The policy should state that employer is committed to violence prevention and outline those that are responsible and accountable for the program.

A workplace violence prevention statement/policy is required under Nova Scotia's Violence in the Workplace Regulations and should, at minimum:

- recognize that violence is an occupational health and safety hazard in the workplace
- recognize the physical and emotional harm resulting from violence
- recognize that any form of violence is unacceptable
- state the organization's commitment to minimize or, where possible, eliminate the risk of violence
- outline consequences of behaviours
- encourage workers to report all incidents and threats of workplace violence

Sample workplace violence prevention statements/policies are provided in the **Toolkit** and should be adapted to be relevant to the particular workplace needs.

## 2.3. Workplace Violence Prevention Procedures

In general, a procedure is a set of instructions on how to perform a task. The procedure should also identify who is responsible for performing the task and what the expected results should be. The procedure should be logical and outline sequential steps to be taken. When developing safety procedures to address significant and unacceptable risks, an organization should ensure the following elements are considered;

1. Justification – Ensure there is a genuine reason for writing a procedure.
2. Identify User – Who will be performing the task.
3. Accountability – Persons or department responsible for ensuring procedure is implemented.
4. Procedure Format – Use a simple and free-flowing method.
5. Writing Style – Make sure you write for the intended user.
6. Test the procedures – Get someone unfamiliar with the procedures to follow them before they are finalized.

Specifically, violence prevention procedures define the tasks, roles and responsibilities involved in eliminating or minimizing the potential for violence. Procedures should help workers:

- Become familiar with risk factors that contribute to violence,
- Recognize warning signs that an incident involving violence is about to occur,
- Plan what to do in crisis situations, and
- Rehearse safe responses to incidents involving violence or the potential for violence.

To ensure that procedures are up to date and accurate, prevention procedures should be reviewed:

- After a violent incident occurs,
- When a job change occurs,
- When new security equipment/procedures are introduced,
- When patients/clients with a violent history or new patients/clients with an unknown history are admitted,
- When new construction or renovations occur,
- When any worker has been away for an extended period, and
- As part of refresher training.

Links to sample workplace violence prevention procedures are provided in the **Toolkit** and should be adapted to be relevant to the particular workplace needs.

## 3.0 Coming Next

STEP 4: Reporting/Documenting/Investigating Workplace Violence

STEP 5: Worker Training/Education/Awareness