



RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF ABERDEEN NO. 373							
Policy Title				Adopted By			
Workplace Violence Policy & Prevention Plan				Council Resolution		101 /24	
Origin/Authority				Jurisdiction		Effective Date	
RM Council		RM of Aberdeen No. 373		April 17th, 2024		Page #	
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1. POLICY STATEMENT

The Rural Municipality of Aberdeen No.373 ("The Municipality") is committed to minimizing and eliminating the risk of workplace violence.

The Municipality is committed to providing employees with workplace violence training and taking appropriate corrective action respecting any employee who subjects another worker to violence. Violence in the workplace may be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment for cause.

This policy was created following consultation with the Municipality's Occupational Health and Safety Committee.

2. APPLICATION

The Municipality's violence policy applies to all persons involved in the operation of the Municipality and prohibits violence by any employee of the Municipality, including supervisors and co-workers, Council members, members of the public, as well as by any person doing business with or for the Municipality. Whether committed by co-workers, managers or third parties, violent incidents are unsafe, unhealthy and unacceptable.

If the alleged individual committing a violent act is a Council member, please also refer to the Rural Municipality of Aberdeen No 373's Code of Ethics Bylaw.

3. DEFINITIONS

"Violence" is defined in section 3-26(1) of *The Occupational Health and Safety Regulations, 2020*, as:

Violence means the attempted, threatened or actual conduct of a person that causes or is likely to cause injury, and includes any threatening statement or behaviour that gives a worker reasonable cause to believe that the worker is at risk of injury.

"The Complainant" is the person who makes the complaint.

"The Respondent" is the person who has allegedly committed violence.

"Worksite" means a location where a worker is or is likely to carry out their responsibilities of employment. This includes work-related settings such as work-related conferences and trade shows, travel, municipality sponsored social events and any vehicle or mobile equipment used by a worker in the course of their employment.

"Workplace violence" includes all acts of violence as defined above, as well as acts of harassment as described in *The Saskatchewan Employment Act*. Workplace Violence is not limited to incidents which occur in the worksite. Threatening telephone calls, texts, or e-mail received at home by supervisors, coworkers, council members, as well as by any person doing business with or for the Municipality are also considered workplace violence.

4. VIOLENCE RISK ASSESSMENT

The Municipality has conducted a risk assessment in preparation of this policy that considered the following potentials risks:

- Previous incidents of violence in the workplace;
- Situations where employees interact with members of the public;
- Integrity of site security, equipment, and lighting;
- Effectiveness of emergency procedures;
- Procedures used in cash handling; and
- Procedures for releasing contact phone numbers, names and addresses of employees only to authorized individuals.

A workplace violence risk assessment of the above factors must be performed as often as necessary to protect workers and to provide a safe working environment.

When completed, the results of the risk assessment must be provided to the Occupational Health and Safety Committee. This reporting requirement also applies to any repeated risk assessments performed to assess and prevent workplace violence incidents.

The Occupational Health and Safety Committee shall review the risk assessment and approve the safeguards or control.

5. VIOLENCE RISK REDUCTION

The Municipality will further take the following actions to minimize or eliminate the risk of violence in the workplace:

- Ensuring employees have access to appropriate personal protective equipment;
- Reviewing and updating emergency procedures, site security, and applicable administrative processes;
- Upgrading site security equipment when required;
- Arranging for sufficient staff levels to carry out the work safely;
- Training and education so that employees understand the risks and the controls which must be followed for preventing exposure and responding to workplace violence; and
- Monitoring the effectiveness of control measures through safety inspections.

The Municipality recognizes that the following positions are at increased risk of being exposed to a violent situation:

1. Office Assistant;
2. Chief Administrative Officer; and
3. Foreman.

The Municipality further recognizes that there is an increased risk that a violent situation may occur at the following worksites:

1. The Municipal Office;
2. Outdoor Worksites; and
3. The Municipal Shop.

If an employee is at an increased risk of being subject to violence in the workplace, The Municipality will inform employees of the nature and extent of the risk from potential violence in writing, except if the disclosure is prohibited by law. The Municipality will disclose any information in its possession related to the risk of violence from persons who have a history of violent behaviour and whom employees are likely to encounter in the course of their work.

A list of Emergency & Administrative Procedures are attached hereto as Schedule "A".

6. REPORTING WORKPLACE VIOLENCE

The Municipality encourages all employees to report any incidents of workplace violence **immediately** so that complaints can be quickly investigated.

If an employee believes they have been exposed to violence in the workplace, they should tell their immediate supervisor or contact the Chief Administrative Officer as soon as possible. If the Chief Administrative Officer is the accused offender, then the written report may be submitted to the Reeve of the Municipality. Employees may be asked to provide a written complaint, which should be specific and include, but not be limited to, the names of the individuals involved, the names of any witnesses, the date, time and location of the incident.

The Municipality will not retaliate against employees for filing a complaint and will not permit retaliation by management employees or co-workers.

Furthermore, no action will be taken against an employee who has made complaint in good faith which is found to be unsubstantiated. However, a complainant may be subject to disciplinary action where it is proven that the complaint is fraudulent or malicious.

7. INVESTIGATION

Following the reporting of the incident by the employee, an investigation will be undertaken. The Municipality or a designate will investigate.

The Municipality will document incidents of alleged violence, the investigation and its outcome, which may include documenting who is involved, potential witnesses, and any other related documents.

In the event of an allegation of violence, the Municipality has full discretion to take whatever temporary interim measures that it deems appropriate to ensure the workplace remains a safe and productive environment and/or helps to facilitate an investigation into said violence including, but not limited to, removing an individual from the workplace.

8. CONFIDENTIALITY

The Municipality will not disclose the name of a complainant or the respondent or the circumstances related to the complaint to any person except where disclosure is necessary for the purposes of investigating the complaint or taking corrective action with respect to the complaint, or as required by law.

In order to protect the safety of the complainant and other staff, the Municipality may place an employee on administrative leave if it is deemed necessary to protect employee safety.

9. INVESTIGATION OUTCOMES & REMEDIES

Violence in the workplace may be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment for cause. If it is determined that workplace violence has occurred, appropriate and effective remedial action will be taken. Appropriate action may also be taken to deter any future incidents.

If the alleged perpetrator of violence is a Council member, please refer to the Rural Municipality of Aberdeen No. 373's Code of Ethics Bylaw for the procedure to be followed and available sanctions.

The Municipality will advise the parties of the results of the investigation.

10. MEDICAL ASSISTANCE

In the event that an employee, as a result of a work-related violence, experiences injury or adverse symptoms, the employee is encouraged to consult the worker's physician for treatment or referral for post incident counselling. If an employee consults their physician for treatment or receives counselling that is related to the workplace violence, the Municipality shall credit the worker's attendance as time at work and ensure that the worker loses no pay or other benefits as a result of the workplace violence.

11. TRAINING

The Municipality is committed to providing a training program for employees that includes:

- the means to recognize potentially violent situations;
- procedures, work practices, administrative arrangements and engineering controls that have been developed to minimize or eliminate the risk to workers;
- the appropriate responses of workers to incidents of violence, including how to obtain assistance; and
- procedures for reporting violent incidents.

12. ACCESS TO POLICY & POLICY REVIEW

Copies of the policy statement and prevention plan will be made readily available to employees.

This policy shall be reviewed, and revised, if necessary, every 3 years or whenever there is a change in circumstances that may affect worker health and safety.

Schedule "A"

Emergency and Administrative Procedures to Minimize the Risk of Workplace Violence

1. At The Municipal Office and Shop

- a. Check security cameras periodically to ensure proper functionality.
- b. Complete deposits as required to minimize the amount of cash on site.
- c. When arriving, leaving, or working within the office or shop yard, check your surroundings to ensure there are no suspicious persons. Stay alert Dealing with persons entering the office
 - i. Keep active and alert at all times.
 - ii. Greet everyone that enters the office.
 - iii. Be friendly and look directly in their eyes.
 - iv. Remain on the office side of the reception desk at a safe distance.
- d. When working alone in the office, keep the back door locked.
- e. Do not share the alarm or door entry code with anyone that is not an RM employee without prior approval from the Chief Administrative Officer or Foreman.

2. Working Outside

- a. When meeting with a ratepayer, contractor, or member of the public, bring another employee or council member with you. Do not meet with people on site or in remote locations of the RM by yourself.
- b. When a member of the public or a ratepayer tries to stop you while conducting work, remain in the vehicle if possible. If you are not in a vehicle, stand a safe distance away from the person. Direct the person to contact the office with any requests, comments, or concerns they may have. Report the incident to the Foreman or Chief Administrative Officer as soon as reasonably possible.

3. Taking a Deposit to the Bank

- a. When possible, take the deposit to the bank during their open hours.
- b. Only take deposits to banks that are well lit.
- c. Vary the times of day/month that deposits are dropped off.
- d. Check your surroundings for suspicious persons before exiting your vehicle to make the drop off.
- e. If someone tries to grab the deposit, do not resist and do not try to chase the thief. Follow the applicable steps mentioned in section 5-Dealing with a Robbery and call the police when it is safe to do so. Request a file number from the responding police officer. Report the incident to the Chief Administrative Officer as soon as it is safe to do so.

4. Dealing with Suspicious, Angry or Irate Persons

- a. Focus on emotions first. Remain calm. This may help the person settle down.
- b. Record vehicle information and physical description of all suspicious persons loitering around the office.
- c. Avoid escalating the situation.
- d. If you are alone and the irate person continues to behave in an agitated manner, stop talking and wait until they realize you are not responding. When the irate person pauses, ask them to return to the office when the Chief Administrative Officer will be present or direct the person to contact the Chief Administrative Officer or their Reeve/Councillor by phone or email.
- e. If the irate person refuses to leave and becomes increasingly agitated or threatening, contact the RCMP for help. If there is a risk to your personal safety,

such as the presence of a weapon, exit the location to somewhere safe while waiting for the RCMP.

- f. If the irate person is on the phone, record the phone call. Follow steps listed above for 4.a & 4.c. If they continue to be verbally abusive, either follow steps listed above for 4.d or terminate the call.
- g. Report the incident to the Chief Administrative Officer as soon as reasonable possible.

5. Dealing with a Robbery

- a. Do not resist or attempt to delay the thief. Obey their instructions.
- b. Do not be a hero. Do not fight or use weapons. These actions may jeopardize your safety or the safety of others.
- c. Remain calm. Give thieves the cash and items they want. Do not argue or attempt to stop them.
- d. Do not attempt to catch or capture a thief. Let them leave the office or immediate work area.
- e. Avoid startling a thief. Tell them if there is another worker in the office or immediate work area so they will not be startled or react violently should the other worker appear unexpectedly.
- f. Avoid sudden or unexpected movements. Keep actions short and smooth and make sure the thief is aware of the movement.
- g. Observations are important. Make note of the following:
 - a. Height, weight, hair colour and any identifying or visible features like tattoos, scars unique hair-cuts or visible piercing.
 - b. Type of clothing and colour.
 - c. Size and type of weapons.
 - d. Pay attention to what is said and how. Unique aspects of speech like an accent or slang, slurred speech or difficulty speaking, etc. may help police.
- h. After the thief has left and when it is safe to do so, lock the building doors and call the police for help.
- i. Provide police with the following information:
 - a. If anyone is injured at the scene.
 - b. The direction the thieves took when they left.
 - c. Vehicle description, if any.
 - d. What the thief looked like and clothing description.
 - e. What kind of weapons they used, if any.
 - f. What time the robbery occurred.
- j. Stay on the phone until the police arrive or tell you it is okay to hang up.
- k. Keep the building locked until the police have arrived to protect the crime scene. Be careful not to damage any fingerprints left by the thieves. Do not touch anything that may be evidence.
- l. Ask witnesses to wait for the police. Get their names, phone numbers, and addresses.

6. Miscellaneous

- a. Addresses, phone numbers, or other personal information of municipal employees are not to be released. Employee names and phone number may be shared among the municipal staff for the purpose of communicating to effectively conduct their duties. The Municipal Foreman's cell phone number is not to be released to the public.
- b. If you witness a verbal or physical altercation involving a co-worker or council member, report it to the Foreman and Chief Administrative Officer immediately. In the event that a physical altercation has caused significant bodily harm, call for police and ambulatory services. Do not attempt to get in the middle of a physical altercation.

**RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF ABERDEEN NO. 373 WORKPLACE
VIOLENCE POLICY & PREVENTION PLAN**

ACKNOWLEDGMENT & AGREEMENT - EMPLOYEE

I, _____, an employee of the Rural Municipality of Aberdeen No. 373 acknowledge that I have been provided with a copy of the Rural Municipality of Aberdeen No. 373's Workplace Violence Policy & Prevention Plan (the "Policy") and have read and understood it and acknowledge that I will abide by the Policy. I understand that if I violate the rules set forth by this Policy, I may face disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Date

Employee Signature

**RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF ABERDEEN NO. 373 WORKPLACE
VIOLENCE POLICY & PREVENTION PLAN**

ACKNOWLEDGMENT & AGREEMENT – COUNCIL MEMBER

I, _____, a Council member of Rural Municipality of Aberdeen No. 373 acknowledge that I have been provided with a copy of the Rural Municipality of Aberdeen No. 373's Workplace Violence Policy & Prevention Plan (the "Policy") and have read and understood it and acknowledge that I will abide by the Policy. I understand that if I violate the rules set forth by this Policy, I may face disciplinary action or sanctions.

Date

Council member Signature