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Parent Policy: Health, Safety, and Environment Policy

Hazard Identification, Assessment, and Control Procedure

Appendix B: Violence Prevention

Office of Administrative Responsibility:	Health, Safety and Environment
Approver:	Director, Health, Safety and Environment

Overview

The University of Alberta is committed to promoting and maintaining a safe and secure working and learning environment. The university recognizes that workplace **violence** is a serious hazard that can put workers at risk of physical or psychological harm and will not tolerate violent behavior, threats of violence, or physical or verbal intimidation at its work sites. All incidents of workplace violence must be promptly reported and investigated confidentially.

The university is committed to the prevention of workplace violence through the use of the Hazard Identification, Assessment, and Control (HIAC) Procedure and will take all reasonable steps to protect staff, students, and visitors from workplace violence.

Workplace violence can take several forms including:

- physical attack or aggression
- threatening or intimidating behavior
- verbal or written threats
- **domestic violence**
- **sexual violence**

This document is not intended to discourage workers from exercising their rights pursuant to any other law.

In addition to this appendix, the university has systems in place to address student disciplinary matters (e.g. *The Student Conduct Policy, Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Policy and Sexual Violence Disclosures and Complaints Procedure* and various collective agreements) and imminent danger scenarios (e.g. section 91 of the GFC Policy Manual, *Protocol for Urgent Cases of Disruptive, Threatening or Violent Behaviour*).

Purpose

This appendix is intended to:

- Assist **senior administrators**, supervisors, staff, and students in recognizing, preventing, reducing, and responding to incidents of workplace violence or threats of violence through the use of the Hazard Identification, Assessment, and Control Procedure
- Meet legislated requirements as outlined in Alberta's Occupational Health and Safety Act Part 1 and Occupational Health and Safety Code (2019) Parts 2 (Hazard Elimination and Control) and 27 (Violence and Harassment).

PROCEDURE

1. Hazard Identification, Assessment, and Control

Hazard identification, assessment, and control of hazards is the basis for preventing injury and illness.

- a. When conducting or reviewing hazard assessments, determine if violence may be a hazard by:
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- i. Reviewing previous incidents related to violence in the workplace
 - ii. Involving workers in the hazard identification, assessment, and control process
 - b. Identify measures to eliminate or control violence or threats of violence
 - c. Develop safe work procedures that include the following:
 - i. Responding to violent workplace situations
 1. If a supervisor becomes aware that a worker is or is likely to be exposed to domestic violence at a work site, the employer must take reasonable precautions to protect the worker and anyone who may be affected at the work site.
 - ii. Summoning immediate assistance when violent incidents occur (cell phones, distancing workers, barriers etc.)
 - iii. Reporting incidents
 - iv. Strategies to support workers who have been exposed to workplace violence (e.g., consultation with workers to discuss their needs, implementation of controls to reduce likelihood of subsequent violent incidents, referral to psychological counseling services, Helping Individuals at Risk, Protective Services, etc.)

2. Information Disclosure

All violence related disclosures of records/information in the custody and control of the University of Alberta will be done in accordance with the FOIP Act and university policy. Specifically, if the disclosure involves identifiable personal information about an individual(s) then disclosures of that information must be in compliance with the FOIP Act and the university's *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Policy* and *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Procedure* (specifically Section 4(d): Disclosure).

3. Unit Action Plans

Each department unit must develop a **unit action plan** that includes actions to be taken in the event of a violent incident.

4. Incident Reporting

Workers who witness or experience workplace violence are encouraged to report the incident promptly by completing the U of A's online incident report (uab.ca/incident). Delayed reporting could compromise collection of evidence and produce other challenges during the investigation. Employees may also contact:

- Office of Safe Disclosure 780-248-1894
- Helping Individuals at Risk (HIAR) 780-492-4372
- University of Alberta Protective Services (UAPS) 780-492-5050
- City of Edmonton Police 911

Employees may report anonymously; however, this may limit the ability to address the complaint and take appropriate next steps.

5. Incident Investigation

All reports of workplace violence will be dealt with promptly and confidentially. An investigation will take place if there is sufficient evidence to prove the incident is a violation of this appendix or any other applicable U of A policy and procedure (e.g. *Student Conduct Policy*, *Discrimination, Harassment and Duty to Accommodate Policy*, *Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Policy*, etc.).

6. Privacy and Confidentiality

- a. Privacy and confidentiality of those who have experienced violence will be protected. However there may be limits to the university's ability to do so when:
 - i. there is a likely risk of harm to self or others, or
 - ii. reporting or action is required or authorized by law
- b. In cases where confidentiality cannot be maintained, those affected will be informed and supported throughout the process. In such cases only necessary information will be disclosed and only to those with a need to know. Disclosure of violence related information will be determined on a case by case basis and only necessary information will be disclosed, in consultation with relevant university officials.

7. Informing Involved Parties

- a. Whether in the context of a disclosure or a complaint, all **involved parties** will be informed of the limits of privacy and confidentiality. In cases where confidentiality cannot be maintained, those affected will be informed and supported throughout the process. In such cases, only necessary information will be disclosed, and only:
 - i. to those with a need to know
 - ii. to investigate the incident
 - iii. to take corrective action
 - iv. to inform workers of a specific or general threat of violence or potential violence and only the minimal amount of personal information when required by law

8. Worker Support

The University of Alberta's Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP) provides workers with confidential assistance programs that provide a wide range of services including psychological counseling.

University employees who have been affected by violence will be advised to:

- i. consult with a healthcare professional of their choice for treatment or referral
- ii. contact EFAP

Employees will continue to be paid normal wages and benefits while seeking and receiving treatment, in accordance with collective agreements..

9. Training and Communication

Workers must be aware of potential hazards and how to protect themselves and their co-workers through established prevention and control measures.

Opportunities for training include:

- a. Orientation, both general and work site specific
- b. Mandatory violence prevention e-learning (in development)
- c. On-going training as workplace conditions change or hazard assessments are updated, such as
 - i. The Supervisor Environment, Health, and Safety Professional Development program
 - ii. Active Shooter video

10. Lessons learned post incident

Program Administration and Continuous Improvement

- a. The Violence Prevention Appendix will be available on the University of Alberta's Policies and Procedures Online (UAPPOL) website
- b. The information in this appendix will be included in orientations, eLearning programs, unit action plans, etc.
- c. All records of incidents, investigations, and training will be maintained by the faculty/portfolio, Health, Safety and Environment, Human Resources or UAPS as appropriate.
- d. The appendix will be reviewed by the Joint Health and Safety Committee prior to final posting on UAPPOL and as it is revised thereafter.

11. Retaliation

- a. Retaliation against an individual involved in a disclosure, complaint, or investigation of violence is prohibited.
- b. Where it has jurisdiction, the U of A will investigate all reports of retaliation in accordance with the appropriate complaint processes.

12. Bad Faith

The university recognizes the serious nature of complaints of violence and may take disciplinary action where allegations of violence are shown to be malicious, fraudulent, and/or vexatious. A complaint made in good faith is not a violation of this procedure even if it is not proven in an investigation.

DEFINITIONS

Any definitions listed in the following table apply to this document only with no implied or intended institution-wide use.	
Violence	Whether at a work site or work-related, means the threatened, attempted or actual conduct of a person that causes or is likely to cause physical or psychological injury or harm, and includes domestic or sexual violence.
Domestic violence	A pattern of behavior used by one person to gain power and control over another with whom a person has or has had a personal relationship. This can range from subtle, coercive forms of control to violent acts that result in physical harm or death. Examples may include physical violence, sexual abuse, financial control, emotional and psychological intimidation, verbal abuse, stalking and using electronic devices to harass and control.
Sexual violence	Any sexual act or act of a sexual nature, or act targeting sexuality whether physical or psychological, committed without consent. This includes but is not limited to sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, indecent exposure, voyeurism distribution of intimate images, inducing intoxication, impairment or incapacity for the purpose of making another person vulnerable to non-consensual sexual activity and other analogous conduct.
Unit action plan	Addresses emergencies that could reasonably be expected in the worksite and the steps that must be taken or activities that must be performed to mitigate loss. Examples include fires, hazardous materials spills, severe weather, floods, medical emergencies etc.
Senior administrator	The Provost, Vice-Provost, President, Vice-Presidents, Associate Vice Presidents, Deans and Chairs, Executive Directors, Directors.
Involved parties	The complainant, the person alleged to have committed the violence, NASA, AASUA, GSA, UAPS, and university administration.

FORMS

Incident Reporting Form: uab.ca/incident

RELATED LINKS

[Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Policy](#)

[Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Procedure](#)

[Discrimination and Harassment Prevention Procedure](#)

[Discrimination, Harassment and Duty to Accommodate Policy](#)

[Hazard Identification, Assessment, and Control Procedure](#)

[Helping Individuals at Risk Policy](#)

[Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Disclosures and Complaints Procedure](#)

[Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Disclosures and Complaints Procedure \(French\)](#)

[Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Policy](#)

[Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Policy \(French\)](#)

[Student Conduct Policy](#)

[Collective Agreements and handbooks \(University of Alberta\)](#)

[Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#)

[Health, Safety and Environment \(University of Alberta\)](#)

[Occupational Health & Safety \(OHS\) Act, Regulation, and Code](#)

*For questions surrounding policy document interpretation or implementation,
please contact the Office of Administrative Responsibility.*

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