



**Labour and Advanced Education**

# **Reference Guide**

## **VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE REGULATIONS**

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Disclaimer:

This document is not an exhaustive interpretation of the regulations or legal advice to the reader. This document is prepared for convenience only. For accurate reference, the reader should get an official copy of the regulations through our web site at <http://www.gov.ns.ca/just/regulations/regs/ohsviolence.htm> or copies may be requested by calling 902-424-5400 or toll free 1-800-952-2687.

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## **A Guide to the Violence in the Workplace Regulations**

This document is in a two column format. The information offered in the left column is a guide only and is a plain language interpretation of the regulations. For your reference and convenience the sections of the Regulations have been included in the right column.

### **When do the Regulations come into effect?**

If you are covered by the regulations (see section 4), you must complete your hazard assessment by October 1, 2007. You must comply with all of the regulations by April 1, 2008.

In addition, starting immediately, you will have the ability to use generic hazard assessments and workplace violence prevention plans for multiple temporary workplaces (section 15) and to share hazard assessments and plans with other organizations (section 16).

### **Why do we need Violence in the Workplace Regulations? It's just part of the job for some people.**

Violence in the workplace is an increasing reality; and yes, for some types of jobs the risk of violence is a known one. That is why it is important to identify what the risks are and then manage them. Everyone deserves protection from violence, and workplace violence is no exception. These regulations provide specific requirements for designated employers to do a hazard assessment and if necessary, develop a violence prevention plan.

Actions that would fall within the definition of “violence” include:

- A shooting at a store while it is open, because employees could be hurt
- Subduing a violent client, because the worker is at risk from client retaliation.

Actions that would fall outside the definition of “violence” include:

- Yelling at a store clerk, unless the yelling includes a threat of physical violence
- Two customers fighting in a store, because no employees are involved or at risk (unless they intervene).

Note that the definition of “violence” deals with any violence that puts an employee in danger at work. This includes violence inflicted on one employee by another. However, the violence must occur at work. Violence that occurs away from the workplace is not covered by these regulations.

While the regulations specifically cover certain types of workplaces, it does not diminish the responsibility of all workplaces parties to recognize violence as an occupational health and safety hazard.

#### **Citation**

- 1 These regulations may be cited as the Violence in the Workplace Regulations.

#### **Definitions**

- 2 In these regulations,
  - (a) "Act" means the Occupational Health and Safety Act;
  - (b) "adequate" means sufficient to protect a person from injury or damage to health;
  - (c) "committee" means committee as defined in the Act;
  - (d) "health care workplace" means any of the following:
    - (i) a district health authority under the Health Authorities Act,
    - (ii) a nursing home, a home for the aged, a residential care facility under the Homes for Special Care Act or any other long-term-care facility, and
    - (iii) a place where emergency health services or home care services are provided;
  - (e) "representative" means representative as defined in the Act;
  - (f) "violence" means any of the following:
    - (i) threats, including a threatening statement or threatening behaviour that gives an employee reasonable cause to believe that the employee is at risk of physical injury,
    - (ii) conduct or attempted conduct of a person that endangers the physical health or physical safety of an employee.

#### **Violence as an occupational health and safety hazard**

- 3 These regulations do not diminish the responsibility of all workplace parties to recognize violence as an occupational health and safety hazard in carrying out their precautions and duties under the Act.

## Who do the regulations apply to? (Section 4)

If the “primary business” of your workplace is included in the list in Section 4, you must comply with the regulations.

Examples of workplaces the regulations apply to are:

- (a) hospitals and clinics,
- (b) private medical and dental practices
- (c) private educational facilities
- (d) taxi and limousine services
- (e) passenger transit services like buses and shuttle services
- (f) homemaker services
- (g) delivery services
- (h) retail operations
- (i) veterinary offices
- (j) provincial departments, offices and special operating agencies that involve regular interaction with the public (“interaction with the public” means dealing personally or in small groups with individuals that do not work for the department, office and special operating agency).

Retail operations, which include restaurants of all kinds, resell goods to the general public without significantly changing them. This characteristic particularly distinguishes them from establishments in the agriculture, manufacturing, and construction industries. For example, farms that sell their products at the farm are not classified in retail, but rather in agriculture, as their operation changes goods from seeds to final fruits and vegetables.

## What if my workplace isn’t on the list?

The regulations do not apply to organizations whose primary business is not listed in section 4 (even if they perform a listed activity on a secondary basis). However, such employers must still deal with issues of workplace violence, as they must deal with all other workplace hazards. The difference is that

## Application of these regulations

- 4 These regulations apply at any workplace where the primary business is any of the following:
- (a) health services, including services provided at a healthcare workplace;
  - (b) ambulance, emergency ambulance and emergency health services provided under the Emergency Health Services Act;
  - (c) medical services;
  - (d) dental services;
  - (e) veterinary services;
  - (f) blood collection services;
  - (g) testing and diagnostic services;
  - (h) pharmaceutical-dispensing services, including facilities operating under the Pharmacy Act;
  - (i) education services provided by institutions including any of the following:
    - (i) the Nova Scotia Community College,
    - (ii) a degree granting institution designated under the Degree Granting Act,
    - (iii) a private career college registered under the Private Career Colleges Regulation Act,
    - (iv) a school governed by the Education Act;
  - (j) policing services, detective services and other law enforcement services including services provided under the Police Act, the Police Services Act and the Constables Act;
  - (k) correctional services, including services provided at any of the following:
    - (i) a correctional facility as defined in the Corrections Act,
    - (ii) a facility under the Correctional Services Act,
    - (iii) a facility under the Court Houses and Lockup Houses Act,
    - (iv) a place or facility designated as a youth custody facility under subsection 85(2) of the Youth Criminal Justice Act

employers who are not covered by these regulations do not have to deal with violence issues in the way set out in the regulations.

- (v) (Canada),  
a place or facility designated as a place of temporary detention under subsection 30(1) of the Youth Criminal Justice Act (Canada);
- (l) probation services provided by a probation officer or assistant probation officer appointed under the Correctional Services Act;
- (m) security and related services including, licensees under the Private Investigators and Private Guards Act;
- (n) crisis counseling and intervention services including, any services provided by an agency as defined in the Children and Family Services Act;
- (o) retail sales;
- (p) delivery services, including parcel delivery services;
- (q) financial services including, services provided by any of the following:
  - (i) facilities operating under the Trust and Loan Companies Act,
  - (ii) facilities operating under the Credit Union Act,
  - (iii) insurer licensed to carry on business under the Insurance Act,
  - (iv) a money lender under the Money-lenders Act;
- (r) sales of liquor or providing premises for consuming liquor including, premises licensed under the Liquor Control Act;
- (s) taxi services;
- (t) passenger transit services;
- (u) gaming activities conducted and managed under the Gaming Control Act;
- (v) services provided by or on behalf of the departments, offices and special operating agencies established under the Public Service Act that involve regular interaction with the public;

- (w) homemakers services as defined in the Homemakers Services Act.

## **My workplace is on the Regulations' list. What do I do?**

The first step for an employer is figure out if there is a risk of violence in the workplace, using a violence risk assessment. A violence risk assessment identifies the type of violence risk (robbery for example) and the chances it will happen. The assessment has to be done in consultation with a joint occupational health and safety committee or health and safety representative (if the workplace has them) and a copy of the final assessment report must be given to them.

An assessment will need to be done at least every 5 years.

## **What kinds of things do I need to consider for a Risk Assessment? (Section 5)**

Some things to consider when doing an assessment include:

- (a) past violent incidents
- (b) violence that happens in workplaces similar to yours
- (c) the conditions in which the work is done (i.e. alone, late at night)
- (d) the interactions (talking, serving, working with or dealing with people and difficult and emotionally charged situations) that happen in doing the work, and
- (e) the physical location and layout of the workplace (is the workplace visible from the street?; are aisles built in a way that causes blind spots?).

Note: we refer to the public as anyone you deal with that is not your employee. This includes your suppliers, contractors, clients, customers, patients, guests etc.

Appendix A has a sample risk assessment

## **Violence risk assessment**

- 5 (1) An employer must conduct a violence risk assessment for each of their workplaces in accordance with this Section to determine if there is a risk of violence in the workplace and prepare a written report concerning the violence risk assessment detailing the extent and nature of any risk identified by the assessment.
- (2) In conducting a violence risk assessment, an employer must take all of the following into consideration:
  - (a) violence that has occurred in the workplace in the past;
  - (b) violence that is known to occur in similar workplaces;
  - (c) the circumstances in which work takes place;
  - (d) the interactions that occur in the course of performing work;
  - (e) the physical location and layout of the workplace.
- (3) An employer must consult with any committee established at the workplace when conducting a violence risk assessment and must provide the committee with a copy of the written report of the assessment.
- (4) An employer must consult with any representative selected at the workplace when conducting a violence risk assessment and must provide the representative with a copy of the written report of the assessment.

form, while Appendix C goes through a complete example.

**Do I have to give a copy of the assessment to the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Division?**

No. The assessment is to help you identify and evaluate risks at your business. Once completed you do not have to give a copy to the Occupational Health and Safety Division unless specifically asked to. OH&S Officers will ask for copies only by exemption; they will not ask for them during every inspection.

**I am not an expert in workplace violence. How can I complete a violence risk assessment?**

Employers are not expected to be experts in workplace violence. However, you are expected to have and maintain a general knowledge of the level of violence within your own industry and general location. This knowledge can be gained through media reports, trade journals or other sources.

**I operate several locations. Do I have to do a separate violence risk assessment for every workplace?**

If several workplaces are similarly vulnerable to violence, the employer may do a generic violence risk assessment for all of the similar workplaces. The generic assessment must clearly state which workplaces it covers.

## **When does a violence risk assessment need to be redone?**

You must do a new violence risk assessment whenever:

- (a) you become aware of a type of violence that the existing assessment does not deal with,
- (b) there is a significant change in the circumstances, interactions, location or layout of the work (this may be as simple as changing your complaint or return policies which may expose your workers to upset or irate customers),
- (c) you build a new or renovate an existing workplace,
- (d) when a Department of Environment and Labour officer orders you to do a new assessment
- (e) at least every 5 years.

## **Do I have to do an assessment after all renovations? (Section 6)**

The renovation must be significant in terms of changing the risk of violence. Changes as simple as moving a reception desk out of sight from co-workers, could affect the risk of violence.

Factors to consider in renovations are:

- (a) has a line of sight changed?
- (b) has a route of escape been blocked or changed?
- (c) have light levels changed?
- (d) have security features or equipment been affected by the renovations?

## **When new violence risk assessment required**

- 6 (1) An employer must conduct a new violence risk assessment for a workplace in any of the following circumstances:
  - (a) the employer becomes aware of a type of violence occurring in similar workplaces that was not taken into consideration when the previous violence risk assessment was conducted;
  - (b) there is a significant change in any of the following:
    - (i) the circumstances in which work takes place,
    - (ii) the interactions that occur in the course of performing work,
    - (iii) the physical location or layout of the workplace;
  - (c) the employer plans to construct a new facility or renovate an existing facility;
  - (d) the employer is ordered to do so by an officer.
- (2) An employer must conduct a new violence risk assessment for each of their workplaces at least every 5 years.

**Section 7 talks about “significant risk”.  
What is significant risk ?(Section 7)**

It is up to the employer, in consultation with the health and safety committee or representative (if they exist at your workplace) to decide, based on their violence risk assessment, what is a significant risk. Appendix B describes one way to determine significant risk. Appendix C shows how this method is applied to the sample violence risk assessment.

**I’ve done my assessment, and I have no significant risk of violence. What else do I need to do? (Section 7)**

If you have completed your assessment and you have concluded there is no significant risk of violence, then you are done. You will need to reassess your workplace at least once every five years or if you change your workplace, or workplace activities in a way that would change the assessed risk.

**I found several areas of significant risk. What do I do now? (Section 7)**

Together with your health and safety committee or representative if they exist at your workplace, you now must develop and put into action a violence prevention plan.

As part of a plan the employer has to:

- write a workplace violence prevention statement
- take and document reasonable measures to lessen, and where possible get rid of, the risk of violence **or** use a code of practice on violence prevention published by the Department of Environment and Labour

**Workplace violence prevention plan**

- 7
- (1) An employer must establish and implement a workplace violence prevention plan for each workplace for which a significant risk of violence is identified through a violence risk assessment or that an officer orders a plan for.
  - (2) As part of a workplace violence prevention plan, an employer must do all of the following:
    - (a) prepare a written workplace violence prevention statement;
    - (b) either
      - (i) take and document reasonable measures to minimize and, to the extent possible, eliminate the risk of violence in the workplace, or
      - (ii) adopt a code of practice on violence in the workplace published by the Director governing the primary business conducted at the employer's workplace;
    - (c) establish and document procedures for providing employees with the information and training required by Sections 10 and 11;
    - (d) establish and document procedures for reporting, documenting and investigating incidents of violence as required by Sections 12 and 13.
  - (3) An employer must consult with any committee established at the workplace when establishing, reviewing or revising a workplace violence prevention plan.
  - (4) An employer must consult with any representative selected at the workplace when establishing, reviewing or revising a workplace violence prevention plan.
  - (5) An employer must make a copy of the workplace violence prevention plan available for examination at the workplace by any employer, contractor, constructor, supplier, employee, owner or self-employed person in

- establish and use procedures for information and training requirements
- establish and use procedures to report, document and investigate incidents.

that workplace.

There are no specific measures that must be taken. The requirement is for the employer to consider the range of possible options and select and implement those that are most reasonable to their needs.

Some examples of steps that can be taken include:

- keep back doors closed
- prominently display notices stating premises are monitored
- do not cover windows with posters and ads so you cannot see in or out
- make arrangements with other nearby employers to have employees watch each others' premises
- keep cash register funds to a minimum and post a sign stating this
- make sure lights in parking lots or over access doors are changed promptly when burnt out

**Do I have to give away copies of my plan to anyone who asks for it? (Section 7)**

There is a requirement for the plan to be available for examination to other employers, contractors, constructors, suppliers, employees, owners or self-employed persons at that workplace. This should usually be done within one working day. Employers may give away copies of their plan if they wish.

**Once I've done my plan, am I done?**  
(Section 8)

The plan will need to be reviewed and revised if needed at least once every 5 years or if a new risk assessment shows there have been changes to the potential for violence.

**What is a Workplace Violence Prevention Statement?** (Section 9)

A workplace violence statement must include:

- the employer's recognition that violence is an occupational health and safety hazard at the workplace
- the employer's recognition of the physical and emotional harm resulting from violence;
- the employer's recognition that any form of violence in the workplace is unacceptable and
- the employer's commitment to minimize, or where possible eliminate, the risk of violence in the workplace (see Appendix D for examples)

**The regulations say I must post my statement. Can I "post" the statement on a computer system?** (Section 9)

Employers can post the workplace violence prevention statement on a computer network or on the Internet or Intranet, provided employees have easy access to these sites.

**I already have a Policy required by section 28 of the Occupational Health and Safety Act. Can I combine the workplace violence prevention statement with the policy?**

Yes, so long as you include all required statements from both the Act and these

**Review and revision of workplace violence prevention plan**

- 8
- (1) If a new violence risk assessment indicates a significant change to the extent and nature of the risk of violence, an employer who is required to establish and implement a workplace violence prevention plan must ensure that the plan is reviewed and, if necessary, revised.
  - (2) At least every 5 years, an employer who is required to establish and implement a workplace violence prevention plan must ensure that the plan is reviewed and, if necessary, revised.

**Workplace violence prevention statement**

- 9
- (1) An employer must prepare a workplace violence prevention statement that includes all of the following:
    - (a) a statement of the employer's recognition that violence is an occupational health and safety hazard at the workplace;
    - (b) a statement of the employer's recognition of the physical and emotional harm resulting from violence;
    - (c) a statement of the employer's recognition that any form of violence in the workplace is unacceptable;
    - (d) a statement of the employer's commitment to minimize and, to the extent possible, eliminate the risk of violence in the workplace.
  - (2) An employer must post a copy of their workplace violence prevention statement in a prominent place or places in each of their workplaces so it can be easily accessed by employees, and must ensure that it remains posted.

regulations.

**The Regulations say I have to inform my employees. What do I inform them of?**  
(Section 10)

An employer has to let any employee exposed to a significant risk of violence know the type of violence and the amount of risk they may run into. Also the employer has to let the employee know the things that could increase or decrease the risk.

**What about the information privacy laws ?**  
(Section 10)

The extent of personal information disclosed under section 10(2) must be balanced against legislated privacy rights of the individual, as provided for in such laws as the NS Freedom of Information & Protection of Privacy Act [FOIPOP], Privacy Act of Canada, Personal Information & Protection of Electronic Documents Act [PIPEDA], and relevant health information legislation. For advice on application of this section of the Regulations, please contact the person responsible for privacy issues in your organization. In the absence of such a person, contact your organization's lawyer, or the Information Access & Privacy Manager for NS Environment & Labour ([DELaccess@gov.ns.ca](mailto:DELaccess@gov.ns.ca) ph: 902-424-8472).

**What kind of training am I going to need to provide and to whom?** (Section 11)

As part of the Violence Prevention Plan, any employees exposed to any significant risk of violence will need training in:

- employee rights and responsibilities
- the workplace violence prevention statement
- the steps taken by the employer to minimize or eliminate the risk of violence

**Information that must be provided to employees**

- 10 (1) An employer must provide an employee who is exposed to a significant risk of violence in a workplace with information on the nature and extent of the risk and on any factors that may increase or decrease the extent of the risk.
- (2) Except as prohibited by law the duty to provide information to an employee under subsection (1) includes a duty to provide information related to a risk of violence from a person who has a history of violent behavior if that person is likely to be encountered by the employee.

**Training and supervision for employees**

- 11 (1) In accordance with the procedure in an employer's workplace violence prevention plan, an employer must provide adequate training on all of the following for any employee who is exposed to a significant risk of violence:
- (a) the rights and responsibilities of employees under the Act;
  - (b) the workplace violence prevention statement;
  - (c) the measures taken by the employer to minimize or eliminate the risk of violence;
  - (d) how to recognize a situation in which there is a potential for violence and how to respond appropriately;
  - (e) how to respond to an incident of violence, including how to obtain assistance;
  - (f) how to report, document and investigate incidents of violence.
- (2) An employer must provide any employee who is required by the employer to perform a function under the workplace violence prevention plan with training on the plan generally and on the particular function to be

- to the employee being trained
- recognizing potentially violent situations and how to respond to them
  - responding to an incident of violence including how to get help
  - reporting , documenting and investigating incidents of violence.

performed by the employee.

In addition, any employee who must perform any task under the workplace violence prevention plan has to be trained generally on the plan and specifically on their task.

## **Who reports incidents of violence? (Section 12)**

Everyone in the workplace must report a workplace violence incident to the employer.

## **What do I need to do if a violent incident occurs? (Section 13)**

If there is a workplace violence incident, the employer must ensure that it is recorded and promptly investigated. The investigation should determine the causes and allow you to take action to prevent it from happening again.

The employer has to tell the health and safety committee or health and safety representative (if they exist at your workplace) and any employee affected by the violent incident of actions taken to prevent similar incidents in the future.

## **What do I do about employees who have been exposed to or affected by violence? (Section 14)**

The employer must provide an appropriate debriefing and advise the employee to consult a health professional of the employee's choice for treatment or counseling.

## **Do I pay for the employee treatment or counselling? (Section 14)**

There is no requirement for the employer to pay for the health professional or to grant paid time off work to consult a health professional. However, the employer must grant reasonable time away from work for an employee to consult a health professional.

## **Duty to report incidents of violence**

- 12 An employer, contractor, constructor, supplier, employee, owner or self-employed person in the workplace has a duty to report all incidents of violence in a workplace to the employer.

## **Documentation, investigation and actions to prevent reoccurrence**

- 13 (1) An employer must ensure that incidents of violence in a workplace are documented and promptly investigated to determine their causes and the actions needed to prevent reoccurrence in accordance with the procedures established under clause 7(2)(d).
- (2) An employer must ensure that notice of the actions taken to prevent reoccurrence of an incident of violence are given to all of the following:
- (a) any employee affected by the incident of violence;
  - (b) any committee established at the workplace;
  - (c) any representative selected at the workplace.

## **Dealing with employees exposed to or affected by violence**

- 14 An employer must provide an employee who has been exposed to or affected by violence at the workplace with an appropriate debriefing and must advise the employee to consult a health professional of the employee's choice for treatment or counseling.

### **What if I have employees in several temporary workplaces? (Section 15)**

Where an employer has employees working at several temporary workplaces, a separate violence risk assessment and workplace violence prevention plan is not required for every temporary workplace. However, the employer will need to do a violence risk assessment and, if there is a significant risk, prepare a workplace violence prevention plan that covers all similar workplaces.

### **What about projects or workplaces where there is more than one employer? (Section 16)**

The regulations allow for 2 or more employers to enter into a written agreement to collectively provide and maintain the required statements, plans and services required by the regulations.

A copy of any agreement has to be kept by each of the employers and a copy has to be given to any of the following persons at the workplace who request a copy: an employee, contractor constructor, supplier, owner, self-employed person, or an officer.

### **Employers with multiple temporary workplaces**

- 15 Despite anything in these regulations, an employer who has employees performing work at multiple temporary workplaces is not required to conduct a violence risk assessment or prepare a workplace violence prevention plan for each individual workplace if the employer conducts a violence risk assessment and prepares a workplace violence prevention plan that covers similar workplaces collectively and takes into account the circumstances and interactions that an employee is likely to encounter in the performance of their work.

### **Ability to meet duties collectively**

- 16 (1) Despite anything in these regulations, 2 or more employers may enter into a written agreement to collectively provide and maintain the statements, plans and services required under these regulations.
- (2) A copy of any agreement made under subsection (1) must be kept by each of the employers and must be provided to any of the following, engaged at the workplace of 1 of the employers, who request a copy:
- (i) an employee,
  - (ii) a contractor,
  - (iii) a constructor,
  - (iv) a supplier,
  - (v) an owner or self-employed person,
  - (vi) an officer.

## **Appendix A**

### **Sample Violence Risk Assessment**

This Violence Risk Assessment can be used to comply with section 5 of the Nova Scotia Violence in the Workplace Regulations. While all workplaces covered by the Regulations must perform Violence Risk Assessments, this specific form is NOT mandatory. Employers are free to design their own forms if they so wish.

#### **How to use the assessment form:**

The employer must first decide who will do the assessment. Remember, it must be done in consultation with the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee or Health and Safety Representative, if they exist in the workplace. The assessor(s), who act on behalf of the employer, should know the principles of the violence risk assessment process.

1. Enter the name of your organization, assessment date and name of the assessor(s).
2. Enter the locations or tasks covered by this assessment.
  - a. The locations can be individual addresses, certain floors within buildings or just areas where similar tasks are done and the risk from violence is similar.
  - b. For smaller organizations, there may only be one location, and thus only one assessment.
  - c. Larger organizations may wish to divide their operations into locations or tasks that have similar predictors of violence. For example, a large retail store may divide its staff into those who are customer service staff and those who perform administrative support functions and have little or no contact with customers. In this way, the employer can focus its violence prevention efforts on those areas where it is most needed.
3. Check the boxes on the attached form as accurately as possible, being sure to put a mark opposite each question. The assessor must individually describe the nature and extent of the risk of violence for each “Yes or Unknown” answer, as well as who may be exposed to the risk.
4. The assessor in consultation with the Committee or Representative must review each individual risk described and decide if the risk is significant.
5. The employer, in consultation with the committee or representative, must address each significant risk in their Workplace Violence Prevention Plan.

#### **Follow-Up Points:**

Copies of any Violence Risk Assessments must be made available to all committees and representatives and to any employee. In highly computerized offices, posting to the Internet or Intranet may be adequate.

A Violence Risk Assessment must be redone:

- if a new or different type of violence occurs in similar workplaces;
- if there is a significant change in either the work, the way staff interacts with the public or the physical location or layout of the workplace;
- if a new facility is erected or an existing facility renovated;
- if ordered to do so by an Occupational Health and Safety Officer;
- at least every five years.

## Violence Risk Assessment

### Part One: Basic Information

Name of Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Assessment Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Assessors: \_\_\_\_\_

Location or Tasks Covered by this Assessment:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

This Violence Risk Assessment was discussed with the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee/Health and Safety Representative on \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Note that this section can be left blank or deleted if your workplace has neither a committee or a representative).

### Part Two: Predictors of Violence

Yes or Unknown	No	Question
		When you are open to the public, are there times when only one employee is present?
		Do your employees handle cash or other valuables?
		Do your employees provide a service where they may deal with troubled persons?
		Do your employees care for others? (i.e. health care or community workers).
		Are your employees involved in disciplining others? (i.e. teachers).
		Do your employees deliver or collect items of value?

		Do your employees exercise control over others ? (i.e. enforcement officers).
		Do your employees inspect other people's private property? (i.e. planning inspectors, assessment officers).
		Do your employees exercise security functions ? (i.e. sheriffs).
		Do your employees sell or dispense drugs or alcohol?
		Do your employees work in community-based settings ?(e.g. nurses, social workers and other home visitors).
		Do your employees work during periods of intense organizational change (i.e. conciliators during strikes or lock-outs).
		Do your employees deal with or handle firearms or similar weapons?
		Has this workplace or task experienced violence in the past?
		Have similar workplaces or tasks in other organizations experienced violence?

Beyond the factors listed in the table, the assessor should consider the following:

- late hours of the night or early hours of the morning
- tax return season
- overdue utility bill cut-off dates
- Christmas
- pay days
- report cards or parent interviews
- performance appraisals
- being located near to buildings or businesses that are at risk of violent crime (e.g. bars and banks)
- being located in areas isolated from other buildings or structures.

**Part Three: Nature and Extent of the Potential for Violence**

Each "Yes or Unknown" answer in Part Two should be reviewed to determine specific potential areas of violence risk which need action. Each of these violence risks should be described separately, with the following information:

Violence Risk #

- i) What activity or feature of the workplace or task may trigger violence? (i.e. presence of money, interaction with customers)
- ii) Describe how frequently the activities occur (i.e. if describing "presence of money", the frequency may be "Daily"; if describing "interaction with customers", the frequency may be "500 customers served per year")
- iii) Describe the size of the activity that creates the violence risk (i.e. the amount of cash handled is \$20 000 per day; on average, 10 customers become upset each day)
- iv) State who is at risk from this violence, preferably using job titles as opposed to personal names

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Predicted type of violence (i.e. assault, robbery, threats, etc.)

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Is there any other information or factor that should be described and considered? (i.e. highlight "peaks" such as "During Christmas, our cash registers may hold twice as much money as normal" or highlight product return policies that are known to frustrate customers)

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## Appendix B

### Determining the Significance of the Risks

There are ways for coming up with a value for risk. Most risk assessment tools involve determining the chances of an event happening and the consequences or impact of the event happening. Risk assessment involves ranking the probability, or chance, of an event happening with the amount of impact of the event. This means you would be developing a matrix or box of risk. At its simplest the ranking can range from High/High - the chance of something happening is high and the impact or seriousness of the event is high, to Low/Low.

To use this risk assessment tool, take each Violence Risk you described in Appendix A and estimate its significance using the following three steps:

#### **Step One: Estimate the Probability**

In this step, estimate the probability of the Violence Risk occurring.

<b>Category</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Characteristic</b>
<b>A</b>	Frequent	Will likely happen often in next year
<b>B</b>	Likely	Will likely happen in next year
<b>C</b>	Occasional	Will likely happen sometime in next several years
<b>D</b>	Remote	Unlikely but event could be experienced in next several years
<b>E</b>	Highly unlikely	Event will not be experienced

## Step Two: Determine the Impact

In this step, estimate the most serious, **reasonably possible** outcome (as opposed to the “most likely” outcome) for the Violence Risk you are considering.

For example, for a bank robbery, the most likely outcome is Category 1 - No Injury. However, in several cases, bank employees have been killed. Thus, the most serious, **reasonably possible** outcome is Category 4 - Fatality.

Thus, the Impact of a bank robbery should be recorded as Category 4.

Category	Name	Characteristic
4	Catastrophic	Fatality, coma
3	Critical	Severe injury - loss of, or use of limbs, hospitalization
2	Marginal	Minor injury - bruises, cuts
1	Negligible	No injury

## Step Three: Determine the Risk

Having estimated the Probability in Step One and the Impact in Step Two, combine the two answers to determine where on the table below the Violence Risk you are considering falls.

		Impact Categories			
		4 Catastrophic	3 Critical	2 Marginal	1 Negligible
Probability	A Frequent	4A	3A	2A	1A
	B Likely	4B	3B	2B	1B
	C Occasional	4C	3C	2C	1C
	D Remote	4D	3D	2D	1D
	E Highly unlikely	4E	3E	2E	1E

The significance of the risk can be interpreted as follows:

4A, 4B, 4C, 3A, 3B, 2A - Significant and unacceptable risks. Address immediately through a violence prevention plan.

4D, 3C, 3D, 2B, 2C - Significant risks. Include in the violence prevention plan.

4E, 3E, 2D, 2E, 1A, 1B - Not significant for the purposes of requiring a violence prevention plan. Should be addressed through regular health and safety measures.

1C, 1D, 1E - Not significant for the purposes of requiring a violence prevention plan. However, where feasible, you should attempt to eliminate or reduce the risk further.

Note that the above risk categories are solely for example purposes. Organizations may develop other factors and characteristics appropriate to their needs.

## Appendix C

### Example Violence Risk Assessment/Risk Significance Estimation

In this appendix, we will take a fictional business and illustrate how they would create a violence risk assessment and determine the significance of the risks.

Our fictional business is Smith's Drugstore - a small neighbourhood drug store. It has a main cash register at the front and a pharmacy area with its own cash register at the rear. They also have a delivery service but they only deliver groceries on credit. Everyone in the area knows they never deliver drugs and never accept cash for payment.

Smith's Drugstore's Violence Risk Assessment is shown below:

### Violence Risk Assessment

#### Part One: Basic Information

Name of Organization: Smith's Drugstore

Assessment Date: June 9, 2007

Assessors: Gordon Smith and James Jones

Locations or Tasks Covered by this Assessment: Main store plus delivery operation

This Violence Risk Assessment was discussed with the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee/Health and Safety Representative on June 14, 2007

#### Part Two: Predictors of Violence

Yes or Unknown	No	Question
	X	When you are open to the public, are there times when only one employee is present?
X		Do your employees handle cash or other valuables?

X		Do your employees provide a service where they may deal with troubled persons?
	X	Do your employees care for others?
	X	Are your employees involved in disciplining others?
	X	Do your employees deliver or collect items of value?
	X	Do your employees exercise control over others ?
	X	Do your employees inspect other people's private property?
	X	Do your employees exercise security functions ?
X		Do your employees sell or dispense drugs or alcohol?
	X	Do your employees work in community-based settings ?
	X	Do your employees work during periods of intense organizational change
	X	Do your employees deal with or handle firearms or similar weapons?
	X	Has this workplace or task experienced violence in the past?
X		Have similar workplaces or tasks in other organizations experienced violence?

From this table, the following Violence Risks are described:

Violence Risk # 1 - Handling Cash at Front Register

- i) What activity or feature of the workplace or task may trigger violence?
- ii) Describe how frequently the activities occur
- iii) Describe the size of the activity that creates the violence risk
- iv) State who is at risk from this violence, preferably using job titles as opposed to personal names

- i) Handling cash
- ii) Every day
- iii) Cash register has up to \$2000 in it.
- iv) Cashier

Predicted type of violence (i.e. assault, robbery, threats, etc.)  
Robbery

Is there any other information or factor that should be described and considered?  
No

Violence Potential (“Yes” answer) # 2 - Handling Cash at Pharmacy Register

- i) What activity or feature of the workplace or task may trigger violence?
- ii) Describe how frequently the activities occur
- iii) Describe the size of the activity that creates the violence risk
- iv) State who is at risk from this violence, preferably using job titles as opposed to personal names

- i) Handling cash
- ii) Every day
- iii) Cash register has up to \$500 in it.
- iv) Pharmacist, pharmacy assistant.

Predicted type of violence (i.e. assault, robbery, threats, etc.)  
Robbery

Is there any other information or factor that should be described and considered?  
No

Violence Potential (“Yes” answer) # 3 - Dispensing Drugs

- i) What activity or feature of the workplace or task may trigger violence?
- ii) Describe how frequently the activities occur
- iii) Describe the size of the activity that creates the violence risk
- iv) State who is at risk from this violence, preferably using job titles as opposed to personal names

- i) Dispensing drugs
- ii) Drugs are always on hand, including narcotics
- iii) There is a two week supply of most drugs with an average value of \$50 000
- iv) Pharmacist, pharmacy assistant.

Predicted type of violence (i.e. assault, robbery, threats, etc.)

Robbery

Is there any other information or factor that should be described and considered?

The robbery may be solely for profit, but may be staged by an addict needing narcotics. We consider the addict to be less predictable and stable and more dangerous. We do not stock OxyContin and we have prominent signs that indicate that fact.

Violence Potential (“Yes” answer) # 4 - Deliveries

- i) What activity or feature of the workplace or task may trigger violence?
- ii) Describe how frequently the activities occur
- iii) Describe the size of the activity that creates the violence risk
- iv) State who is at risk from this violence, preferably using job titles as opposed to personal names

- i) Delivering goods alone
- ii) Daily
- iii) Average of 25 deliveries a day
- iv) Delivery person

Predicted type of violence (i.e. assault, robbery, threats, etc.)

Robbery

Is there any other information or factor that should be described and considered?

We only deliver groceries on credit. We never deliver drugs nor accept cash.



Having described the nature and extent of the four predicted types of violence, Smith’s Drugstore staff

<b>Violence Potential</b>	<b>Impact (Most serious, reasonably possible outcome)</b>	<b>Probability</b>	<b>Risk</b>
Front cash	4 - Death	C - Occasional	4C - Significant and unacceptable
Pharmacy cash	4 - Death	D - Remote*	4D - Significant
Dispensing drugs	4 - Death	C - Occasional	4C - Significant and unacceptable
Deliveries	2 - Cuts, bruises	E - Highly unlikely	4E - Not significant

\*The workers who completed this assessment concluded that anyone looking to rob them of cash would simply rob the front cash register, which is easier to get to and has more money. They considered that there was only a remote chance that the pharmacy cash register would be robbed.

**Conclusions:**

Based upon this Violence Risk Assessment and the estimates of the significance of the risks, Smith’s Drugstore will create and implement a Workplace Violence Prevention Plan that includes steps to minimize the risks from robberies of either cash register plus robberies for drugs. The first areas they will deal with are robberies from the front cash register and robberies of narcotics, because the assessment rated them as “Significant and unacceptable”.

They decided that the risks from delivery robberies were not significant enough to include in the plan. Any violence risks from deliveries would be dealt with through their regular health and safety program.

**Appendix D**  
**Sample Workplace Violence Prevention Statements**

1. The management of ABC Convenience Stores, Inc. recognizes the potential for violent acts directed against staff. Management also acknowledges the potential for physical and emotional harm as a result of these violent acts. No forms of violence will be tolerated in the workplace. Every effort will be made to identify possible sources of violence and implement procedures to eliminate or minimize the risks they create.
  
2. 123 Company acknowledges that violence in the workplace is an occupational health and safety hazard that can cause physical and emotional harm. We view any acts of violence or threats of violence in the workplace as unacceptable. We are committed to working to prevent workplace violence and to responding appropriately if workplace violence does occur. All members of the company are responsible for creating and maintaining a safe environment.

## Appendix E

### Additional Resources

#### *Governments in Canada:*

##### **Nova Scotia Environment and Labour - Workplace Violence**

<http://www.gov.ns.ca/enla/healthandsafety/violenceintheworkplace.asp>

##### **Workers' Compensation Board of Nova Scotia - Education and Awareness**

<http://www.wcb.ns.ca/new/prevention.php?id=277>

##### **Health Canada - Workplace Violence**

[http://chp-pcs.gc.ca/CHP/index\\_e.jsp/pageid/4005/odp/Top/Health/Public\\_Health\\_and\\_Safety/Violence\\_and\\_Abuse/Workplace\\_Violence](http://chp-pcs.gc.ca/CHP/index_e.jsp/pageid/4005/odp/Top/Health/Public_Health_and_Safety/Violence_and_Abuse/Workplace_Violence)

##### **Ontario Workplace Safety and Insurance Board - More Resources on Preventing Workplace Violence**

<http://www.wsib.on.ca/wsib/wsibsite.nsf/public/ViolencePreventionResources>

##### **Saskatchewan Labour:**

- Violence  
<http://www.labour.gov.sk.ca/safety/fast/VIOLENCE.HTM>
- A Guide to Developing a Violence Policy Statement  
<http://www.labour.gov.sk.ca/safety/violence/guide/index.htm>
- A Sample Policy on Workplace Violence  
<http://www.labour.gov.sk.ca/safety/violence/policy/index.htm>

##### **Worksafe BC:**

- Preventing Violence, Robbery and Theft - A guide for retail owners, managers, and workers  
[http://www2.worksafebc.com/PDFs/Small%20Business/violence\\_draft.pdf](http://www2.worksafebc.com/PDFs/Small%20Business/violence_draft.pdf)
- Injury Prevention Resources for Health Care - Violence  
<http://www2.worksafebc.com/Portals/HealthCare/Violence.asp>
- Take Care: How to develop and implement a workplace violence prevention program  
[http://www.worksafebc.com/publications/health\\_and\\_safety/by\\_topic/assets/pdf/take\\_care.pdf](http://www.worksafebc.com/publications/health_and_safety/by_topic/assets/pdf/take_care.pdf)

##### **RCMP - Creating Safer Communities -Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)**

[http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/ccaps/safecomm\\_e.htm](http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/ccaps/safecomm_e.htm)

##### **Toronto Police Service - Taxi driver safety**

<http://www.torontopolice.on.ca/crimeprevention/taxisafety.php>

## *United States Government :*

**National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) - Occupational Violence**

<http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/injury/traumaviolence.html>

**Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) -Workplace Violence**

<http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/workplaceviolence/>

## *International*

**United Kingdom Health and Safety Executive - Work related violence**

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/violence/index.htm>

## *Non-Government Organizations*

**Nova Scotia Safety Council - Managing Workplace Violence**

[http://w3.youthsafetyportal.ca/images/Outlines/45\\_Managing%20Workplace%20Violence.pdf](http://w3.youthsafetyportal.ca/images/Outlines/45_Managing%20Workplace%20Violence.pdf)

**Canada Safety Council - Bullying in the Workplace**

<http://www.safety-council.org/info/OSH/bullies.html>

**Canadian Association of University Teachers - Violence in the Workplace**

<http://www.caut.ca/en/publications/healthandsafety/Violence.pdf>

**Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety - OHS Answers - Psychosocial**

<http://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/psychosocial/>

**Canadian Initiative on Workplace Violence**

<http://www.workplaceviolence.ca/research/ciwvpapers.html>

**Education Safety Association of Ontario - Workplace Violence Hazard Assessment Form**

[http://www.iapa.ca/pdf/07\\_empl\\_risk\\_assess\\_wv.pdf](http://www.iapa.ca/pdf/07_empl_risk_assess_wv.pdf)

**Industrial Accident Prevention Association (IAPA):**

- Workplace Hazard Inspection Form - Workplace Violence  
<http://www.safety-council.org/info/OSH/bullies.html>
- Employee Risk Assessment Questionnaire - Workplace Violence

[http://www.iapa.ca/pdf/07\\_empl\\_risk\\_assess\\_wv.pdf](http://www.iapa.ca/pdf/07_empl_risk_assess_wv.pdf)

**Retail British Columbia - Your Violence Prevention Program**

<http://www.retailbc.org/portals/0/images/Publications/Retail%20Tips/Safety%20Violence%20Prevention.pdf>

**University of Saskatchewan - Sample Violence Risk Assessment Form**

<http://www.usask.ca/dhse/pdf/Appendix%204%20-%20Violence%20Risk%20Assessment%20Form.pdf>