

# POLICY

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No. D.13

## VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE

*Adopted: 97-04-14  
Amended: 04-03-08  
Amended: 08-05-13  
Reviewed: 12-02-14  
Reviewed: 13-03-12  
Reviewed: 15-02-10  
Reviewed: 15-11-09  
Amended: 17-01-09  
Reviewed: 17-11-13*

### Policy

The Board of Education is committed to providing and maintaining a safe environment for its employees. In doing so, the Board also recognizes its responsibility to provide appropriate services and support to those individuals whose behaviours may threaten injury or cause injury to employees of the District. The objective of this policy is to:

- promote a violence-free workplace for all employees;
- respect and protect the health, safety and dignity of all employees;
- empower employees to make and act on decisions regarding risk of violence;
- ensure employees are aware of and follow safety practices to prevent and respond to violent incidents;
- establish written practices to identify and address risks for each worksite using input from all work site employees, to be included in the District Health and Safety Program Manual;
- offer critical incident debriefing and other support to employees affected by workplace violence; and,
- as a minimum, comply with Occupational Health and Safety regulations and applicable collective agreements.

Any work-related threats or acts of violence against employees, or their families, are unacceptable and will not be tolerated. All employees of Vancouver Island West School District 84 have a responsibility to know the regulations outlined in this policy and to follow those regulations at all times. This includes the responsibility of all employees to identify situations of risk so that appropriate planning for prevention, intervention and follow-up can be put in place, as well as reporting any violent incidents to their Supervisor.

This policy is to be reviewed annually by Supervisors and the District Health and Safety Committee for its effectiveness. If changes need to be made to the procedures to protect employees from the threats or acts of violence, then these changes will be recommended to the Board of Education for approval.

# REGULATION

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### Regulation

**Violence** means the attempted or actual exercise by a person, other than a worker, of any physical force so as to cause injury to a worker, and includes any threatening statement or behaviour which gives a worker reasonable cause to believe that the worker, or the worker's family, is at risk of injury.

1. Vancouver Island West School District 84 will develop procedures for the prevention of violence in the workplace, and ensure that each supervisor is trained in the procedures. Such procedures shall be included in the District Health and Safety Program Manual.
2. Written records will be kept, including:
  - A list of job titles that could be exposed to violence in the workplace;
  - Risk assessments;
  - Minutes of safety meetings where the Violence in the Workplace policy, regulation and procedures were reviewed;
  - Investigation reports of violence in the workplace;
  - Records of training of personnel in the policy, regulation and procedures for Violence in the Workplace.
3. The Supervisor at each worksite will ensure that an annual review occurs, and that all appropriate records are kept for a period of no less than 10 years.
4. Workplace risk assessments must be undertaken and documented where a risk of violence has been identified. Procedures to minimize or eliminate that risk must then be put in place.
5. The supervisor at each worksite will inform employees who may be exposed to the risk of violence of the nature and extent of the risk.
6. Employees who may be exposed to the risk of violence will be instructed in recognizing the potential for violence inherent in the employee's position, violence prevention procedures, correct response procedures including how to obtain assistance, workplace emergency procedures, and incident reporting procedures.
7. Employees are required to report any violent incident or threat they have been subjected to on the job.
8. All reports of violent incidents shall be investigated by the Supervisor, with the assistance of the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee or Safety Representative(s).
9. Employees subject to violence from a co-worker should seek a remedy to this problem through the established procedures outlined in Policy D.10, *Respectful Workplace*.
10. The Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee and Safety Representatives will review the policy, regulation and procedures on an annual basis and recommend any changes to the District Health and Safety Committee.

# REGULATION

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11. Employees will:
  - Provide input into risk assessments;
  - Attend training sessions when requested;
  - Provide input into development of the local worksite's violence prevention procedures, when required;
  - Follow policy and procedures set forth by Vancouver Island West School District 84 for the prevention of violence;
  - Read students' safety plans, as required;
  - Report and document incidents of violence;
  - Provide input into incident investigations; and
  - Consider accessing critical incident debriefing or trauma counseling services when offered by the employer.
12. Supervisors will:
  - Comply with reporting, investigating and documenting procedures;
  - Facilitate ongoing discussions on workplace violence issues with staff, as required;
  - Provide input into risk assessments;
  - Assist in development and updating of the local worksite's prevention procedures;
  - Instruct staff on procedures for prevention of violence;
  - Promote and encourage reporting of violent incidents; and,
  - Advise impacted staff of critical incident debriefing or trauma counselling services available.
13. Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committees and Safety Representative(s) will:
  - Provide input into risk assessments;
  - Provide input into the local worksite's prevention procedures;
  - Provide input into incident investigations; and
  - Provide input into a regular evaluation of the Violence in the Workplace policy, regulations and procedures.
14. Where persons are known who may display violent behaviours, the Principal/Supervisor will include the following in orienting staff:
  - Review of this policy;
  - Philosophy of the District;
  - Identity of the person(s) who may display violent behaviours;
  - Current action plans at worksite file;
  - Emergency procedures in the event of a problem;
  - Reporting procedures;
  - Review this policy with staff at the beginning of each school year.
15. Each school shall carry out an annual review of its *Student Conduct* Policy E.33 and submit any changes, when required, to the Board for approval in an effort to minimize the risk of violence in the workplace.