



Violence

Information for SIAST Students

Introduction

Violence is a problem in many occupations. Saskatchewan's occupational health and safety laws require employers to protect workers. Employers at workplaces with higher risks must have a written violence policy.

You have a right to know about the risks in your workplace, how to protect yourself, and what to do if you are affected.

1. What is violence?

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 he or she is at risk of injury.

2. Who is covered?

Occupational health and safety laws govern workplaces, employers, supervisors, and workers.

3. What workplaces must have a policy?

Employers in these workplaces must have a written violence-prevention policy:

- services provided by most health care facilities
- pharmaceutical-dispensing services
- education services
- police services
- corrections services
- other law enforcement services
- security services
- crisis counselling and intervention services

- retail sales in establishments that are open between the hours of 11:00 P.M. and 6:00 A.M.;
- financial services
- the sale of alcoholic beverages or the provision of premises for the consumption of alcoholic beverages
- taxi services
- transit services

The employer should develop the policy in consultation with the occupational health committee, or the worker health and safety representative. The employer should consult workers directly if the workplace does not require a committee or a representative.

4. What must the violence-prevention policy do?

1. **State the commitment of the employer to eliminate or minimize the risk.**
2. **Identify the risks** – The employer must identify worksites where violent incidents have occurred or may occur, and jobs with the greatest risk. The policy should address the concerns of workers working alone, and workplace situations involving the public, clients, and customers.
3. **Inform workers** – The employer must inform workers about the nature and extent of risk from violence, including, except where the disclosure is prohibited by law, any information in the employer's possession related to the risk of violence from persons who have a history of violent behaviour and whom workers are likely to encounter in the course of their work.

-over

To contact the Occupational Health and Safety Division:

Visit our website: www.labour.gov.sk.ca

Regina call: 1-800-567-7233 (toll-free). **Saskatoon** call: 1-800-667-5023 (toll-free)

4. **Describe how risks will be minimized** – The policy must set out what the employer will do to minimize or eliminate the risk, including the use of personal protective equipment, administrative arrangements, and engineering controls. Measures can be integrated into regular work procedures.
5. **Describe procedures for reporting and investigating incidents** – The policy should describe how workers should report violent incidents to the employer.
6. **Advise workers to consult a doctor** – The policy should describe how each worker affected by violence is to be advised about his or her right to consult a doctor for treatment or referral for post-incident counselling. Time spent in post-incident counselling counts as time at work.
7. **Train workers** – The policy statement must clearly demonstrate the employer’s commitment to train employees to follow the policy and protect themselves. Training time is paid work time.

5. What else should the violence-prevention policy do?

The policy should cover how the employer plans to:

- report, investigate, and document incidents;
- make sure that claims are properly filed with the Saskatchewan Workers’ Compensation Board;
- deal with cases of *post-incident traumatic stress*; and
- prevent recurrences.

How can I learn more?

You can learn more by reading the Occupational Health and Safety Division’s publication *A Guide to Developing a Violence Policy Statement*. It is available through Saskatchewan Labour’s website or from the office in Regina.