

## BOARD ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE  
**Workplace Violence  
Prevention**

ADMINISTRATIVE  
PROCEDURE NUMBER  
**AP - 509**

Directional Policy  
**Employee Relations - 500**

### TITLE OF ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE:

Workplace Violence Prevention

### DATE APPROVED:

April, 2023

### PROJECTED REVIEW DATE:

April, 2024

### DIRECTIONAL POLICY ALIGNMENT:

This Administrative Procedure aligns with the Employee Relations Directional Policy by identifying the expectations and requirements that employees will follow in relation to matters of workplace violence. The PVNC Catholic District School Board will ensure that all employees engage with students appropriately and perform training to support this requirement.

### ALIGNMENT WITH MULTI-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN:

One of the pillars of the PVNC Catholic District School Board's 2021-2025 Strategic Plan is *Being Well*. This Administrative Procedure aligns with this pillar in its intention to build supportive, inclusive and effective learning and working environments through supportive relationships among all members of the learning community in order to ensure physical and emotional safety of self and spirit.

The Board is committed to the prevention of workplace violence and is ultimately responsible for worker health and safety. The Board will take whatever steps are reasonable to protect workers from workplace violence.

The Occupational Health & Safety Act defines workplace violence as the exercise of physical force by a person against a worker, in a workplace, that causes or could cause physical injury to the worker; an attempt to exercise physical force against a worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker; and/or a statement or behaviour that it is reasonable for a worker to interpret as a threat to exercise physical force against the worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker

[PVNCCDSB Board Vision, Mission and Strategic Priorities](#)

## **ACTION REQUIRED:**

### **1. What to do if you Experience Workplace Violence**

Summon Immediate Assistance - If an employee is involved in a violent incident the immediate steps they should take to reduce risk of injury are:

- a. Where possible, remove oneself and others under your care (i.e. students) from the situation;
- b. Summon assistance from a supervisor, principal or designate, or a nearby staff member;
- c. If needed, call 911 or request that a colleague call 911 when faced with imminent danger; and
- d. Report the incident to the supervisor, principal or designate at the earliest possible opportunity.

Refer to *Section 3 Reporting and Investigating Incidents of Workplace Violence* for further detail.

### **2. Domestic Violence Awareness and Response**

- a. Employees are encouraged to inform their Principal/Supervisor if they are experiencing domestic violence outside of the workplace or become aware of domestic violence that may create a risk to themselves or others in the workplace (whether the notifying employee is the victim or not).

- b. When a Principal/Supervisor is informed of an employee experiencing domestic violence, the Principal/Supervisor will gauge the nature and extent of the threat and take actions (as deemed appropriate) to protect employees and students, under the advice of their Superintendent and Human Resource Services, regardless of whether the threat of domestic violence is from a co-worker or from someone outside of the workplace. Actions may include, but are not limited to:
  - i. A [Notification of Potential Risk form \(HR32\)](#) to appropriate employees
  - ii. Informing Police
  - iii. Requesting restraining orders / trespass orders
  - iv. Provision/ development of an employee safety plan
- c. When possible, Principals/Supervisors are to make available to all employees information about supports available for victims of domestic violence (i.e. Employee and Family Assistance Plan, community counseling, support groups, shelters, and the Police). When possible, Principals/Supervisors will remind potential victims of domestic violence in the workplace of these resources. See Appendix B for a list of resources.
- d. In all circumstances, a Principal/Supervisor must tell the victim that if they feel at risk of physical harm, whether inside or outside the workplace or at home, the employee should contact the Police.
- e. Additionally, the Principal/Supervisor shall ensure that the workplace violence program is reviewed with the employee when the Principal/Supervisor becomes aware of the risk of domestic violence.

### 3. Reporting and Investigating Incidents of Workplace Violence

- a. By an Employee against another Employee of the Board:
  - i. All incidents of workplace violence by an employee against another employee must be immediately reported to the employee's Principal/Supervisor.
  - ii. The Principal/Supervisor will determine if immediate action is necessary and shall consult with their Superintendent or the Superintendent of Human Resource Services. This may include removing the employee from the presence of the alleged aggressor if it is safe to do so.
  - iii. The employee reporting the matter will be required to complete an [HR5 - Accident/Incident form](#).

- iv. Upon receipt of the HR5, the Principal/Supervisor will investigate the allegations in consultation with Human Resource Services. Such investigation may include interviewing and/or obtaining statements from individuals with knowledge of the events in question and reviewing any other relevant supporting materials. The employee being accused of workplace violence will be made aware of, and provided the opportunity to respond to, the allegations against them during the course of the investigation.
  - v. If the employee has concerns with respect to their Principal/Supervisor subjecting them to workplace violence, the employee will contact the Superintendent of Human Resource Services to report the incident. In the event that the employee has concerns with respect to their Principal/Supervisor, alternative arrangements with respect to the investigation process outlined above will be undertaken.
- b. By a Student against an Employee of the Board:
- i. All incidents of workplace violence by a student against an employee must be immediately reported to the employee's Principal/Supervisor.
  - ii. The employee will be required to complete an [HR5 - Accident/Incident form](#) to report the matter. The employee may also be required to complete a Safe Schools Form 20.
  - iii. The Principal/Supervisor will investigate the specifics of the reported incident and respond to the HR5 with any steps taken to prevent a recurrence. This may include the creation/amendment of a student safety plan, use of personal protective equipment, creation/communication of a [Notification of Potential Risk form \(HR32\)](#), debriefing with the employee, or other action as deemed necessary by the Principal/Supervisor or other appropriate action outlined in Board [AP 912 Supporting Positive Student Behaviour - Safety for All](#).
  - iv. It is recognized that enhanced measures may be required for students identified with special needs presenting symptomatic behaviours where there is a risk of injury for employees. When a violent incident occurs, the staff may be involved with reviewing and altering the Safety Plan as per Board [AP 912 Supporting Positive Student Behaviour - Safety for All](#).
- c. By a Third Party (e.g. parent, visitor, contractor, etc.) against an Employee of the Board:
- i. All incidents of workplace violence by a third party against an employee must be immediately reported to the employee's Principal/Supervisor.

- ii. The Principal/Supervisor will determine if immediate action is necessary and shall consult with their Superintendent or the Superintendent of Human Resource Services.
- iii. The employee will be required to complete an [HR5 - Accident/Incident form](#) to report the matter.
- iv. When a threat of workplace violence exists, the Principal/Supervisor or designate will convene a meeting with appropriate stakeholders to ensure the safety of an employee from workplace violence. Actions to mitigate the risks posed to the employee could include the creation of a [Notification of Potential Risk form \(HR32\)](#), contacting police, limiting access to the workplace, establishing a work alone plan, etc.

#### 4. Notification of Potential Risk from a person with a History of Violent Behaviour

The Principal/Supervisor will ensure that employees have been provided with sufficient information, which may include personal information related to a risk of workplace violence, if:

- a. The worker can be expected to encounter that person in the course of their work; and
- b. The risk of workplace violence is likely to expose the worker to physical injury

The Principal/Supervisor will use [Notification of Potential Risk form \(HR32\)](#), attached as Appendix A, to ensure appropriate disclosure to affected employee(s) of persons with a history of violence posing a potential threat to employee safety.

A record of [Notification of Potential Risk form \(HR32\)](#) is to be completed and stored in a confidential manner in the Principal/Supervisor's office. Each employee meeting the criteria set out in the paragraph above must review the form annually and sign off that they are aware of the information identified on the form. This includes occasional and supply staff as well as support services staff who may be expected to encounter the person while on school premises. It will be the Principal/Supervisor's responsibility to ensure this disclosure is made to each affected employee.

#### 5. Workplace Violence Risk Assessments

- a. Risk Assessments:  
The Board will ensure each work location completes a risk assessment

respecting the potential for violent incidents at that work location and during work activities within the Board's jurisdiction during employment-related events and activities.

During this process, an assessment will be made of the risks of workplace violence that may arise from:

- the nature of the workplace
- the type of work
- the conditions of work

The assessment will consider circumstances common to other school boards and circumstances specific to the PVNC Catholic District School Board.

The results of risk assessments and risk re-assessments will be shared with the members of the PVNCCDSB's Multi Site Joint Health and Safety Committee.

b. Risk Re-assessments:

A reassessment of the risks of workplace violence will be undertaken as often as is necessary to ensure that the workplace violence policy and program continues to protect workers from workplace violence. Changes or events within the Board that may warrant a reassessment may include: an increase in the number, frequency or severity of workplace violence incidents for that specific workplace; a change in the physical environment of the workplace; a change in the student population of a school or a change in curriculum or scheduling, to determine if such change could impact the potential for workplace violence.

Risk reassessments will be completed a minimum of once every three (3) years. Consideration should be given to a risk reassessment being completed when a new Principal/Supervisor is appointed to the school/department.

Completed risk assessments will identify workplace violence risks as well as measures and procedures taken to control the identified risks within the workplace.

The results of risk assessments and risk re-assessments will be shared with the members of the PVNCCDSB's Multi Site Joint Health and Safety Committee.

c. Controlling the Risk of Workplace Violence -

Measures and procedures to control the risks of workplace violence could include (but are not limited to):

- Identifying a means to summon immediate assistance if required. Measures and procedures to summon immediate assistance should be appropriate given the specific circumstances.
- Video Surveillance in accordance with Administrative Procedure AP 1208
- Violence Threat Risk Assessment Process (Police School Board Protocol)
- Maintaining community policing relationships
- Work Alone Procedures
- HR 32 Notification of Potential Risk of Injury from a Person with a History of Violence
- Workplace Violence Risk Assessments and Reassessments
- Adherence to Safe and Accepting Schools Administrative Procedures and other applicable school board policies, regulations or programs
- Employee training in Workplace Violence Prevention (including domestic violence)
- Establishing and maintaining controlled access to school buildings
- Provision of communication systems such as phones, walkie-talkies and public address systems
- Regular maintenance and repairs of facilities
- Consideration to barriers and other measures

## 6. Work Refusals

The *Occupational Health and Safety Act* (the “OHSA”) allows workers the right to refuse work where the worker has reason to believe that workplace violence is likely to endanger himself or herself. Should a situation of work refusal arise, the requirements of the OHSA (process outlined in the [PVNCCDSB Work Refusal Process](#)) will apply.

Please note- Regulation 857- Teachers, made under the *OHSA* states that Part V of the *OHSA* (Work Refusals) does not apply to teachers, as defined in the *Education Act*, where the circumstances are such that the life, health or safety of a student is in imminent jeopardy.

## 7. Support for Employees

The Board recognizes the trauma that may come from a violent incident in the workplace. The Board is committed to the health and well being of our employees. Principals and Supervisors will ensure debriefs happen as soon as possible and employees are provided information so they can access necessary support. See [Appendix B](#) for a list of resources available.

**RESPONSIBILITIES:****The Board of Trustees is responsible for:**

- Ensuring this Administrative Procedure aligns with the Employee Relations Directional Policy.
- Reviewing the Workplace Violence Prevention Administrative Procedure as part of its regular policy and procedures review cycle.

**The Director of Education is responsible for:**

- Designating resources for ensuring the implementation of and compliance with this Administrative Procedure.
- Ensuring annual review of this Administrative Procedure to ensure compliance with the provisions of the Occupational Health and Safety Act

**Superintendent of Human Resource Services is responsible for:**

- Consulting with Principals/Supervisor when evaluating workplace violence incidents.
- Ensuring the Joint Health & Safety Committee is informed if a person is killed, critically injured, disabled from performing their usual work, or requires medical attention due to workplace violence.
- Ensuring the Joint Health and Safety Committee is advised of the results on any workplace violence assessment/ reassessment and provided a copy if it is in writing

**Superintendents are responsible for:**

- Ensuring that the relevant employees under their direction have been provided with sufficient information, which may include personal information related to a risk of workplace violence, if:
  - the employee can be expected to encounter that person in the course of his or her work; and
  - the risk of workplace violence is likely to expose the employee to physical injury. This is accomplished by ensuring [HR Form 32 Notification of Potential Risk](#) (Appendix A) is completed and disclosed to affected employees.

**Principals, Vice-Principals, Managers and Supervisors are responsible for:**

- Identifying and providing the means by which employees may summon immediate assistance.
- Determining if immediate action is necessary to address a workplace violence report through consultation with their Superintendent or Human Resource Services. This may include removing the employee from the presence of the alleged aggressor if it is safe to do so.
- Liaising with the Superintendent of Human Resource Services with respect to workplace violent incident reports.
- Posting this Administrative Procedure at a conspicuous place in the workplace.
- Addressing and attempting to resolve disputes in a timely fashion.
- Maintaining confidentiality in the investigation process.
- Imposing discipline as appropriate and consistent with the circumstances.

- Ensuring that the relevant employees under their direction have been provided with sufficient information, which may include personal information related to a risk of workplace violence, if:
  - the employee can be expected to encounter that person in the course of his or her work; and
  - the risk of workplace violence is likely to expose the employee to physical injury.

This is accomplished by ensuring [HR Form 32 Notification of Potential Risk](#) (Appendix A) is completed and disclosed to affected employees.

- Reviewing [HR Form 32 Notification of Potential Risk](#) (Appendix A) annually with affected employees.
- Reassessing the risk of workplace violence as required by this Administrative Procedure

**Joint Health and Safety Committee is responsible for:**

- Reviewing this Administrative Procedure on an annual basis.
- Receiving and reviewing the results of an assessment of workplace violence risks or the results of a reassessment.

**All Board employees are responsible for:**

- Ensuring they advise their Principal/Supervisor if they are victims of workplace violence.
- Completing assigned training on Workplace Violence Prevention (including domestic violence)
- Adhering to the Employee Relations directional policy and conducting themselves and performing their duties with integrity and professionalism by refraining from any act of workplace violence
- Completing a Safe Schools Form 20 where applicable.

**PROGRESS INDICATORS:**

- Workplace violence reports will be addressed and resolved in a timely fashion.
- Employees will complete assigned training in workplace violence prevention.
- Workplace violence risk assessments and reassessments will be completed at required frequencies and shared with the Joint Health and Safety Committee
- Employees will have a means to summon immediate assistance for workplace violence incidents

**DEFINITIONS:**

**Workplace** - any place where employees perform work or work-related duties or functions. Schools and school-related activities, such as extra-curricular activities and excursions, comprise the workplace, as do Board offices and facilities. Conferences and training sessions fall within the ambit of this Administrative Procedure.

**Workplace Violence** - is the exercise of physical force by a person against a worker, in a workplace, that causes or could cause physical injury to the worker; an attempt to exercise physical force against a worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker; and/or a statement or behaviour that it is reasonable for a worker to interpret as a threat to exercise physical force against the worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker.

**Nature of the Workplace** - The nature of the workplace refers to the physical aspects of the workplace and may include but is not limited to schools, school yards, school board offices, field trip locations, non-traditional classrooms, and third-party spaces, and any other place that a worker performs work for the school board.

**Type of Work** - The type of work refers to the activities workers perform and the type of people with whom workers interact such as students, co-workers, agencies, parents, volunteers, and other members of the community, either individually or in groups. Activities could include, but are not limited to, classroom teaching, assisting students outside the classroom, non-academic work, recess, lunch support and field trips. These are a few examples of the different settings where work is performed and school boards must assess all types of work for the risk of workplace violence.

**Conditions of the Work** - The conditions of work refer to other aspects such as the time of work, whether workers move from location to location, work alone, or work in isolated or remote workplaces.

## RELATED DOCUMENTS:

[Appendix A - HR Form #32 – Notification of Potential Risk of Injury](#)  
[Appendix B- List of Resources for Victims of Workplace/ Domestic Violence](#)  
PVNCCDSB Work Refusal Process  
[AP 912 Supporting Positive Student Behaviour - Safety for All.](#)

## REFERENCES:

[Ontario Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990, c.H.19](#)  
[Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act, R.S.O. 1990, c.O.1](#)  
[Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.O. 1990, c.M.56](#)  
[PVNCCDSB Joint Protocol for Enhancing Positive Relationships in the Workplace](#)  
[Workplace Violence in School Boards, A Guide to the Law](#)