

	<h1>Policy</h1>	Policy # POL625
Title Workplace Violence and Harassment Policy		
Section Human Resources	Approved Date April 16, 2013	Revised

Associated Documents: NA

TO BE POSTED AND AVAILABLE TO ALL EMPLOYEES

Policy and Purpose

Student Transportation of Eastern Ontario (the agency) believes that all employees, including temporary and contract workers, must be allowed to work in an environment that is free from violence, discrimination and harassment. STEO strongly supports the guidelines contained in the Ontario Human Rights Code concerning such behaviour.

The purpose of the policy is to establish procedures to minimize and/or prevent violence, harassment and unacceptable behaviour in the workplace and to foster the safety and security of employees, clients and visitors to our work site.

STEO and its employees are responsible for the promotion of a safe workplace and an understanding of the obligations set forth in Ontario's Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA). All employees are required to demonstrate exemplary conduct and personal integrity in the workplace.

The agency does not tolerate violence, harassment or unacceptable behaviour in the workplace perpetrated by or against employees, clients, or other third parties. In the event of a violent incident or unacceptable behaviour perpetrated by an employee, the agency will act to discipline the employee, up to and including discharge for cause.

This policy is not restricted to the office or immediate work area. Conferences, work sites, business travel and office gatherings are all considered part of the workplace.

Definition of Workplace Violence

The exercise of physical force by a person against a worker, in the 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; or **a statement or behaviour that is reasonable for a worker to interpret as a threat to exercise physical force against the worker, in a workplace, or that could cause physical injury to the worker.**

For the purposes of Ontario's OHSA and this policy, the threat of physical violence is the same as actual physical violence.

Domestic Violence

If the employer is aware, or ought reasonably to be aware, that domestic violence may expose a worker to physical injury in the workplace, the employer will take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances to protect employees.

Definition of Discrimination

For purposes of this policy, discrimination means abusive, unfair, or demeaning treatment of a person or group of persons on the basis of, for example, race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, political belief, religion, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation or age.

Definition of Harassment

Harassment refers to personal, racial or sexual harassment.

Harassment is engaging in vexatious comment or conduct. It may include unwelcome, unwanted, offensive or objectionable conduct, bullying, that could be intimidating, hostile or offensive; adversely affecting an individual's work performance; adversely affecting an individual employment relationship; and/or denying an individual dignity and respect.

Sexual harassment is any sexually related act, practice, innuendo or comment (whether written or oral) that injures, humiliates, insults or intimidates a person; that constitutes invasion of person privacy; that undermines job performances and /or threatens the economic livelihood or status of a person. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing definition, sexual harassment may include:

- a. Persistent objectionable looks at a person's body.
- b. Crude and unwanted remarks about a person's clothing, body or social activities.
- c. Unnecessary and unwanted physical contact.
- d. Subtle or explicit seeking of sexual activity, which may or may not have an implied or overt effect on a person's job or status.
- e. Physical assault.

STEO further recognizes that sexual harassment infringes on the human rights of individuals and exemplifies an unacceptable caliber of overall management and that it constitutes a disciplinary infraction which will be dealt with accordingly, including dismissal.

Communication

As per Bill 168 amendments to Ontario's OHSA, the employer or supervisor will provide information to a worker about a risk of workplace violence from a person with a history of violent behaviour if the worker can expect to encounter that person in the course of work, and if the worker may be at risk of physical injury. Personal information related to a person's history of violence may be disclosed, but only what is reasonably necessary to protect the worker from physical injury.

Work Refusals

Workers have the right to refuse work without reprisal from the employer, if they have a reason to believe they are in danger from workplace violence.

Process and Procedures for Investigating and Resolving Complaints

A process for investigating and resolving complaints associated with workplace violence will be developed and shared with all employees. For CUPE employees, reference the Collective Agreement Local 5678-1, Article 5 Human Rights.

Training and Education

All employees will be educated and trained on the contents of this policy. These training sessions will be conducted annually and will include; the means to recognize potentially violent situations; procedures that have been developed to minimize risks to workers; appropriate responses of workers to incidents of violence; and procedures for reporting violent incidents.

Violence Prevention Program

The Workplace Violence and Harassment Policy will be reviewed as often as necessary and no less than once every year, with input collected from staff around the development of programs to assess, identify and control risks of workplace violence and harassment.

The employer will develop measures and procedures to:

- Control risks identified in the risk assessment;
- Summon immediate assistance when workplace violence occurs or is likely to occur;
- Allow workers to report incidents or threats of workplace violence to the employer;
- Investigate and address incidents or complaints of workplace violence.