Appendix A - Workplace Violence Risk Assessment

PURPOSE:

This Workplace Violence Risk Assessment is designed to assist the University in assessing the hazard of Workplace Violence and identifying possible measures, procedures and controls that can be implemented to control the risk of Violence in the Workplace.

"Workplace Violence" is defined as (*Occupational Health and Safety Act, sec.1 (1)):*

- *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,*
- *a statement or behavior 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.*

INSTRUCTION:

The Manager shall:

- Hold meetings with Workers to seek their input. This will assist to:
- identify risks that Workers perceive and their sense of personal safety in Workplace
- consider Workers' experience of Violence and whether the situation involved strangers, clients, co-Workers, students, estranged partners or family members
- identify jobs or locations in which Workplace Violence is a concern; and
- gather opinions about the effectiveness of the controls currently in place.

The Department Head shall:

- Determine if there will be one set of assessments filled out for the entire department/faculty, or whether there will be separate assessments for different jobs, tasks, or locations with similar risks of Violence. For a large Workplace, the department head may wish to divide the department/faculty into Workplaces or tasks that have similar risks of Violence. For example, a fee collection office may divide its staff into those that deal with customers personally and those who work in the office with no customer contact.
- Complete or arrange to have Managers complete the Risk Assessment (attached to this document).
- Send the original Risk Assessment to the Manager Risk and Insurance, Room 603 Robertson Hall by the specified date.
- Keep a copy of the Risk Assessment in the department/faculty for future reference.

The Manager Risk and Insurance shall:

- Prepare an Assessment Report that identifies areas of risk of Workplace Violence with recommendations for necessary risk control measures.
- Send the Assessment Report to the Working Group on Workplace Harassment and Violence, as well as the Joint Occupation Health and Safety Committee.
- Send the necessary risk control measures to the Department Head for implementation.

Reference:
1. Occupational Health and Safety Council of Ontario-Workplace Violence Assessments January 2010.
2. Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety. Violence in the Workplace Prevention Guide. 3rd Edition.
3. Occupational Health and Safety Act (as amended under Bill 168).

Carleton UNIVERSITY
Canada's Capital University

Risk Assessment Worksheet

Faculty/Department	Completed By: Name/Title	Date
		Phone

Part I - General Assessment

1. Physical Environment

Do you or your workers have any concerns about risk of workplace violence pertaining to the physical environment? (i.e. lighting, entry control and security system, public counters, interior design and hidden areas, workplace location (neighbourhood).

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, please indicate areas of concern:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Examples of Controls (e.g., installed access card entry, increased lighting, rearranged work station, placed service request to install locks on doors etc.) taken:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Part II - Assessment of Current Safety Programs

After consulting with workers in the area, complete the following questionnaire on safety programs now in place on campus.

Program	Are workers in your area aware of this program?		Have workers in your area used this program?		If employees have used the program how often have they use it?		Other Comments
Safewalk **- provides a safewalk escort to your vehicle, bus stop or residence on request**	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**	**Frequently** **(once a week)**		
					Often **(once a month)**		
					Seldom **(once every 3 months)**		
Working After Hours Program **– University Safety will check in on you by phone or in person at pre-arranged intervals**	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**	**Frequently** **(once a week)**		
					Often **(once a month)**		
					Seldom **(once every 3 months)**		
RAD **– free self defense program for women – teaches risk awareness, hand-on instruction of physical defense training**	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**	**Frequently** **(once a week)**		
					Often **(once a month)**		
					Seldom **(once every 3 months)**		
Panic Pendant Personal Alarm **-pendant worn around the neck and works with intrusion alarm system. Activation of alarm sends signal to University Safety**	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**	**Frequently** **(once a week)**		
					Often **(once a month)**		
					Seldom **(once every 3 months)**		
Personal Safety and Crime Prevention Brochures **– topics include harassment, personal safety, theft reduction**	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**			
Safety Audit **– University Safety personnel can conduct a safety audit of your work area on request**	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**			
Safety Presentations **– University Safety will attend your staff meeting on request and provide presentations on a variety of personal safety topics**	**Yes**	**No**	**Yes**	**No**			

Part III - Identification and Assessment of Specific Risks Factors

Certain types of work or conditions can put workers at higher risk from workplace violence. Review the list of specific risks associated with the type of work or conditions of work included in the table below. **If the risk exists, rate the risk using the guideline on the next page.** Ranking or prioritizing the risk factors is one way to help determine which are the most serious safety hazards and therefore need to be addressed first (i.e. by implementing controls) and the level of training required.

- Managers may complete a separate sheet for each group of workers with similar tasks. (i.e. Administrative Assistants, Advisors, etc.)

Faculty/Department:				
Job/position (e.g., office administrative staff, advisors etc.):				
Does Work Include:	**Examples of Activities or Situations**	**Risk Exists?**		**Level of Risk** **H = High** **M = Moderate** **L = Low**
		Yes	**No**	(see "Risk Method" on next page)
• **Direct contact with the public including students, workers or customers with likelihood of dealing with irate persons**	• Working at complaint centre, appeals office • Involved in mediation • Carrying out legislative or policy enforcement duties • Service counter staff			
• **Handling money or valuables**	• Working at cashier station in a fixed location • Transporting cash to remote or isolated locations or at night			
• **Working with unstable or volatile persons**	• Providing a service to persons with physiological, psychological, or psychiatric conditions and substance abuse issues • Working in premises where alcohol is served			
• **Working alone**	• Working in a fixed location where there is limited or no access to communication tools (Research Lab) • Working in a fixed location where there is a high potential of assault or robbery (i.e. safety officer) • Working in isolated areas within a worksite, away from other workers (i.e. CCS or Maintenance) • Working in a remote worksite where public may have access • Working during late evening hours or early morning hours (i.e. Maintenance, CCS or Research Lab)			
• **Mobile workplace or transporting passengers as part of your job**	• Transporting student/staff to locations on or off campus (public has physical access to driver/staff) • Working in remote unknown areas • Working in areas where there is limited or no access to communication tools • Working in situations where fare collection and enforcement of fares is required			

Risk Assessment Method

Category of Risk* = Severity + Frequency**

Notes:

***** Risk inherent in the job assuming no controls in place.
** In this exercise, it is assumed that high frequency also leads to high probability of occurrence.

Frequency	Severity	Category of Risk
"Regularly" **Score = 3** Exposure may be part of the normal work routine or assignment	**"High"** **Score = 3** - potential for fatal or critical injury - may be exposed to physical injury from physical assault, punching, kicking, hitting, weapons	**"High"** **Total score = 6**
"Occasionally" **Score = 2** Exposure is infrequent	**"Moderate"** **Score = 2** - potential for lost time or health care - may be exposed to threatening behaviour such as hostile, intimidating, frightening etc. (e.g., shouting, pushing a table etc.)	**"Moderate"** **Total score = 4 - 5**
"Rarely" **Score = 1** Not a normal part of the work routine or employees are exposed to risk.	**"Low"** **Score = 1** - potential for first aid - may be exposed to behaviours that are disruptive and aggressive (e.g., slamming the door, walking out etc.)	**"Low"** **Total score= 1 - 3**

Example: A student advisor who works at a service counter responding to enquiries from students in the day time.

Specific risk: Dealing with irate customer with potential of workplace violence.

Frequency of risk: **"**Moderate", since the worker may occasionally deal with an irate customer.
Score = 2

Severity of risk: **"**Low", worker may be shouted at by the customer demanding to see the manager. **Score = 1**

Risk category: **2+1= 3 ("Low")**

Enter "L" in "Level of Risk" column on previous page.

Appendix B

Safety Tips for Specific Risks Factors of Workplace Violence

These safety tips also include examples of control measures that protect workers from the potential hazard of violence. These tips can be used as resource or training materials by posting or distributing and reviewing with workers at staff meetings.

Dealing with Irate Persons

- Know how to summon immediate assistance when an emergency occurs or is likely to occur
- Be familiar with warning signs of potentially violent behavior
- If you feel you are being harassed, threatened or intimidated:
  - tell the person to stop
  - document the incident (e.g. the nature of the incident, time, place, witnesses)
  - inform your manager.

Verbal Communication

- Focus your attention on the person to let them know you are interested in what they have to say
- Remain calm
- Speak slowly, quietly and confidently
- Speak simply. DO NOT rely on official language or complex terminology
- Listen carefully. DO NOT interrupt or offer unsolicited advice or criticism
- Encourage the person to talk. DO NOT tell the person to relax or calm down
- Try to understand. Ask questions like “Help me understand why you are upset.”
- Once you think you understand, repeat it back to the person so they know you understand
- Remain open-minded and objective
- Use delaying tactics to give the person time to calm down, e.g. offer a drink of water
- Acknowledge the person’s feelings. Indicate that you can see he or she is upset.

Non-Verbal Behaviour and Communication

- Use calm body language – relaxed posture with hands unclenched, attentive expression
- Arrange yourself so that your exit is not blocked
- Position yourself at a right angle rather than directly in front of the other person
- Give the person enough physical space; this varies by culture, but normally 2-4 feet is considered an adequate distance

- Get on the other person's physical level; if they are seated try kneeling or bending over, rather than standing over them
- DO NOT pose a challenging stance, such as standing directly opposite, putting your hands on your hips, pointing your finger, crossing your arms.

Problem Solving

- Try to put yourself in the other person's shoes, so that you can better understand how to solve the problem
- Ask for his or her recommendations
- Accept criticism in a positive way, when a complaint might be true, use statements like "You are probably right" or "It was my fault." If the criticism seems unwarranted, ask clarifying questions
- Be honest. DO NOT make false statements or promises you cannot keep
- Remain professional and take the person seriously.
- Be respectful
- Break the issue down into smaller units and offer step-by-step solutions so that the person is not overwhelmed by the situation, issue or solution
- Be reassuring and point out choices
- Try to keep the person's attention on the issue at hand
- DO NOT take sides or agree with distortions
- DO NOT reject the person's demands or position from the start
- Find ways to help the person save face
- Establish ground rules if unreasonable behaviour persists
- In a calm and non-threatening manner, clearly state that violence is unacceptable and will not be tolerated
- Avoid issuing commands and making conditional statements
- If the nature of the situation involves punishment or sanctions: delay the punitive action until you have backup or the situation is safe
- If you feel threatened try to politely and calmly terminate the interaction in a non-threatening manner.

Handling Money and/or Valuables

- Know how to summon immediate assistance when an emergency occurs or is likely to occur (Dial 4444 on any internal phone)
- Keep cash register funds to a minimum
- Use electronic payment systems if possible. For example: automatic ticket dispensers or collectors, debit cards, credit cards, cheques
- Vary the time of day that you empty or reduce funds in the cash register
- Remove all large bills ($50, $100) from the register frequently
- Install and use a locked safe with a drop slot
- Change the combination of the safe at frequent intervals

- Post visible signs which indicate that minimum cash (state amount, e.g. less than $50) is kept on the premises
- Ask customers for exact change or the smallest bills possible
- DO NOT handle large amounts of cash or count money in public view
- Use cash drawer covers
- Install security screens in high-risk areas.

Banking Money

- Deposit money to bank on a frequent basis.
- Use an unmarked bag or container to carry cash and/or securities.
- Vary the route taken to the bank or financial institution.
- Vary times of deposit.
- Avoid making night deposits.

- Observe your surroundings before making your transaction.
- Rotate the task so that it isn't always the same person making the deposit if possible.
- Avoid making deposits alone especially if employees work in remote and isolated areas. Have one person face the other way to act as a lookout while the other makes the deposit.
- Arrange for regular cash collection by a licensed security firm.

Working with Unstable or Volatile Persons who may be Potentially Violent

- Know how to summon immediate assistance when an emergency occurs or is likely to occur.
- Store away objects or equipment (e.g., sharp objects) that could be used to hurt people.
- Use special rooms for meeting e.g., rooms with windows in the door, rooms close to other employees, rooms with easy exit in case of emergency.
- Be familiar with warning signs of a potentially violent person (refer to e-course on Violence in the Workplace: Awareness).

Tips for Verbal Communication

- Focus your attention on the person to let them know you are interested in what they have to say.
- Remain calm and try to calm the other person. DO NOT allow the other person's anger to become your anger.
- Speak slowly, quietly and confidently.
- Speak simply. DO NOT rely on official language or complex terminology.
- Listen carefully. DO NOT interrupt or offer unsolicited advice or criticism.
- Encourage the person to talk. DO NOT tell the person to relax or calm down.
- Try to understand. Ask questions like "Help me understand why you are upset."
- Once you think you understand, repeat it back to the person so they know you understand.
- Remain open-minded and objective.
- Use silence as a calming tool.
- Use delaying tactics to give the person time to calm down, e.g., offer a drink of water.

- Acknowledge the person's feelings. Indicate that you can see he or she is upset.

Tips for Non-Verbal Behaviour and Communication

- Use calm body language – relaxed posture with hands unclenched, attentive expression.
- Arrange yourself so that your exit is not blocked.
- Position yourself at a right angle rather than directly in front of the other person.
- Give the person enough physical space….this varies by culture, but normally 2-4 feet is considered an adequate distance.
- Get on the other person's physical level. If they are seated try kneeling or bending over, rather than standing over them.
- DO NOT pose a challenging stance, such as standing directly opposite, putting your hands on your hips, pointing your finger, crossing your arms.

Tips for Problem Solving

- Try to put yourself in the person's shoes, so that you can better understand how to solve the problem.
- Ask for his or her recommendations.
- Repeat back to the person what you think he or she is asking of you, to clarify what you are hearing.
- Accept criticism in a positive way, when a complaint might be true, use statements like "You are probably right" or "It was my fault." If the criticism seems unwarranted, ask clarifying questions.
- Be honest. DO NOT make false statements or promises you cannot keep.
- Remain professional and take the person seriously. Be respectful.
- Break an issue down into smaller units and offer step-by-step solutions so that the person is not overwhelmed by the situation, issue or solution.
- Be reassuring and point out choices.
- Try to keep the person's attention on the issue at hand.
- DO NOT take sides or agree with distortions.
- DO NOT reject the person's demands or position from the start.
- Find ways to help the person save face.
- Establish ground rules if unreasonable behaviour persists.
- In a calm and non-threatening manner, clearly state that violence is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.
- Avoid issuing commands and making conditional statements.
- If the nature of the situation involves punishment or sanctions: delay the punitive action until you have backup or the situation is safe.
- If you feel threatened try to politely and calmly terminate the interaction in a non-threatening manner, if possible.
- If you feel threatened:
    - Know what backup is available to assist you in handling a difficult individual
    - Use a silent alarm
    - Use a code word

- If you threaten to call Campus Safety, call them.

Working Alone

- Know how to summon immediate assistance when an emergency occurs or is likely to occur.
- Carry a communication device (e.g. cell phone, radio etc.)
- Know your environment (e.g., location of exits, neighbours etc.)
- Make sure someone knows where you are and your plans (e.g., when you plan to leave etc.)

(a) Workers who work alone on a regular basis

Refer to the University Safety website at:

http://www2.carleton.ca/community-safety/safety-tips/working-late/

Mobile Workplace or Transporting Passengers as Part of Your Job

- Know how to summon immediate assistance when an emergency occurs or is likely to occur.
- Carry a communication device (e.g. cell phone, radio etc.).
- Keep your car in good repair. Perform circle check regularly (e.g. daily or weekly).
- Always lock your car, even when you are in it.
- Stay cool. Do not react to provocation.
- DO NOT open your car window more than one inch to speak to someone you are not familiar. with approaching your car.
- If you suspect another car is following your car:
  - Note the license plate no. of the other car
  - Drive to a service, police or fire station
  - Stay in your car
  - Honk the horn in short repeated blasts until someone helps you.
- If you think you have been intentionally bumped from behind:
  - DO NOT leave your vehicle.
  - Motion to the other driver to follow you to the nearest police station or open service station.
- Make sure someone knows your plans, your route and your estimated arrival time.
- Reduce amount of cash.
- Consider buddy system if you are transporting people or goods in remote and isolated areas.