

Health and Safety Standard

WORKPLACE VIOLENCE PREVENTION

1 PURPOSE

This standard supports the Hazard/Aspect and Risk Assessment Policy and establishes the requirements for managing potential customer/public-to-worker workplace violence.

2 SCOPE

SaskPower is committed to taking preventative measures to protect workers from potentially violent situations and investigating reported incidents of violence while taking necessary action and providing appropriate support. This standard applies to all acts or threats of external violence which involve customers or the public.

This standard excludes worker to worker violence including but not limited to threatening/intimidating behaviour, bullying, discrimination and/or harassment. Worker to worker violence shall be reported to and managed through SaskPower Human Resource's Respectful Workplace Policy or the Code of Conduct Policy and Process. This standard outlines the minimum requirements that shall be met or exceeded by SaskPower workers and contractors. Failure to comply may result in injuries, damage to equipment and property, performance management or any combination thereof.

The use of the word "shall" within this standard denotes a mandatory action, whereas the use of the word "should" or "may" denotes a recommended action.

3 DEFINITIONS

The following definitions apply to this standard:

Violence – is 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 the worker is at risk of injury.

Worker – is a person, including a supervisor, who is engaged in the service of an employer. This includes SaskPower contracted individuals.

Workplace – a physical location, equipment, materials processed or used, and the kinds of operations performed in the course of an employee’s work, whether on or off the employer’s premises.

4 REQUIREMENTS

4.1 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Anyone who witnesses, or experiences workplace violence is responsible for bringing it to the attention of their Manager/Supervisor and will participate in the investigation process if required.

4.1.1 MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Management is responsible for understanding what constitutes as external workplace violence and shall communicate that workplace violence and/or abuse will not be tolerated or ignored. Management shall achieve this by:

- Communicating this standard and applicable procedure/processes to workers within their department;
- Acting as role models with respect to the appropriate conduct and promoting a non-violent workplace;
- Conducting a hazard/aspect risk assessment for their department which focuses on external violence risk factors and reviewing or revising their assessment as necessary;
- Implementing applicable controls, procedures and/or processes that minimize the risk of workplace violence;
- Encourage and provide applicable training to workers that are at risk of violent incidents;
- Monitoring the effectiveness of applicable controls, training, procedures or processes regularly and implement any necessary changes;
- Reviewing all complaints/incidents of violence seriously, promptly and diligently investigating any alleged incident;
- Submitting complete records of any incidence of external workplace violence as per the applicable process ensuring confidentiality is retained where required; and
- Providing workers with access to appropriate resources or agencies when involved in violent incidents.

4.1.2 WORKER RESPONSIBILITIES

All workers are responsible for understanding what constitutes as external workplace violence and for conducting themselves in accordance. Workers shall achieve this by:

- Acting as role models with respect to the appropriate conduct and promoting a non-violent workplace;
- Abiding by the requirements of this standard and any applicable procedure/processes;
- Incorporating violence risk factors and controls on their hazard/aspect risk assessments when applicable;
- Participating as required for reviewing and revising hazard/aspect risk assessments, applicable procedures/processes and/or investigations;
- Completing any necessary training;
- Reporting any threat or actual conduct of workplace violence in accordance to the applicable procedure/process; and
- Seeking appropriate support and assistance when experiencing difficulties that may be contributed from workplace violence.

4.2 IDENTIFICATION OF EXTERNAL VIOLENCE RISK FACTORS

A hazard/aspect and risk assessment shall be conducted and documented to identify where positions, assignments and/or tasks may expose workers to an external violence risk factor.

The following work practices and/or risk factors that could create or contribute to incidents of external violence should be considered:

- Travelling to and from work
- Working alone or in small numbers
- Handling/exchange of money
- Working and/or interacting with the public
- Dealing with irate customers
- Location of workplace (isolation)
- Working after normal work hours
- Any previous incidents of workplace violence

Consider travelling in a vehicle or wearing clothing that identifies a worker as a SaskPower employee, may make a worker a target by customers or the public.

4.3 VIOLENCE CONTROL MEASURES

Where practical, external violence risk factors/hazards shall be removed. Where external violence hazards cannot be removed, controls shall be implemented to reduce the probability of a violence incident occurring.

Where a task specific hazard/aspect and risk assessment identifies the potential for workplace violence:

- Appropriate controls shall be determined and reviewed with the worker's supervisor or manager;
- If controls are deemed insufficient, the task shall not be performed until a second hazard/aspect and risk assessment has been performed with the supervisor/manager and appropriate controls determined; and
- Where a worker(s) still feels the level of risk is too high the matter must be referred to the local Occupational Health Committee (OHC).

4.3.1 PRE-CONTACT CONTROLS

Pre-contact controls involve methods to avoid exposure to violence. They can include:

- educating the public;
- removing the risk factor/hazard from the workplace; and/or
- creating a barrier between the worker and the hazard by manipulating the physical design of the work environment.

Specific pre-contact measures can include:

- Distributing education materials and safe work procedures for violence prevention and protection;
- Communicating the Workplace Violence Prevention Standard to service suppliers, contractors, clients and customers;
- Create and utilize posters that include the following or similar verbiage, "There is Zero tolerance for verbal abuse, threatening actions and physical attacks. Any such actions will not be tolerated and will be reported to appropriate authorities";
- Controlling access to work areas by the use of full walls, locked doors, oversized counters;
- Appropriate lighting systems for all interior and exterior building areas, ground and parking areas;

- Arranging furniture to prevent workers from being trapped during a violence incident;
- Using video surveillance cameras, alarm systems, panic buttons or other systems which permit monitoring of high-risk areas and enable workers to get help in emergencies (alarm systems, cell phones, two-way radios, personal alarm devices);
- Use of “buddy systems” where workers assist each other either by working in pairs or by maintaining regular contact with each other; and/or
- The use of law enforcement agencies is encouraged when dealing with customers with a history of violence.

4.3.2 POST-CONTACT CONTROLS

Post-contact controls assist in reducing the impacts of and ensuring appropriate responses to violence incidents which can include:

- Processes to provide medical attention, counseling and/or debriefing as required to all workers involved in violent incidents;
- Processes and procedures to capture and record pertinent information concerning violent incidents and provide the information to business units and workers who may be exposed to similar circumstances in the future; and/or
- Processes to notify suppliers, contractors or clients if one of their employees’ actions constitutes violence towards any SaskPower worker.

4.4 HAZARDS AND RISK COMMUNICATION

If situations of potential violence are recognized through a hazard/aspect and risk assessment or by other means:

- Workers and/or work groups that could be impacted shall be identified; and
- Pertinent details shall be communicated to the potentially affected workers.
 - Communication shall be completed according to the work group’s documented procedure

4.5 INCIDENT REPORTING AND INVESTIGATION

Workplace violence incidents involving external parties (customers/public) and SaskPower workers shall be reported and investigated according to the following applicable processes:

- Health & Safety Incident Investigation Process; and

- Enterprise Security's Security E-Report Process (Icon located on computer desktop); or
- Safe Entry into Customer Yards Process for Field Employees (located on Field Smart).

4.6 TRAINING

Workers who have been identified as at risk of violent incidents shall attend training, which shall include:

- The nature and extent of risk associated with the anticipated violence;
- Ways to recognize potentially violent situations;
- Appropriate responses to avoid and/or de-escalate incidents of violence;
- The procedure for reporting violent behaviour; and
- The procedure for documenting and investigating violence incidents.

5 IMPLEMENTATION

The requirements of this standard take effect six months after the approval date.

6 RESOURCES

6.1 INTERNAL RESOURCES

Related Policies:	Hazard/Aspect and Risk Assessment Policy Respectful Workplace Policy Code of Conduct Policy
References:	Incident Investigation Process Incident Reference Chart Process for Safe Entry into Customer Yard Security E-Report Safety Briefing #13 - Workplace Violence Prevention Standard
Related Standards:	Hazard/Aspect and Risk Assessment Standard

6.2 EXTERNAL RESOURCES

Related Legislation:	<i>The Saskatchewan Employment Act, 2013</i> <i>The Occupational Health and Safety Regulations, 2020</i>
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Ownership

Division:	Human Resources and Safety
Department:	Health and Safety
Review Frequency:	3 years
Approved by:	Health & Safety Council
Approval Date:	March 18, 2020

Document History

Revised by	Revision Purpose	Date
M. Podaima	Scheduled Review Cycle	March 18, 2020