



Office of the  
Saskatchewan Information  
and Privacy Commissioner

## HUMAN RESOURCE POLICY

### **9.0 EMPLOYEE WELLNESS** **9.06 VIOLENCE-FREE WORKPLACE**

#### **Purpose**

To provide a healthy and safe workplace environment for Saskatchewan Information and Privacy Commissioner (IPC) employees, visitors and clients free from any form of violence.

#### **Application**

This policy applies to all employees of the IPC, including contract employees and the Commissioner.

The IPC recognizes that members of the public, clients or others who conduct business with the IPC may act violently towards IPC employees. In these circumstances, the IPC acknowledges its responsibility to do all in its power to protect, support, and assist those employees.

#### **Policy**

Employees have a right to work in an environment free of violence and as such, the IPC will not condone violence in any form in any location in which employees are engaged in work related activities.

This includes:

- the workplace;
- during work related travel;
- at restaurants, hotels or meeting facilities that are being used for work purposes; or
- during telephone, e-mail or other communications.

Violence that occurs outside the normal workplace but which has an impact on the working environment, including working relationships, may also be considered violence in the workplace.

## Definition

**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 the worker is at risk of injury.

Examples of workplace violence include:

- Physically threatening behaviour, such as shaking a fist at someone, destroying property, throwing objects;
- Verbal or written threats to physically attack an employee;
- Leaving threatening notes or sending threatening e-mails or texts;
- Wielding a weapon at work;
- Stalking someone;
- Physically aggressive behaviours, including hitting, shoving, standing aggressively close to someone in an aggressive manner, pushing, kicking, throwing an object at someone, physically restraining someone or any other form of physical or sexual assault.

## Duties of all employees

All employees must do their part by ensuring that their behaviour does not violate this policy and by fostering a work environment based on respect.

If an employee is experiencing domestic violence that could put him/her at risk of physical injury in the workplace, or the employee believes that workplace violence could occur, the employee may seek immediate assistance by communicating with their supervisor, the Director of Operations or the Commissioner. Together, in consultation with the Commissioner, a violence prevention and response strategy will be developed. Affected employees are also entitled to Interpersonal Violence Leave as outlined in *The Saskatchewan Employment Act*, subdivision 11, section 2-56.1. Any inquiries regarding this type of leave should be directed to the Director of Operations.

Employees are expected to immediately report any complaints about workplace violence, or if they have witnessed or are aware of violent behaviours or the threat of violent behaviour.

## Process

1. Any employee who is the victim of, a witness to, or becomes aware of, a threat, intimidation, or physical assault should report the matter to their supervisor, the Director of Operations or Commissioner as soon as possible.
2. Upon request from the Commissioner, local law enforcement will undertake to investigate the matter and provide appropriate security for employees.
3. The Commissioner, in consultation with the Director of Compliance and the Director of Operations will determine what action should be taken as a result of the investigation.

4. If an IPC employee is responsible for the threat, intimidation or physical assault, they will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.
5. The IPC will take action against anyone who commits a criminal offence which impacts the working environment.

If an employee makes a complaint in good faith and without malice, regardless of the outcome of the investigation, the employee will not be subject to any form of discipline.

Where it is determined by the Commissioner that an employee has made a false or malicious complaint; that employee will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. Further, the IPC will not tolerate retaliation against anyone who launches a complaint or takes part in an investigation.

### **Confidentiality**

The IPC will keep all information related to a complaint of workplace violence confidential and will only release as much information as is necessary to investigate and respond to the complaint or situation or if required to do so by law.

Out of respect for the involved individuals, it is essential that the complainant, respondent, witnesses and anyone else involved in an investigation of a complaint maintain confidentiality throughout the investigation and afterwards.

### **Authority**

*The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, section 43.1*

*The Saskatchewan Employment Act*

### **Influencing Sources**

Legislative Assembly Service Human Resource Policy 9.7

*The Saskatchewan Employment Act*

Saskatchewan Public Service Human Resource Manual, Section 815