



Workplace Violence Examples

A TOOL FOR K-12 PUBLIC EDUCATION -
COMPLIANCE



Workplace Violence Examples

Purpose:

The purpose of this document is to further explain the term workplace violence that is defined in the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation in British Columbia, so that it can be better understood in the context of the K-12 education sector.

Scope:

This document applies to workplace violence as defined by the Regulation and applied in all K-12 educational settings in British Columbia. There are experiences that workers may have that are not defined below and when in question ensure reporting is completed within the requirements of your workplace policies.

Definition:

"violence" means the attempted or actual exercise by a person, other than a worker, of any physical force so as to cause injury to a worker, and includes any threatening statement or behaviour which gives a worker reasonable cause to believe that he or she is at risk of injury.

Workplace violence applies to all persons committing violence except where a worker of the same employer is the victim. Workers of the same employer are covered by section 4.25 of the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation.

Verbal abuse or harassing behaviour is not included in the definition of violence for the purpose of section 4.27 (violence) unless it includes threats or behaviour which give the worker reasonable cause to believe that the worker is at risk of injury.

Source: [WorkSafeBC](#)

Requirements:

School districts:

1. Must ensure that workers are trained on the definition of workplace violence.
2. Should ensure that workers have access to the more detailed supporting information for the definition of workplace violence specific to the K-12 sector.

Table 1. Examples of workplace violence in the education sector (other examples may exist)

The specific context of the situation and the knowledge of the individual involved in the action must always be considered. The worker must have reasonable cause to believe they are at risk of injury.

	WORKPLACE VIOLENCE REPORTING REQUIRED		BEHAVIOUR LOGGING POSSIBLE
Body part where the action originates	Contact violence (harmful/injurious physical contact) attempted or actual	Non-contact violence (verbal, written, gesture threat of contact violence)	Actions not typically considered Workplace violence*
Head region	Head butting, or biting a worker	Threats directed toward worker: verbal, gesture, or written, which give the worker reasonable cause to believe that the worker is at risk of contact violence including: comments that induce fear for the worker’s physical safety, ganging up or stalking.	glaring, head banging – against object or person other than a worker, involuntary head movement causing harm to a worker, moaning and crying, name calling, not listening/non-compliance, screaming, staring, spitting, licking, mucus/phlegm, swearing, threatening to self harm, yelling,
Upper body – arms and body	Worker contact by pushing, shoving, pulling/twisting, grabbing, scratching, punching, slapping, pinching, throwing, slamming against, checking, use of weapons or weaponized objects, inappropriate age touching.	Gesturing to punch, slap with credible ability to make contact, and cause injury, threats using weapons or weaponized objects	clearing flailing holding hands involuntary arm or body movements reaching toward rocking rubbing slamming objects smashing objects touching repeatedly twisting – their own body
Lower body (legs and feet)	Kicking, Stomping on someone, intentional tripping of a worker	Pursuing	Bolting Flailing involuntary leg movements Leaving area Stomping

*These items could be considered baseline behaviour or if not part of baseline behaviour could, under certain situations, be part of workplace violent actions.

Note: Sexual harassment falls under bullying and harassment. Follow the internal bullying and harassment procedures.

R4.27-1

Violence in the Workplace – Definition

BACKGROUND

1. Explanatory Notes

Section 4.27 defines "violence" for purpose of the violence in the workplace provisions.

2. The OHSR

Section 4.27:

In sections 4.28 to 4.31,

"violence" means the attempted or actual exercise by a person, other than a worker, of any physical force so as to cause injury to a worker, and includes any threatening statement or behaviour which gives a worker reasonable cause to believe that the worker is at risk of injury.

POLICY

Section 4.27 applies to all persons committing violence except where a worker of the same employer is the victim. Workers of the same employer are covered by section 4.25.

Verbal abuse or harassing behaviour is not included in the definition of violence for the purpose of section 4.27 unless it includes threats or behaviour which give the worker reasonable cause to believe that the worker is at risk of injury.

All workers working at a "multiple-employer" workplace within the meaning of section 24 of the OHS provisions of the *Act* are treated as fellow workers for the purpose of section 4.27. Violence or threats between these workers are not covered by the provision.

The definition of "violence" in section 4.27 covers the situation where a worker affected by a threat has reasonable cause to believe that the worker is at risk of injury. It does not apply where a person other than the worker has such a belief. If there is a dispute over whether the worker has reasonable cause, the worker may invoke the procedure under section 3.12.

All threats against a worker or the worker's family must be treated as serious matters. When the employer is made aware of the threat, the employer is required to notify the worker, if the worker is not already aware of the threat, and to notify the police or similar authority responsible for the protection of public safety. If the employer is unable to contact the worker, the employer should advise a family member so that appropriate precautions can be taken. The employer and any other persons involved are also required to cooperate in any investigations necessary to protect the worker or worker's family. The means of fulfilling these responsibilities should be included in the written Workplace Violence Protection Program.

A threat against a worker's family that is a result of the worker's employment is considered a threat against the worker for the purpose of section 4.27.

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Where a threat is made against a worker's family, any person who becomes aware of the threat must report it to the person's supervisor or the employer.

R4.25-1

Workplace Conduct - Prohibition of Improper Activity or Behaviour

BACKGROUND

1. Explanatory Notes

Section 4.25 prohibits "improper activity or behaviour" in the workplace that may create an occupational health and safety hazard. Section 4.24 defines "improper activity or behaviour" for this purpose.

2. The OHSR

Section 4.25:

A person must not engage in any improper activity or behaviour at a workplace that might create or constitute a hazard to themselves or to any other person.

Section 4.24:

"improper activity or behaviour" includes

- (a) the attempted or actual exercise by a worker towards another worker of any physical force so as to cause injury, and includes any threatening statement or behaviour which gives the worker reasonable cause to believe the worker is at risk of injury, and
- (b) horseplay, practical jokes, unnecessary running or jumping or similar conduct.

POLICY

Section 4.25 may be violated in any situation where an act of violence is committed by one worker on another, whether or not the violence is covered by section 4.27.