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## 1. Introduction

Vancouver Island University (VIU) is committed to preventing, managing, and responding appropriately to incidents of violence, threatening behaviour, harassment, or intimidation to provide a safe, secure, and productive learning and working environment for all members of the campus community. WorkSafeBC defines Violence as , “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”.

## 2. purpose

The purpose of this program manual is to describe the requirements and procedures established by VIU for the prevention, management and investigation of violence in the workplace thus ensuring that all VIU employees (faculty and staff) at VIU work in the safest manner possible. This program applies to all VIU employees (faculty and staff) and students in the workplace.

## 3. scope

This violence prevention program deals specifically with the processes for the prevention, management and investigation of violence hazard(s) in the workplace and is regulated by WorkSafeBC.

## 4. VIU Health and Safety POlicy 41.09

“Vancouver Island University is committed to promoting a safe and healthy working and learning environment. It is the priority of the University to ensure safe working conditions and job safety practices in the planning, budgeting, direction and implementation of the University’s activities.”

## 5. REsponsibilities for this program

**Vancouver Island University (VIU)**

Departments and Faculties are responsible for sharing pertinent information with appropriate personnel at VIU to ensure information is disseminated as required by WorkSafeBC.

a) Ensure that workers are provided with information related to the risk of violence from persons who have a history of violent behavior and whom workers are likely to encounter in the course of their work.

b) Notify a worker of any threat against the worker or worker’s family and notify the RCMP. If VIU cannot contact the worker, VIU will attempt to contact a family member so appropriate precautions can be taken.

c) VIU will cooperate in any investigations necessary to protect a worker or worker’s family.

**Health and Safety Services (HSS)**

HSS provides the co-ordination, technical expertise and administrative oversight for the Violence Prevention Program at VIU. The responsibilities of HSS include:

a) Administering and managing the program.

b) Assisting departments/Faculties with Risk Assessments.

c) Coordinate training and provide guidance to the campus community regarding recognizing risk, reporting violence or incidents and when to seek assistance.

d.) Act as an information resource for questions related to Violence in the Workplace.

e) Ensure that workers are provided with information related to the risk of violence from persons who have a history of violent behavior and whom workers are likely to encounter in the course of their work.

f) Ensure that a worker reporting an injury or adverse symptom as a result of an incident of violence is advised to consult a physician of the worker's choice for treatment or referral and that a WCB claim is initiated.

**Departments (supervisors)**

a) Ensure that workers are informed that they may be exposed to the risk of violence and the nature and extent of the risk in their role in the workplace.

b) Ensure that workers are provided with information related to the risk of violence from persons who have a history of violent behavior and whom workers are likely to encounter in the course of their work.

c) Ensure workers have been appropriate training for the risk of violence in their work area.

d) Review any policies, procedures and work arrangements that have been developed to minimize or control the risk to workers with the workers.

e) Regularly review the procedures for reporting violent incidents as well as the response to incidents and when and how to seek assistance.

f) Ensure that a worker reporting an injury or adverse symptom as a result of an incident of violence is advised to consult a physician of the worker's choice for treatment or referral.

**Faculty and Staff (workers)**

a) Attend required training sessions.

b) Review any policies, procedures and work arrangements that have been developed to minimize or control the risk to workers on a regular basis.

c) Discuss concerns with their supervisor and/or Health and Safety Services and report any incidents or behaviors that cause concern.

d) Cooperate in any investigation into the threat of Violence in the workplace.

## 6. Regulatory and best Practice Requirements

WorkSafeBC Regulation, Part 4 General Conditions (4.27 – 4.31)

WorkSafeBC Policy Items (R4.27-1 – R4.31-1)

## 7. training requirements

As part of the overall Health and Safety Program at VIU the following training is conducted in order for employees to be informed of their responsibilities and to promote cooperation and information sharing between departments and external organizations.

*Health and Safety Orientation* - Mandatory training for all VIU employees. Outlines the requirements for incident reporting, general safety, WorksafeBC overview, first aid, emergency planning, ergonomics and overall health and safety at VIU etc.

## 8. safe work procedures

**Prevention**

*Risk Assessment-* a risk assessment must be completed in areas where there is a risk of violence identified. The assessment must include the following:

a) Previous experience in the workplace (at least one year).

b) Occupational experience in similar workplaces.

c) The location and circumstances in which work will take place.

The main objectives of the risk assessment are to determine:

* The nature and type of occurrences of violence which are anticipated in the place of employment
* The likelihood of their occurrence at a specific site or location
* Elimination or mitigation of any risk identified

Whenever possible a worker representative from the area should be included in the risk assessment process. The assessment should be repeated if there is a significant change in the nature of the work or location of the work or a significant renovation or change in office layout.

*Work Environments*

The physical workplace environment is to be evaluated for the potential risk of violence. Different areas of the campus will have different concerns.

*Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED)*

CPTED is an approach to planning and development that reduces opportunities for crime. It is part of a comprehensive approach to crime prevention. All new construction and/or renovations to existing facilities are planned by Facilities Services and Campus Development with these principles in mind.

*Collaborative Assessment, Referral and Education Team (CARE)*

A team led by the Executive Director of Student Affairs to detect, monitor and intervene with students who exhibit concerning behaviors and to assist students in successfully completing their education while protecting the learning environment of others. This group meets regularly to determine appropriate interventions to support students.

*Ongoing Support*

In order to assist employees and students the following support is available.

* Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP) for employees
* VIU Counseling (students)
* Community Mental Health (VIHA)

**Management**

Once a risk of violence to workers is identified as result of a risk assessment, VIU must take steps to eliminate or minimize the risk to workers. Identification of a risk of violence can also be made through:

* Identified trends from incident reporting
* Reported concerns
* Complaints received
* As a result of a violent incident

*Incident Reporting*

All incidents of violence, including threats, are to be reported immediately using the established incident reporting guidelines.

The affected person should report the incident to their immediate supervisor, and/or Security and/or Health and Safety Services.

The employee will be advised of the services available through the Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP) provided by the employer.

Health and Safety Services will promptly initiate an investigation and notify the following personnel (as necessary):

* Facilities Services
* Security
* RCMP
* Human Resources
* Student Affairs
* Applicable Dean / Director of area involved
* Senior Administration

*Investigation of Incidents*

VIU will promptly investigate all incidents of violence, including threats. The investigation of the incident will include, but not be limited to:

* An assessment of any threats and/or potential threats in accordance with recognized protocols for threat assessment.
* Gathering evidence; interviewing people involved; liaising with internal personnel; liaising with external personnel (e.g. RCMP).
* Identifying steps to be taken to mitigate the risk, and ensuring all steps necessary are taken that will reasonably ensure the safety of the victim(s) of such an incident.

The investigation will be compiled into a report and retained as appropriate.

*Risk and Threat Assessment Team (RTAT)*

Student Affairs is responsible for the RTAT at VIU, the purpose of the RTAT is to investigate and determine an appropriate level of response to reports of concerning behaviours and/or threats with the potential to result in harm to the campus community. Integral to the success of the RTAT will be the coordinated effort of all employees and students to identify and report concerning behaviours and threats and to work together to create and maintain a respectful, supportive, caring and safety oriented University community. To ensure this, VIU will:

* Treat all threats seriously; and
* Assess their potential in accordance with established criteria; and
* Deal with them (manage them) as they occur and prevent them from progressing to actual incidents of physical violence.

*Instruction of Workers*

Once a risk of violence is known. VIU, whether it be the supervisor, H&SS or the RTAT, must inform workers who may be exposed to the risk and the nature and extent of the risk. This information will be conveyed to any employees or persons required to work with or may reasonably be expected to encounter the individual in question.

*Identification Mechanisms*

* Student Records System - will be used to create “Threat Assessment Alerts” in order to alert staff who are dealing with potentially violent students.
* Supervisors - will be responsible for notifying affected employees once they become aware of a potentially violent history.
* Internal Web server (to be determined) - Individuals who are banned from VIU property will be identified and their photo posted on an internal web server accessible only by VIU employees.

*External Communication*

Incidents of threats and/or violence will be reported to the RCMP, and WorkSafeBC as necessary.

Any external communications associated with threats and/or risks, other than to the respective authorities (e.g. RCMP, WCB), e.g. to the media, will be done by the Executive Director, University Relations in consultation with the Risk and Threat Assessment Team Chair.

*Work Environment Arrangements*

Where a person is identified as being at risk, arrangements will be undertaken as necessary to minimize their exposure to these risks. Mitigation Strategies include: temporary re-assignment, additional security personnel, personal assistant hold up alarms, re-orienting a workspace to increase sight lines and increase access to egress routes, restricting access to work areas, (using audio video surveillance in accordance with Policy 44.17 Audio Video Security Systems).

*Worker and Supervisor Training*

Basic training in the management / prevention of workplace violence will be provided to all employees as part of the Health and Safety Orientation but more in depth training will be necessary for areas with identified risks.

*Emergency Operations Centre*

A pre-designated facility, set up on campus to provide support for a site emergency or any other emergency event requiring management. The EOC provides policy direction to site Incident Commanders, coordinates resource requests from the site and manages all non-site activities. Information collection, evaluation and dissemination are managed and communicated to the public and interested stakeholders through the EOC. The EOC at VIU is organized into five management functions: Management or Command, Operations, Planning, Logistics and Finance/Administration.

In the event of a serious risk of violence, the Risk and Threat Assessment Team may recommend EOC activation to the EOC Director to manage the overall response to the risk. External agencies such as RCMP, Mental Health may be involved as necessary.

## 9. tools available to the viu community

Violence Risk Assessment Template – best practice developed based on WorkSafeBC Regulation and UCIPP best practices.

VIU policy 41.09

VIU Policy 44.17