

# Violence Prevention

## **An employer's guide for developing a violence policy statement and prevention plan**

2023

PLEASE NOTE

Consult the legislation for all purposes of interpretation and application of the law.

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## Introduction

Violence in the workplace is unacceptable and all workers have the right to a safe and healthy workplace.

This guide is intended to help employers, supervisors and workers to understand their legal obligations to prevent violence under *The Saskatchewan Employment Act*. The samples provided in the appendix will help employers and workers develop and implement a policy statement on violence and prevention plan.

## Defining Workplace Violence

Workplace violence is more than physical assault. Section 3-26 of *The Occupational Health and Safety Regulations, 2020* (regulations) defines workplace violence as:

the attempted, threatened or actual conduct of a person that causes or is likely to cause injury, and includes any threatening statement or behavior that gives a worker reasonable cause to believe the worker is at risk of injury.

Workplace violence is not limited to incidents which occur in a place of work. At times, workers are subjected to violence by their employers, supervisors, colleagues and clients outside of their workplace. It may occur off-site at business-related functions like conferences and trade shows, at social events related to work, or in clients' homes. Threatening telephone calls, texts, or e-mail received at home are also considered workplace violence.

Whether committed by co-workers, managers or third parties, violent incidents are unsafe, unhealthy and unacceptable. These incidents are known to affect workplace morale, absenteeism and staff turnover.

Incidents can result in expensive insurance claims, workers' compensation payments and significant upset to a workplace's daily business operations. Eliminating workplace violence is in the interest of workers, employers and the public.

## Duties and Obligations

The Saskatchewan Employment Act requires all provincially regulated employers and supervisors to protect workers from workplace violence and all workers (including supervisors, students, contractors and volunteers) must refrain from participating in or carrying out acts of violence. These workplace parties must work together to create a safety culture and practices that eliminate workplace violence.

Currently prescribed high-risk industries are required to have a violence policy statement and prevention plan for workplaces.

Employers are in a prescribed high-risk sector if they are operating in any of the following industries:

- Services provided by health care facilities
- Pharmaceutical-dispensing services
- Education services
- Police services
- Corrections services
- Other law enforcement services
- Security services
- Crisis counseling and intervention services
- Late night retail premises
- Financial services
- The sale of alcoholic beverages or the provision of premises for the consumption of alcoholic beverages
- Taxi services
- Transit services.

Changes to *The Saskatchewan Employment Act* (Act) will require that **all** workplaces in Saskatchewan implement a policy statement and prevention plan (PSPP) to eliminate workplace violence by May 17, 2024. This applies whether an employer or a workplace is in a high-risk industry or not.

### Who is Protected from Violence in the Workplace

Under the Act, and regulations all provincially regulated workers are protected against workplace violence. For the purposes of violence prevention in the workplace, workers are defined in the Act. This includes all employees, supervisors, and any dependent and independent contractors, students or volunteers who are being trained or permitted by the employer to perform work or services.

To protect all workers, employers must ensure they are covered by and included in their policy statement and prevention plan and that the document is in writing and readily available to workers.

Occupational health and safety provisions pertaining to the prevention of workplace violence will apply by May 17, 2024 to all provincially regulated workplaces regardless of whether it is in a prescribed high-risk industry or not. There are, however, some extra provisions that apply to late night retail premises.

Workplaces where the incidence of violence is known to be high-risk may need to include extra mitigation measures in their PSPP to reduce or eliminate specific risks. The PSPP of employers operating in prescribed high-risk industries will likely contain mitigation measures or engineering controls that may not be required by an employer that does not have those same risks.

All PSPPs need to be tailored to the risks identified for a particular workplace. Mitigation and preventive measures, engineering controls and practices in the PSPP must respond appropriately to reduce or eliminate the risks identified for that workplace.

### Late Night Retail Establishments

Late night retail establishments are required to take additional precautions to protect employees working late night hours. For example, some precautions may include specific measures for working alone, handling cash, or using engineering controls like video cameras and personal emergency transmitters or measures to protect workers should a theft occur.

#### **Workplace Hazard Assessment is Mandatory**

Conducting a workplace hazard assessment is mandatory for all late night retail establishments open between the hours of 11:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m.

The workplace hazard assessment is conducted in addition to the risk evaluation required for a violence policy statement and prevention plan.

Employers must ensure the hazard assessment is reviewed and updated at the minimum frequency of every three-years, or sooner--whenever there is a change of circumstances that may affect the health or safety of workers.

#### **Working Alone**

When an employee is working alone between 11:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m., there must be a check-in system and a written check-in procedure in place.

A personal emergency transmitter that signals or calls for emergency response personnel must be available and worn by the worker.

#### **Handling Cash**

Opening and closing a premises and cashing in and out are well-known high risk activities. Employers must have procedures to minimize or eliminate the risks associated with these activities. Two requirements are:

- Safe cash handling procedures are required to minimize the amount of money available to the worker.
- Ensure procedures are written and readily available to workers

#### **Engineering controls**

Video cameras are required and must capture key areas in the workplace, including the cash desk and, if applicable, outdoor gas pumps.

Measures must be taken to ensure good visibility into and out of the premises, such as not blocking windows with signs or posters.

Signs indicating the worker has limited access to cash and that video surveillance is in use must be posted.

## Other Laws Apply to Late Night Retail

Employment standards legislation requires employers to arrange free transportation home for hotel, restaurant, educational institution, hospital and nursing home employees who finish work between the hours of 12:30 a.m. and 7:00 a.m. local time.

For additional requirements, review the employment standards legislation in Part II of the Act.

## Role of Occupational Health Committees or Representatives and Employees

Employers and workers must work together to prevent workplace violence. The Saskatchewan Employment Act requires employers to consult with workers when developing and implementing a policy statement and prevention plan. Employers must consult with the workplace:

- occupational health committee (OHC);
- occupational health and safety representative; or
- workers, where there is no OHC or representative.

Since every workplace is different, employers and workers must tailor their policy statement and prevention plan to mitigate, reduce or eliminate the risks and hazards they identify in each workplace. The workplace PSPP must identify, control and mitigate the risk of violence and any hazards identified.

Visit [saskatchewan.ca](http://saskatchewan.ca) to learn about the requirements for OHCs and representatives.

## Development of an Independent Policy Statement and Prevention Plan

Some employers may feel they should incorporate their violence policy with other policies that are mandated by occupational health and safety provisions in the Act, such as the requirement for a harassment prevention policy. However, the legislation requires that the policies must be independent of each other. In other words, each policy statement needs to be treated as its own separate entity.

## Assess Risks and Develop a Policy Statement and Prevention Plan

Assess your workplace risks. Ensure your PSPP includes mitigation and preventive measures for all identified risks and hazards. These steps may be applied to all workplaces or businesses.

A separate section is provided for late night retail due to the additional laws that apply to this sector. For late night retail operations, the steps below should be applied in addition to the information included in the separate section.



This guide is not exhaustive nor is it intended to cover every risk of violence or hazard that a workplace may encounter. The guide, examples and samples which follow may not meet all of your needs. Employers, OHC's, representatives and workers should anticipate modification and tailoring of their PSPP to the needs of their specific business or operation.

Consult the Act and the regulations to learn more about your legal obligations and to ensure your development and implementation of your PSPP meets all applicable requirements.

## Steps to Conducting a Risk Assessment

Gather and assess workplace information related to any prior incidents of violence which have occurred in the workplace. The assessment determines the risks that may already be present and confirms which workers (job positions) are, or may be, at risk. It shows where and when violent events are occurring or are likely to occur in future. This information is needed to develop practices and policies aimed at minimizing or eliminating these risks.

### Step 1. Gather information

Begin by reflecting on past incidents. Collect and organize documents from violent incidents which occurred in the last year. Include incidents that involve theft, if any.

Sources of information:

- incident reports, first aid reports and OHC records;
- guides, policies and procedures;
- recommendations from police or security staff;
- the OHC or representative or if there is no OHC or representative, the workers;
- worker surveys, (see the sample survey in Appendix C ); and
- affiliated umbrella organizations or industry associations.

### Step 2. Find risks by creating a 'snapshot'

**Make note of the:**

- location, nature and circumstances of the work and the incident;
- workplace locations and job classifications or positions affected;
- similar or repeated patterns or details like time of day, job duty or location;
- frequency of these incidents; and
- occupations and locations that are at the most risk.

#### **A. Assess the attributes of workers:**

For each incident, make note of the impact of:

- level of training and experience (see the sample record of training and instruction in Appendix D.);
- age and gender;

- demeanor; and
- personalities and attitudes.

#### Example

- Are workers scheduled in a way that protects them from violence and theft?
- Are younger workers on earlier shifts rather than late night shifts?
- Are experienced and fully trained workers on late night shifts and working alone?
- Is there an orientation and training program to train new and existing workers?
- Does the training program help workers:
  - identify potentially violent situations and use avoidance techniques;
  - work with police and know what to expect when police arrive; and
  - complete incident reports or forms (See samples in Appendix D and E.).

### **B. Assess the nature of the work environment:**

For each worksite, examine the physical layout of the space. For each workplace where a violent incident or theft has occurred or is likely to occur, note the impact of workplace design, signage and lighting.

#### Example:

- Does the layout impede violence and theft?
- Is the check-out counter located in a position with good visibility inside and outside the store?
- Is shelving low enough to maintain a line of sight from any point in the store to a customer?
- Is there a way to improve the line of sight and make it more difficult for thieves to hide?
- Is there a door alarm? Does it alert employees when someone enters the store?
- Are garbage bins (rooms/sheds) and the parking lot areas well lit?

### **C. Assess administrative practices:**

There are many high risk activities like working alone, working late at night, working with people known to be violent or exhibiting irrational, unpredictable or agitated behaviours which could result in violence, completing cash deposits, opening or closing a premises, or other activities where violent events occur or are likely to occur. Determine which activities have a high risk of violence.

**Ask and find out:**

- What practices, procedures or precautions are in place to prevent violence while workers are present?
- Are the practices, procedures or precautions in use? Are they used properly?
- If there are none in place, what procedures and preventive measures will reduce and eliminate risk?

**Sources of information:**

Business association affiliates and industry umbrella organizations may already have preventive measures. Contact your representative group for more information.

**Example:**

- Provide specific written procedures for working alone.
- Provide specific procedures for high risk situations such as opening, closing and cashing out.
- Check-in with workers at specific time intervals (depending on the level of risk during those work hours. (See Appendix F.)

### **Step 3. Expand your review with snapshots**

- Include incidents of violence and theft in your workplace in the last five to 10 years.
- Create a 'snapshot' for each historical incident by repeating Step 2.
- Compile information from all 'snapshots' noting the type, number, frequency, time, location and severity of violent incidents.
- Analyze all 'snapshots' to look for common or similar patterns.

**Ask:**

- Is the frequency of incidents increasing?
- When and where are incidents occurring?
- Which positions are impacted?
- Are circumstances similar or repeated?
- What factors are common?
- What practices, procedures and policy were in place at the time? Did staff know about them? Were they used or used appropriately? Were they lacking?

**Make note of:**

- measures that need to be implemented;
- policies, procedures and practices that need to be updated or implemented;
- lack of preventive measure which would minimize or reduce risk; and
- any instances where knowledge and training is lacking or needed.

## Step 4. Conduct a comparison

- Find statistics or historical information on violence occurring in similar places of employment or within the same industry. Federal and provincial government publications, the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety, business association affiliates or umbrella organizations may be good sources of information.
- Find other workplaces with similar experiences or look at the experiences of the industry. What preventive measures, practice or precautions, policies and procedures were put in place to minimize or eliminate risk of violence and theft by:
  - similar workplaces;
  - the industry; or
  - an affiliated association or umbrella organization?
  - Identify and list the preventive measures, practices or precautions, policies and procedures that are suited to and capable of reducing or eliminating each identified risk.

## 5. Next steps: Use risk assessment results

Use the sample checklists and the results of the risk assessment to compile a list of preventive measures, practices or precautions, policies and procedures and physical controls which need to be implemented to minimize or eliminate risk.

Determine where training and education is needed. Include this information in the policy statement and prevention plan.

### Policy Statement on Violence and Prevention Plan

A policy statement on violence and prevention plan is required by law and must be in writing. An Occupational Health and Safety Officer can ask to see it during a workplace inspection. If it is not complete, they can issue a Notice of Contravention and require improvements.

Employers must ensure preventive measures to minimize and eliminate risks are in the policy statement and prevention plan, and that these are put into practice in the workplace to protect workers from the risks of violence and theft.

## Policy Statement and Prevention Plan Guide

This guide and the sample policy statement and prevention plan located in Appendix A are provided as examples. They may not cover all the content required by law and will need to be tailored to the risks and hazards present in your specific workplace. Review the legislation to ensure your policy statement meets all of the regulatory requirements and includes preventive measures for all of the identified risks for your workplace.

Changes to *The Saskatchewan Employment Act* (Act) will require that **all** workplaces in Saskatchewan implement a policy statement and prevention plan (PSPP) to eliminate workplace violence by May 17, 2024. Workplaces that are in a high risk industry are required to continue to have a violence policy statement and plan in place now.

### **1. Statement of employer commitment**

This statement must explain the employer's commitment to:

- minimize or eliminate the risk of violence;
- include workers in developing, maintaining or updating the policy statement and prevention plan; and
- provide a training program for workers which includes:
  - the means to recognize potentially violent situations;
  - procedures, work practices, administrative arrangements and engineering controls developed to minimize the risk to workers;
  - proper responses of workers to incidents of violence, including how to obtain assistance;
  - procedures for reporting violent incidents; and
  - the means to understand their legal obligation to refrain from participating in or carrying out acts of violence.

### **2. Identification of risk**

Do a risk assessment to identify any positions, locations and situations that pose the greatest risk. Include the worksites where violent incidents have occurred or have the potential to occur.

This information is necessary to decide what must be done to reduce or eliminate risks. Use this knowledge to develop preventive measures which will eliminate or reduce the risk of violence to workers.

### **3. Procedures for informing workers**

Workers are entitled to receive information from employers about the nature and extent of the risk of violence in the workplace. Information related to people with a known history of violent behaviour whom workers are likely to encounter in the course of their work must also be provided, unless prohibited by law. In the policy, employers must describe the procedure(s) they will use to inform their workers about the nature and extent of violent incidents that could occur and about persons who have been violent at their workplace.

### **4. Preventive measures to minimize risk**

These are the measures to eliminate or minimize risks. The risk assessment determines who may be at risk of harm and how and where violent events are occurring or are likely

to occur at the workplace. These are the identified risks. The next step is to determine what preventive measures will eliminate or reduce them. Measures can include practices or precautions, policies and procedures, or physical controls. If they are not already in place, or are not being used or working properly, they may need to be developed, revised or implemented.

Workers may need training and education. Some examples of preventive measures are:

- use of personal protective equipment;
- administrative or procedural arrangements; and
- engineering controls.

Match each identified risk to a preventive measure that eliminates or minimizes the risk. Include the identified risk and the preventive measure in the policy statement and prevention plan. Make plans to inform and train workers about new preventive measures, policy statement and prevention plan content and their safety role and obligations.

## **5. Measures following an incident involving violence**

Procedures must be in place for managing violent incidents. These procedures should:

- enable workers to report any incidents of violence or theft to managers or supervisors, including threats and physical acts of violence;
- state how the employer will document and investigate these incidents;
- state obligations of workers to report violent incidents and to complete forms;
- provide sufficient information and explanation to workers on how to complete incident report forms;
- contain measures to help workers cope with injuries and post-traumatic incident stress arising from violent incidents;
- contain a recommendation that any worker exposed to a violent incident consult their physician for treatment or referral for post-incident counselling;
- include the occupational health and safety committee (OHC); or the representative; or, where there is no OHC or representative, the workers in the investigation and review of the incident; and
- provide procedures for the OHC, representative, or workers (where there is no OHC or representative) to recommend the corrective action needed to prevent a recurrence. The employer decides which corrective actions to accept and implement.

## **6. Training of workers**

Under the regulations, workers and employers have occupational health and safety duties and obligations related to training. Employers must provide a training program for all workers who are, or are likely to be, exposed to violence in the workplace. All workers are obliged to use the safeguards, safety appliances and personal protective equipment provided. Every worker at the workplace is required to follow the safe work practices and procedures in the policy statement and prevention plan. The Saskatchewan Employment Act places an onus on employers to demonstrate that the training provided to workers meets all regulatory requirements.

Include all workers as defined in the Act in the training program. Ensure that the training program is in the policy statement and prevention plan. The program must provide workers with:

- the means to recognize potentially violent situations;
- procedures, work practices, administrative arrangements and engineering controls that were developed to minimize or eliminate risk to workers;
- the appropriate responses of workers to incidents of violence, including how to obtain assistance;
- procedures for reporting violent incidents; and
- an understanding of their legal duty to refrain from participating in or carrying out acts of violence.

All workers, including supervisors, students, volunteers, and contractors, must receive training when the policy statement and prevention plan is ready to be implemented. New workers require training during employment orientation or their first presence on the worksite. All workers may need training or re-training when PSPP revisions are planned and implemented.

### **7. No loss of pay or benefits**

Where a worker receives medical treatment or counselling after a violent incident, the employer is obliged by law to credit a worker's attendance for treatment or counselling as time worked. Employers must ensure the worker does not lose pay or other benefits to attend these appointments. The policy statement and prevention plan must inform workers of this entitlement and the employer's obligation.

### **8. Worker's Compensation Board claims - psychological injury**

In Saskatchewan, *The Workers' Compensation Act, 2013* recognizes all forms of psychological injury incurred by a worker, including but not limited to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), arising from their work unless there is evidence to the contrary. If a worker sustains an injury, consults a physician or attends counselling after a violent incident, a report of injury needs to be submitted by the employer (E1 Form) and by the worker (W1 Form) to the Saskatchewan Workers' Compensation Board (WCB). The WCB will open a file, collect reports and make claim benefit decisions.

### **9. Availability of policy statement on violence and prevention plan**

The regulations require the policy statement and prevention plan be readily available to workers. Store the statement in a convenient and easy to find location where employees can access and view it without asking permission.

### **10. Revisions**

The policy statement and prevention plan must be reviewed every three years and whenever there is a change of circumstances that may affect the health or safety of workers. Workers must be consulted when the policy is being reviewed and they must be informed when changes are planned or have been made. Re-training may also be required.

## **Adopt Good Practices**

Consider adopting practical measures. Employers may find these practices useful:

- date the original policy statement and prevention plan and each revised version;
- document when policies and procedures or other practices come into use or are revised;
- provide periodic refresher training to keep worker knowledge and skills up-to-date; and
- ensure someone on staff is knowledgeable, experienced and well-trained in all aspects of the policy statement and prevention plan.



## Appendix A: Sample Policy Statement on Violence and Prevention Plan

### Introduction

ABC Convenience Stores employs 50 workers in 10 stores province-wide. All locations are open between 11:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. Due to the work hours, our stores are considered high-risk for violent incidents under section 3-21 of *The Saskatchewan Employment Act* and section 3-26 of *The Occupational Health and Safety Regulations, 2020*.

### Our Commitment to Safety

The management of ABC Convenience Stores recognizes the potential for violent acts and threats towards its workers and is committed to protecting their health and safety.

In consultation with its workers and NiteLite Security, the company has identified the risks of violence in its convenience stores and developed procedures to eliminate and minimize the risks to workers.

Management will ensure all workers are aware of violence hazards and are properly trained to protect themselves. Administering the policy and ensuring it is reviewed and updated is part of management's regular duties. The review and updates will be done in collaboration with the occupational health and safety committee. Workers must follow the procedures established to reduce the risk of violence and must immediately report all incidents to ABC's store managers.

### Jobs at Risk and Locations

Cashiers, stock persons and store managers working at any of our retail locations open between 11:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m. are at risk of a violent situation.

### Procedures and Policies

#### Dealing with Customers and Potentially Violent Individuals

##### All Customers

- Keep active and alert at all times. Don't be a target.
- Greet everyone who enters the store.
- Be friendly and look directly in their eyes.
- Get away from the sales counter when there are no customers.

##### Irate Customers

- Focus on emotions first. Remain calm. This may help the customer settle down.
- Avoid escalating the situation.
- If you are alone and the customer continues to behave in an agitated manner, stop

talking and wait until they realize you are not responding. When the customer pauses, ask the customer to return to the store when your supervisor is available. Give an exact time.

- If the customer refuses to leave and becomes increasingly agitated or threatening, discreetly activate your emergency response transmitter to notify the police or NiteLite Security for help.

### **Suspicious Persons**

- Ask the customer standing next to a suspicious customer, "Are you together?" The customer will usually turn around to look at the other person. This may deter a potential thief.
- Keep looking directly at suspicious loiterers. When they leave the store, fill out a suspect and vehicle identification report. The form is located in a book stored near the cash register.
- If the suspects do not leave, use your emergency transmitter to notify the police or NiteLite Security to signal for a patrol check.

### **Shoplifters**

- Don't be a hero. Your safety comes first.
- Some store managers have been trained to confront shoplifters. Unless you have received this training, do not become physically involved.
- If you suspect shoplifting, don't take chances. Be cautious, remain calm and use your emergency transmitter to inconspicuously notify the police or NiteLite Security.
- When the shoplifter(s) leave, immediately fill-out a suspect and vehicle identification report. The form is located in a book stored near the cash register.

### **Store Appearance, Lighting, Organization and Signage**

- The store layout is designed to be attractive to customers and unattractive to thieves.
  - Low shelving provides visibility so staff can observe customers at all times. This prevents thieves from hiding.
  - The sales counter and cash register are located near windows to promote visibility inside and outside of the store. If a robbery happens, someone is more likely to notice.
- Garbage disposal bins and parking lots must remain well lit. Report parking lot lighting issues to XYZ Property Managers.
- The following signs are provided and must be on display at all times:
  - Minimum cash on premises.
  - Video surveillance on premises.
- Video cameras must remain visible to customers at all times. Blocking cameras or obscuring the lens with merchandise or displays is prohibited.
- Height strips are installed on doors in all locations. The strip must remain clearly visible from the cash register.

- Door alarms are installed at each location to signal when customers enter and leave the store. These must remain in working order at all times. Report broken alarms to your manager immediately.
- Report violent incidents to management as soon as they occur. Use the suspect and vehicle identification report to record incident details immediately after the incident. The report form is stored in a book located near the cash register
- All emergency phone numbers (police, fire ambulance and the number for NiteLite Security) must be displayed prominently beside each store phone.
- Managers and workers must ensure back doors or entries, other than the front door, are locked and can only be accessed by workers with a key or security card.

### **Daily Tasks to Prevent Violent Incidents**

#### General

- Identify escape routes and know how to exit in an emergency.
- Check outside lights each night to ensure they are on and working properly. Ask the store manager to fix defective lights immediately.
- Wear your emergency response transmitter, carry your cell phone and know the location of pay phones.

#### Cash Handling

- Keep the cash register fund to a minimum.
- Ask customers for exact change or the smallest bills possible.
- Remove \$50 and \$100 dollar bills from the cash register as soon as you receive them.
- Between 11:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m., only operate one register. Open the empty, unused register drawer(s) and tip it/them up for display.

#### Making Deposits

- Workers responsible for making deposits must observe the following rules:
  - Deposits are only made during the day.
  - The time the deposit is made must vary.
  - Two workers must make the deposit. One person submits the deposit while the other watches for suspicious persons/activity.
  - Do not take deposits or valuables (such as jewelry) home.
  - If someone grabs the deposit, do not resist and do not chase the thief.

#### Working Alone

- Someone from NiteLite Security will contact workers who are working alone. Contact will be at scheduled intervals to ensure worker safety.
- Workers must phone (306) XXX-XXXX at the beginning of their shift to confirm the signals for suspicious persons, shoplifters or irate persons and violence.

- If there is a person or a group of people who are suspicious, shoplifting or irate, use the emergency response transmitter to call for help.
- If there is a violent incident, call for help with your emergency response transmitter and sound the alarm when the person has left the store.
- Do not empty the garbage at night.

### **Parking at Work**

#### Arriving

- When driving alone, ensure everything needed is on the front seat.
- Drive onto the parking lot with vehicle doors locked and windows rolled up.
- Scan the area for suspicious persons when entering the parking lot.
- If the store is open and it is after dark, drive up to the main entrance. Wait for acknowledgement from workers inside. Park and walk to the store when other staff are watching.

#### Parking

- Park in an open, well-lit spot near an exit that is visible from within the store.
- Gather personal belongings (lunch, shoes, etc). Have the building key and safety devices (whistle or emergency response transmitter) in hand and ready to operate.
- Scan the area for suspicious persons before getting out of the car.
- Exit the vehicle when ready and safe.

#### Exiting Vehicle and Walking to the Store

- Do not reach back into the vehicle or linger beside it after exiting.
- Lock the vehicle and walk quickly and directly to the store.
- Use the main entrance. Avoid back doors or secluded entrances.

#### Returning to the Vehicle

- Gather all belongings and prepare to leave the store. If it is late at night have the keys for your vehicle in hand when exiting the store.
- Have your emergency response transmitter ready to operate.
- Scan the area for other people prior to leaving the store.
- Use the main entrance to exit. Avoid rear doors or secluded exits.
- If closing, lock the doors.
- Walk directly and quickly to your vehicle. If possible, leave with other workers.
- Alert other workers in the store of your departure. Exit while other workers watch you walk to your vehicle.
- Once in your vehicle, lock all doors and keep windows up.

### **What to Do During a Robbery**

- Most robberies last less than two minutes. The longer a robbery takes, the more nervous

a thief becomes. Do not resist or attempt to delay the thief. Obey their instructions.

- Do not be a hero. Do not fight or use weapons. These actions may jeopardize your safety or the safety of others.
- Remain calm. Give thieves the cash and merchandise they want. Handle as if making a sale to a customer. Do not argue or attempt to stop them.
- Do not attempt to catch or capture a thief. Let them leave the store.
- Avoid startling a thief. Tell them if there is another worker in the back of the store so they will not be startled or react violently should the other worker appear unexpectedly.
- Avoid sudden or unexpected movements. Keep actions short and smooth and make sure the robber is aware of the movement.
- Observations are important. Make note of the following:
  - Height, weight, hair colour and any identifying or visible features like tattoos, scars unique hair-cuts or visible piercing.
  - Type of clothing and colour.
  - Size and type of weapons.
  - Pay attention to what is said and how. Unique aspects of speech like an accent or slang, slurred speech or difficulty speaking, etc. may help police.
  - Observe each thief's height on the door strip as they exit.

### **What to Do After a Robbery**

- Activate your emergency response transmitter and the alarm located under the cash register drawer after the robbers have left.
- Call for help, but only when it is safe to do so. Activate the alarm and dial 911 immediately after the thief leaves.
- Provide police with the following information:
  - If anyone is injured at the scene.
  - The direction the thieves took when they left.
  - Vehicle description, if any.
  - What the robbers looked like and clothing description.
  - What kind of weapons they used, if any.
  - What time the robbery occurred.
- Stay on the phone until the police arrive or tell you it is okay to hang up.
- Protect the crime scene. Be careful not to damage any fingerprints left by the thieves. Do not touch anything that may be evidence.
- Ask witnesses to wait for the police. Get their names and addresses.

### **Reporting Violent Incidents**

- Complete a suspect and vehicle identification report and a violent incident report as soon as you can after the incident. The forms can be found in a book stored near the cash register.

- Report a violent incident and provide the completed forms to the store manager.

### **Investigating Violent Incidents**

- All violent incidents will be investigated by the occupational health and safety committee (OHC), the occupational health and safety representative, or workers where there is no OHC or representative.
- The OHC, representative or workers will make recommendations for corrective actions to prevent similar incidents from recurring.
- The employer/manager will document deficiencies and the appropriate changes will be made.
- Workers in affected stores will be informed of the results of the investigation and of any changes in the policy and prevention plan that result.
- If changes require worker re-training, the training will be provided by the employer.

### **Seeking Medical Aid for Injury and Post-Traumatic Stress**

- Medical aid and counselling is available to any worker who is a victim of violence. An offer of medical aid and counselling will be made by the company. The offer will be documented and every effort will be made to ensure the worker understands this offer at that time.
- Workers have a right to refuse medical aid and/or counselling at any time.
- If a worker seeks medical aid or counselling, injury reports must be filed with the Saskatchewan Workers' Compensation Board (WCB). The worker must submit a W1 form and the employer must submit an E1 form. These forms are available on the WCB's website at [www.wcbsask.com](http://www.wcbsask.com).

### **Commitment to Provide Training**

- The company provides a trainer competent in violence avoidance techniques. The trainer teaches all current, new and inexperienced workers how to:
  - Prevent and minimize the risk of violence.
  - Recognize potentially violent situations.
  - Respond to violent incidents and obtain emergency assistance.
  - Document, report and investigate incidents of violence.
  - Where permitted by law, the company will disclose information about persons with known histories of violence to workers at ABC's stores.
- To successfully complete training, all workers must demonstrate knowledge of:
  - The nature and extent of the risks they may face at work.
  - The safety equipment and procedures that must be used to work safely and prevent violence.
  - The recent and past incidents of violence which occurred in the store.
  - Current and newly identified risks and how to avoid or prevent recurrences of violence.

- Persons with known histories of violence whom workers have the potential to encounter in the course of their duties.
- After training is provided, each worker must sign a record of training and instruction

### **No Loss of Pay or Benefits**

- Managers will ensure victims of violent incidents do not lose pay or other benefits for visiting a physician or other health care specialist for treatment or counselling during work hours.

### **Availability of Policy Statement and Prevention Plan**

- Managers will ensure workers receive a copy of this policy statement and prevention plan during orientation and training.
- Managers will ensure all workers know a copy is stored in the cupboard next to the cash register where they can easily find and read it.

### **Revisions**

- Managers will ensure the policy is reviewed every three years and when there are events in the workplace that require changes.
- Managers will ensure workers are consulted when this policy is reviewed.
- Managers will ensure the original policy and revised versions are dated.
- Managers will ensure workers are informed of revisions to the policy and retrained on the revised elements of the policy.

## Appendix B: Sample Worker Survey

### General Information:

Have you ever been a victim of violence in this workplace? ☐ yes ☐ no

If yes, what was the nature of the incident (e.g., verbal threats, hitting, offensive correspondence)?

Who was the offender (e.g., a customer, co-worker, contractor)? Provide a name if known.

Do you feel safe from violence at work? ☐ yes ☐ no

If no, why?

### Likelihood of Violence

Do you think violence is more likely to occur on certain days? ☐ yes ☐ no

If yes, why and which days?

Do you think violence is more likely to occur at certain times of the day? ☐ yes ☐ no

If yes, why and when?



Do you think violence is more likely to occur in certain places? ☐ yes ☐ no

If yes, why and where?

### **Violence Prevention**

What do you think could be done to minimize the risk of violence?

Are there any situations on the job where you feel particularly vulnerable? ☐ yes ☐ no

If yes, what are they?

### **Violence Prevention Training**

Have you received workplace violence prevention training? ☐ yes ☐ no

If yes, what kind of training did you receive?

**Submit this survey to your employer or supervisor.**

## Appendix C: Sample Risk Assessment Checklist

Note: Security measures should not conflict with fire or other safety requirements. Do not do anything that could impede workers' and customers' ability to leave the building during an emergency.

Potential Risk Factors	Yes	No	N/A
Do employees acknowledge customers with a friendly greeting, smile and make eye contact?			
Are workers selected for night shifts based on age and demeanor?			
Are workers trained to recognize potentially violent situations?			
Are workers trained to safely handle irate customers, suspicious persons, shoplifters and thieves?			
Are violence prevention techniques built into daily tasks (e.g., cash handling and deposits, parking lot safety)?			
Are workers trained on what to do during a robbery?			
Are workers trained on post robbery procedures (e.g., reporting to police, suspect identification, their right to medical aid without loss of pay)?			
Do workers know they have a right to medical aid without loss of pay or benefits after a robbery?			
Do workers have a copy of the most recent version of the policy and know where a copy is located if they need to read it?			
Are workers informed and retrained when elements of the policy have changed?			
Store Appearance, Lighting, Organization and Signage	Yes	No	N/A
Are workers and customers visible to potential witnesses outside?			
Is shelving low (e.g., five feet) so workers can see customers at all times?			
Do mirrors or video surveillance monitors help employees see the whole store?			
Are cash registers at the front of the store near windows?			
Are garbage bin and parking lot areas well lit?			
Are the video surveillance cameras visible to customers?			
Is there signage to indicate a small amount of cash and video surveillance on the premises?			
Is public access to washrooms controlled?			
Are anti-jump barriers fitted in front of cash-handling devices?			
Is access to employee-only areas locked?			
Are backdoors and side entries locked and only accessible to workers with keys or security cards?			
Are there door alarms to alert workers when someone enters the store?			
Are emergency numbers and contact information close to the cash registers and store phones where workers can quickly access the information?			
Is there a silent, hold-up alarm installed?			
Is the height strip at the front door in place and clearly visible from the cash register?			

<b>Employees Working Alone at Late Night Hours</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>N/A</b>
Does someone contact workers at regular intervals to ensure they are okay?			
Is there a check-in and check-out procedure?			
Are employees permitted to take garbage out alone at night? (If yes, this should stop.)			
Do employees assigned to work late night hours have personal emergency transmitters?			
Are personal emergency transmitters monitored by the police, employer, a security company, or other person designated by the employer?			
Are late night workers at least 19 years of age?			
Are the video surveillance cameras monitored by a security company?			
<b>Handling Money and Deposits</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>N/A</b>
Is there a procedure for cash handling and deposits? (If no, develop one.)			
Is it standard practice to keep as little cash in the till as possible?			
Are large bills put into a drop box, safe, or strong room that is out of sight?			
Do workers make deposits at night or alone?			
When workers make deposits together, do they face in opposite directions to keep an eye on the surroundings?			
Does the time and routine for making deposits vary from day to day to make it less predictable?			
Do workers transport cash in a bag that has the company logo or otherwise makes it obvious that they are carrying cash?			
<b>Opening and Closing</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>N/A</b>
Do your written procedures for opening and closing emphasize personal safety?			
<b>Travelling To and From Work</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>N/A</b>
Do employees have the option of asking for an escort to walk to their cars or the bus stop at night?			
Are evening or night parking spaces near the workplace available for employees?			
Do you provide free transportation home for workers who finish between 12:30 a.m. to 7:00 a.m. local time, if applicable? *This is an employment standards requirement for Saskatchewan hotels, restaurants, educational institutions, hospitals and nursing homes who are open overnight.			
<b>Regular Checks of Policy</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>N/A</b>
Do you conduct risk assessments for violence every three years and revise your policy accordingly?			
Do you revise your policy when there are significant changes to the workplace design and work procedures?			
Do you investigate violent incidents?			
Do you accept recommendations from the OHC, representative and/or workers, take corrective action and update your policy accordingly?			
Do you provide workers with an up-to-date copy of the policy and retrain them on its revised elements?			
Do you retrain workers on the revised elements in the policy?			

## Appendix D: Sample Written Check-in Procedures

<b>You will be contacted by:</b> _____			
<b>They will contact you (circle one):</b>	In person	By telephone	By (other): _____
<b>They will contact you (circle one):</b>	Every ____ minutes	Every ____ hour(s)	At the end of your shift
<p>1. You will call the contact person within five minutes if you were not available at the predetermined check-in time.</p> <p>2. If your contact person cannot reach you at one of these predetermined times, they will make another attempt within five minutes.</p> <p>3. If your contact person still cannot reach you after the second attempt they will do the following (select all that apply):</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Call a neighbouring store and have someone check on you.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Call the owner or manager of your store and ask him or her to send someone to your work location if your workplace is in an isolated area.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> If necessary, call 911 and request help at your location.</p>			
<b>Emergency information:</b>			
<p>In case of an emergency (e.g., fire, flood, or bomb threat) call the following person:</p> <p>Contact name: _____</p> <p>Contact phone number: _____</p>			

## Appendix E: Record of Training and Instruction

A record of training and instruction ensures that procedures for dealing with violent situations are clearly communicated and understood by all workers.

Record of Training and Instruction Form			
When you sign the record you are acknowledging that the employee has attended training about workplace violence prevention procedures conducted by ABC Convenience Stores Inc.			
Training may include:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The content of the policy statement on violence and prevention plan in the workplace.</li><li>• The risks of violence identified at ABC Convenience Stores, Inc.</li><li>• Appropriate action to be taken.</li><li>• Reporting requirement whenever incidents of violence occur.</li><li>• How to fill out a violent incident report and a suspect and vehicle identification report form.</li></ul>			
Date (mm/dd/yy)	Printed name	Trainer's signature	Supervisor's signature

## Appendix F: Sample Violent Incident Report Form

<b>1. General information:</b>	
Date of incident	Time <input type="checkbox"/> a.m. <input type="checkbox"/> p.m.
Name of employee	Job title
Shift	Store/department/section
Location of incident (select all that apply): <input type="checkbox"/> Parking lot <input type="checkbox"/> Store <input type="checkbox"/> Stockroom <input type="checkbox"/> Counter/reception area <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	
Type of incident (select all that apply): <input type="checkbox"/> Verbal <input type="checkbox"/> Threat <input type="checkbox"/> Pushed <input type="checkbox"/> Scratched <input type="checkbox"/> Bitten <input type="checkbox"/> Struck <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	
Police called: <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	Advised of right to consult a medical professional: <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no
Medical attention/first aid obtained: <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	WCB form completed: <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no
Please describe the incident:	
<b>2. Witness Information:</b>	
Name	Phone number
Name	Phone number
Name	Phone number
<b>3. Suspect Information:</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Customer <input type="checkbox"/> Current employee <input type="checkbox"/> Former employee <input type="checkbox"/> Delivery person <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	
Name and contact information of suspect (if known):	
Was the suspect involved in previous violent incidents? <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no	
<b>4. Please provide any other information you think is relevant:</b>	

## Appendix G: Sample Suspect and Vehicle Identification Report

Employees who have experienced or witnessed violence must complete a copy of this form along with incident report form.

<b>1. General Appearance:</b>		
Gender	Age	Height
Weight/build	Hair (colour/type)	Complexion
Race	Scars/marks	Tattoos
Jewelry	Hat	Coat
Shoes	Shirt/tie	Pants/skirt
<b>2. Facial Features</b>		
Hair texture/style Skin/hair colour Shape of eyebrows Shape/size of eyes Shape of nose Mouth/lips Moustache/beard Wrinkles Ear shape/size cheeks Neck/Adam's apple	Include specific features you remember:	
<b>3. What did the suspect say?</b>		
<b>4. Tool or weapon seen?</b>		
<b>5. Vehicle:</b>		
Colour	Make	Model
Licence plate	Body style	Damage/rust
Bumper sticker	Wheel covers	Direction of travel

# Violence Prevention

## An employer's guide for developing a violence policy statement and prevention plan

For more information, please contact the Ministry of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety Occupational Health and Safety Branch at:

### **Regina**

300 - 1870 Albert Street  
Regina, SK S4P 4W1

### **Saskatoon**

8th Floor, 122 3rd Avenue North  
SASKATOON, SK S7K 2H6

### **Toll Free**

1-800-567-7233 (SAFE)