



# THE UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG

## Violence in the Workplace Form Information Summary

It is important to consider that while many situations are able to be identified and resolved with little or no intervention, that the documentation of such incidents may assist administration when reviewing case history to develop procedures and / or place into effect mitigation strategies that will reduce the potential of future exposure to certain situations.

The University of Winnipeg “**Workplace Violence Incident Report Form**” serves as a method to document those situations where individuals (staff) confronted with incidents, or where it is being reported through other persons (clients) that a potential violent incident has occurred, to acquire and document the situation, in the event that the incident has potential to become a legal matter and where the documentation will serve as a record of the actions undertaken to address the issue in a court of law (where applicable).

Ultimately, the reporting of incidents of workplace violence assists administration with the investigation and resolution of complaints / issues and to ensure the provisions guided through university policy and provincial legislation for a safe work environment.

The following information serves as a summary concerning factors and what constitutes situations which may be considered as “Violence in the Workplace”, as described through supporting information from the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health & Safety.

Most people think of violence as a physical assault. However, workplace violence is a much broader problem. It is any act in which a person is abused, threatened, intimidated or assaulted in his or her employment. While exact definitions may vary in legislation, generally speaking workplace violence includes:

- **Threatening behaviour** – such as shaking fists, destroying property or throwing objects.
- **Verbal or written threats** – any expression of intent to inflict harm.
- **Harassment** – any behavior that demeans, embarrasses, humiliates, annoys, alarms or verbally abuses a person and that is known or would be expected to be unwelcome. This includes words, gestures, intimidation, bullying, or other inappropriate activities.
- **Verbal abuse** – swearing, insults or condescending language.
- **Physical attacks** – hitting, shoving, pushing or kicking.

Workplace violence may also be considered when individuals are subjected to situations involving;

- rumors
- swearing
- pranks
- arguments
- property damage
- vandalism
- sabotage
- theft
  - psychological trauma



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- anger-related incidents

Without question, serious offences inclusive of sexual assault, assault, arson, etc. are all examples of workplace violence.

Workplace violence is not limited to incidents that occur within a traditional workplace. Work-related violence can occur at off-site business-related functions (conferences, trade shows), at social events related to work, in clients' homes or away from work but resulting from work (a threatening telephone call to your home from a client or customer).

As such and to reiterate, **all** incidents in which there is any interaction, where individuals are feeling vulnerable or have been subjected to any type of unacceptable behavior or abuse, whether verbal, physical or implied, that this is documented appropriately.

The completion of a form is a confidential process and there should be no fear of reprisal or repercussion regarding the reporting of incidents by staff. The reporting of incidents assists administration to investigate and resolve complaints.

There are two documents which have been developed to assist in the reporting of violence incidents, as described within this summary. Below are the instructions for completing the form:

## 1. Workplace Violence Incident Report Form

- **Section 1:** In this section, the reporting individual will complete their full name, date and contact telephone number(s)
- **Section 2:** This section is where the reporter will include the name(s) of the involved individuals, whether they are the victim or perpetrator and relevant details concerning contact information. In this section, the reporter will describe the relationship of the subject identified as the perpetrator and their relationship to the victim or recipient of the alleged abuse.
- **Section 3:** In this section, the reporter will check off, to the best of their ability the known reasons of the nature of the incident. Details are not required in this section and may be expanded upon in the report dialogue.
- **Section 4:** Although not all encompassing, in this section the reporter will to the best of their knowledge identify and provide a brief description concerning the nature of the incident.
- **Section 5:** The reporter in the section will indicate whether any reported injury has occurred and whether requiring medical or aid assistance. Non-Physical injuries generally may be described as being emotional and related to stress, anxiety, fear, etc.
- **Section 6:** In this section, the reporter will provide indication of the response to the event. This includes whether there was immediate intervention where resolve was met, or where further intervention was required as a result of the nature and severity of the incident (Security, Police, Medical Aid, etc.).



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- The next section on the form is where the reporter will provide a detailed account of the event, inclusive of what happened, where, with whom at what time and all relevant details. The reporter will also use this section to identify any witnesses and where required, have witnesses complete a statement.
- The last portion of the Incident Form serves as a routing feature. After any report of Workplace Violence, the form shall be submitted by scanning the completed document to the appropriate Program Manager, Chief Human Resource Officer, as well as the Manager, Health and Safety and Director of Security.

## 2. Workplace Violence Incident Witness Statement

This form is to be provided to and completed by any witnesses to a violence incident. In this form, witnesses will describe to the best of their ability, a detailed account of what they may have seen, heard or witnessed. It will be important to provide the witness with clear instruction on what is required within the body of the form, including approximate times, date(s) and involved persons and any pertinent detail which will assist the reader in gaining an understanding of the nature of the incident. The witness should be instructed to only communicate what was actually observed and/or heard and not offer opinions or subjective dialogue.

Once completed, the witness will require signing and dating the document. The witness statement(s) shall then be submitted electronically by scanning and emailing to the intended recipients (**Internal users** - faculty, staff, and students) or through hard copy (**External users** – contractors, visitors, general public) to the Health and Safety office for appropriate distribution.

### **Form Submission**

To complete the Violence Incident and Witness (where applicable) forms, simply complete, download and print from the U of W Safety Office site and within the Incident Reporting tab (Workplace Violence link).

Once the forms are completed, please scan and send to the intended recipients as noted in the routing section on the form(s).

Please ensure that any printed copies are maintained confidentially and not left visible on your desk or where they can be openly viewed or removed. The information contained within these forms is of a sensitive nature and should only be shared between the composers and intended recipients.