

IISD-ELA Workplace Violence and Harassment Prevention Policy and Program



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Purpose

Every worker is entitled to a harassment- and violence-free workplace. This policy and program aim to prevent workplace violence and harassment, respond to situations in which violence or harassment have occurred, and, importantly, support victims of violence and harassment. Responsibilities for the employer, employees, supervisors, IISD Experimental Lakes Area (IISD-ELA) Occupational Health & Safety Committee (OHSC), Human Resources (HR), affiliates, and board members are defined below should they encounter or be informed of incidents or threats of workplace violence or harassment.

Scope

This policy applies to the following:

- All employees, overnight visitors to the IISD-ELA field station, affiliates, contractors, board members, senior management, and volunteers
- IISD president and chief executive officer
- Director, People and Culture
- IISD-ELA OHSC

Definitions

Employee refers to any part-time, full-time, casual, or temporary employee, volunteer, or intern of IISD-ELA, as well as any individual who would be considered a “worker” for the purpose of the applicable occupational health and safety legislation (including students, visiting researchers, contractors, employees of other organizations, and all overnight visitors to the IISD-ELA field site).

Employer refers to IISD-ELA, including the management team and anyone with a supervisory role.

Supervisor refers to any person who has charge of a workplace or authority over a worker, including individuals employed by IISD-ELA and those employed by other organizations.

Workplace means any land, place, location, or thing at, upon, near, or in where business or work-related activities are conducted. It includes, but is not limited to, the physical work premises (offices or camps), home office (remote), work-related social functions (parties, external events), work assignments outside of IISD-ELA's offices or camps, work-related travel, and work-related conferences or training sessions.

Conduct includes a written or verbal comment, a physical act or gesture or display, or any combination therein.

Violence Definitions

In Manitoba, **violence** is defined in the Workplace Safety and Health Regulation, 217/2006 as

- a) the attempted or actual exercise of physical force against a person, and/or
- b) any threatening statement or behaviour that gives a person reasonable cause to believe that physical force will be used against the person.

According to Ontario's Occupational Health and Safety Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. O.1, **workplace violence** is defined as

- a) the exercise or an attempt to exercise physical force by a person against a worker, in a workplace, that causes or could cause physical injury to the worker,
- b) a statement or behaviour that is reasonable for a worker to interpret as a threat to exercise physical force against the worker, that could cause physical injury to the worker.

Violence can include, but is not limited to, the following acts or attempted acts:

- verbal threats or intimidation
- verbal abuse, including swearing or shouting offensively at a person
- contact of a sexual nature
- kicking, punching, scratching, biting, squeezing, pinching, battering, hitting, or wounding a person in any way
- attack with any type of weapon
- spitting at a person

Threat is defined as the implication or expression of intent to inflict physical harm or actions that a reasonable person would interpret as a threat to physical safety.

Domestic violence is described as a range of behaviours or actions taken by a person to control and dominate another person. Domestic violence is characterized by abusive, coercive, forceful, or threatening acts or words used by one member of a family, household, residence, or

intimate relationship against another. The definition of domestic violence used in this policy and program may differ from that used by other organizations and agencies. Other commonly used terms to describe similar behaviours include family violence, intimate partner violence, and spousal violence. **Domestic violence** can include, but is not limited to, any of the following forms:

- using property, pets, or children to threaten and intimidate
- stalking, verbal abuse, or use of electronic devices and technology to control or abuse
- threatening deportation if the victim was sponsored
- economic abuse, such as withholding or stealing money or stopping a partner from reporting to work or from getting or keeping a job
- physical, emotional, sexual, spiritual abuse, or neglect

Sexual violence is any sexual act, act of a sexual nature, or act targeting sexuality (physical or psychological) that is committed without consent. It includes, but is not limited to, sexual assault, stalking, sexual harassment, indecent exposure, voyeurism, and distribution of intimate images, including video. Sexual violence also includes inducing intoxication, impairment, or incapacity for the purpose of making another person vulnerable to non-consensual sexual activity, and other analogous conduct.

Minor incident means an incident in which no one is physically harmed in any way, and which was resolved through employee or supervisor intervention or mediation.

Serious incident means an incident in which someone was physically harmed, whether requiring medical attention or not, or which continued or escalated after supervisor intervention or mediation.

In Ontario, a violent incident involves a **critical injury** if

- a worker is killed, or
- the injury is of a serious nature that
 - places life in jeopardy
 - produces unconsciousness
 - results in substantial loss of blood
 - involves the fracture of a leg or arm but not a finger or toe
 - involves the amputation of a leg, arm, hand, or foot but not a finger or toe
 - consists of burns to a major portion of the body
 - causes loss of sight in an eye.

Harassment Definitions

In Manitoba, **harassment** is defined in the Workplace Safety and Health Regulation, 217 / 2006 as

- a) objectionable conduct that creates a risk to the health of a worker, or
- b) severe conduct that adversely affects a worker's psychological or physical well-being.

According to Ontario's Occupational Health and Safety Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. O.1, **workplace harassment** is defined as

- a) engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct against a worker in a workplace that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome, or
- b) **workplace sexual harassment**, which is defined as
 - i. engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct against a worker in a workplace because of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression, where the course of comment or conduct is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome, or
 - ii. making a sexual solicitation or advance where the person making the solicitation or advance is in a position to confer, grant, or deny a benefit or advancement to the worker, and the person knows or ought reasonably to know that the solicitation or advance is unwelcome.

For purposes of this policy, **workplace harassment** can include perceived, actual, threatened, attempted, or repeated conduct intended or likely to threaten, intimidate, degrade, bully, or otherwise harm another person. Harassment may be written, verbal, a gesture or display, or any combination of these, and may cause physical and/or psychological or emotional damage. Harassment can include, but is not limited to, any of the following acts or attempted acts:

- misusing authority, including:
 - constantly changing work guidelines
 - withholding information
 - setting impossible deadlines that lead to failure, and/or
 - blocking applications for leave, training, or promotion in an arbitrary manner
- impeding a person's work in a deliberate way, including tampering with work equipment or personal belongings
- unwanted and inappropriate invitations, requests, or comments, including of a sexual nature
- intruding on a person's privacy, including spying or stalking
- unwanted physical contact
- spreading rumours or gossip about a person
- harsh or excessive criticism of a non-constructive nature
- undermining, belittling, demeaning, or ridiculing a person
- socially excluding or isolating a person
- making offensive jokes or remarks or playing unwanted practical jokes

- making aggressive, threatening, or rude gestures
- engaging in any of the actions, conduct, or comments outlined above against a person because of that person's
 - race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, family status, economic status, genetic characteristics, disability, physical appearance, or
 - any of the other prohibited grounds that the Canadian Human Rights Act or provincial and national laws list

Harassment is not consensual workplace banter and interactions (unless it includes hurtful remarks about others, especially if they pertain to any of the prohibited grounds listed above) or reasonable management action carried out in a fair way, such as day-to-day actions by a supervisor or manager related to performance, absenteeism, assignments, discipline, and even dismissal (unless it is abusive or discriminatory).

Policy and Program

IISD-ELA is committed to providing and maintaining a safe, secure, and respectful environment free from all forms of violence (including domestic violence, sexual violence, and third-party violence) and harassment. IISD-ELA does not tolerate violence, threats, or harassment in the workplace by or against employees, visitors, volunteers, customers, clients, or other third parties. In the event of an incident, IISD-ELA will investigate in a fair and timely manner and take disciplinary action against the individual, up to and including removal from the site, banning from future visits, and/or immediate discharge for just cause.

This policy and program apply to affected persons while they are at an IISD office, the IISD-ELA field site, travelling to and from the field site, or elsewhere performing work duties. This policy and program support human rights, labour and employment, and occupational health and safety legislation and regulations, and will be interpreted in accordance with all local laws.

Notwithstanding anything in this policy and program, an individual has the right to file a complaint with the Manitoba Human Rights Commission, the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario, any other provincial or national Human Rights Commission, or the competent labour court. This policy and program are not intended to discourage or prevent the complainant from exercising any other legal rights pursuant to any other law.

This policy and program are reviewed with each new employee and are provided to all overnight visitors to the IISD-ELA field station. The policy will also be available on the IISD-ELA Intranet and IISD-ELA external website for future access.

Roles and Responsibilities

All individuals have the responsibility to treat each other with respect and to prevent disrespect toward others. A respectful workplace supports the physical, psychological, and social well-being of all persons.

Employer

- Take every reasonable precaution in the circumstances to protect employees from workplace violence and harassment.
- Ensure that a workplace violence and harassment assessment is conducted by the OHSC. Develop procedures to minimize identified risks.
- The IISD-ELA operations manager (or their designate) will provide a copy of this policy and program through the MRI OnLocation platform to all overnight visitors to the IISD-ELA field station except employees of IISD-ELA, who will receive the policy from HR (see below).
- Provide information and instruction to employees about the contents of this policy and program.
- Ensure employees are trained to
 - recognize the potential for violence and harassment,
 - follow the policies developed to minimize risk of violence and harassment,
 - respond to incidents appropriately, including reporting and documentation. Supervisors require additional training on responding to reports.
- Advise employees of the existence of any actual or potential danger to the health or safety of workers, including hazards of workplace violence or harassment, of which the employer is aware. Unless otherwise prohibited by law, the duty to inform a worker about the risk of violence includes a duty to provide any information in IISD-ELA's possession, including personal information, related to the risk of violence from persons who have a history of violent behaviour and who workers are likely to encounter in the course of their work. Any personal information provided pursuant to this duty must be the minimum amount necessary to accomplish the purpose.
- Ensure that a copy of this policy is posted in a conspicuous location in institutional facilities.
- If the employer becomes aware, or ought to be reasonably aware of violence or harassment in the workplace, the employer will take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances for the protection of the employee(s).
- Ensure that proper medical care is provided for anyone involved in an incident and that the safety of employees is secured prior to investigating the incident or taking reports.
- Ensure that all reported instances of workplace violence or harassment are investigated in a fair and timely manner, are reported appropriately, and that the appropriate corrective actions are taken, if any.
- Cooperate with police, company investigators, government agents, or other authorities, as required, during any investigation related to workplace violence or harassment.
- Notify the Ministry of Labour when a person is critically injured or killed in a workplace, including situations when the cause is workplace violence (see below for more information and timelines).

Employees

- Comply with the IISD-ELA Workplace Violence and Harassment Prevention Policy and Program and participate in any related training offered by the employer.
- Educate themselves on occupational health and safety acts of their province or country ([Manitoba](#), [Ontario](#), [Canada](#)).
- Take every reasonable precaution to ensure that the workplace remains free of violence and harassment.
- Promptly report all incidents of violence or harassment to their supervisor or manager, a member of the IISD-ELA Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC), any permanent IISD-ELA staff member, executive director, or the IISD Director, People and Culture when they experience or witness it.
- Cooperate in any investigation process related to an incident. Respect the confidentiality of the information shared throughout the resolution process.
- Refrain from retaliatory behaviour against the principal party, responding party, witnesses, and any other individuals who are involved in the resolution process for an incident.

IISD-ELA JHSC

- Meet regularly, as needed, but at a minimum twice a year.
- Assess the risks of workplace violence and harassment that may arise from the nature of the workplace, the type of work, or the conditions of workplace and employment. Advise senior management of the results of this assessment in a written report. Senior management and the IISD-ELA board will address the findings contained in the report. Annual review of this policy will include review of the risk assessment.
 - Where an incident of violence or harassment has occurred, or a risk has been identified through a workplace risk assessment, this policy shall be updated to include a description of
 - any particular worksite at the workplace where an incident has occurred or may reasonably be expected to occur,
 - any particular job functions at the workplace where the worker performing the functions has been, or may reasonably be expected to be, exposed to incidents of violence or harassment, and
 - the measures that IISD-ELA must implement to eliminate the risk of violence or harassment to a worker at the workplace or to control that risk if it is not reasonably practicable to eliminate it.

IISD Human Resources

- Reinforce the organization's commitment to providing a safe and healthy workplace free from violence and harassment.

- Provide a copy of this policy and program to all employees of IISD-ELA through the BambooHR platform. Overnight visitors to the IISD-ELA field station will receive the policy from IISD-ELA Operations (see above, Employer section).
- Provide training to employees on violence and harassment prevention.
- Investigate and deal with all reported incidents of workplace violence and harassment in a fair and timely manner, respecting the privacy of all concerned as much as reasonably possible. Implement corrective and disciplinary measures when needed.
- Log all violence and harassment complaints with the corrective action taken for each complaint.

Procedures

Procedures - Harassment

Self-Help

If an employee experiences **harassment**, they are encouraged to attempt to resolve their concerns by direct communication with the person(s) engaging in unwelcome conduct where appropriate, comfortable, and safe to do so. This communication should take the form of a respectful response in which it is made clear that the behaviour is unwelcome and is to stop. Verbal or written communication is acceptable. Employees should keep a written record of the date, time, and details of the conduct, response, and any witnesses.

Complaint and Investigation

Employees who believe they are victims of **harassment**, or who become aware of situations where such conduct may be occurring, who are not comfortable approaching the harasser, or who were unsuccessful in their attempt to resolve the situation, are encouraged to report these matters verbally or in writing to their supervisor, a member of the IISD-ELA JHSC, any permanent IISD-ELA staff member, the executive director or the IISD Director, People and Culture (whomever you prefer under the circumstances and given the facts). Following the filing of the complaint, the complainant must cooperate with those responsible for investigating the complaint.

Upon learning of the complaint, the person to whom the report has been made will document the complaint using the Workplace Violence and Harassment Incident Report Form (linked at end of policy). They may attempt to resolve the complaint with the two parties by themselves or in consultation with the IISD Director, People and Culture, or they may immediately hand the complaint and investigation off to the IISD Director, People and Culture. Regardless of approach, the form must be submitted to the Director, People and Culture upon completion.

Complaints shall be investigated as appropriate in the circumstances. If a formal investigation is done internally, it will be conducted by the IISD Director, People and Culture or their designate. IISD-ELA, in its sole discretion, may arrange to have the investigation conducted instead by an external third party, where deemed appropriate. The investigation process shall involve interviews of the complainant, the respondent, and any witnesses the investigator believes may

have information relevant to the complaint. The investigator will determine if mediation is needed or appropriate and, if so, mediate or arrange for mediation (to be conducted in consultation with the IISD Director, People and Culture). Within a reasonable amount of time following the completion of interviews, the investigator shall prepare a written report of the investigation findings, including whether there has been a breach of this policy and program. This report will be kept on file by HR. The complainant and the respondent to the complaint will be informed in writing of the results of the investigation.

If the assailant is an employee of IISD-ELA, the Director, People and Culture (in consultation with the executive director of IISD-ELA and HR) shall apply appropriate disciplinary measures, if necessary, based on the facts of the incident and the assailant's employment record. If the assailant is not an employee of IISD-ELA, the Director, People and Culture, shall report the incident in writing to the HR department of their employer. IISD-ELA management and the IISD Director, People and Culture will determine whether the individual will be allowed to return to the field station.

Procedures - Violence

Complaint and Investigation

Every incident of **violence** in the workplace shall be reported immediately to a supervisor, a member of the IISD-ELA JHSC, any permanent IISD-ELA staff member, the executive director, or the IISD Director, People and Culture (whomever you prefer under the circumstances and given the facts). After reporting the incident, the complainant must cooperate with those responsible for investigating the complaint. The person to whom the report has been made (the investigator) shall respond to the incident immediately:

- If emergency assistance is required (medical, police, fire), this shall be sought prior to the commencement of any investigation. The investigator should facilitate these arrangements.
 - See information regarding a **critical injury** below for additional emergency response and reporting requirements.
- Additionally, the investigator must immediately take any appropriate measures toward the assailant, which may include immediate suspension and an obligation to stay at home or to leave the field site while inquiries are carried out.
- Following any emergency response, the investigator shall promptly make inquiries of the victim and any witnesses using the Workplace Violence and Harassment Incident Report Form (linked at end of policy) to guide inquiry and documentation. The investigator will
 - conduct a thorough initial investigation, keeping detailed notes of facts, times, witnesses, and witness accounts (using the form for documentation), and
 - following this initial investigation the investigator shall contact the IISD Director, People and Culture to determine whether additional members of the JHSC, HR, or management should be involved in the investigation.
- The investigator/investigation team will take these steps:

- Determine if mediation is appropriate and, if so, mediate or arrange for mediation (in consultation with the IISD Director, People and Culture).
- Within a reasonable period, write a report outlining the details, facts, and witnesses of the incident, including whether this policy and program have been breached, and submit the report to the IISD Director, People and Culture.
- If the assailant is an employee of IISD-ELA, the IISD Director, People and Culture (in consultation with the executive director and HR) shall apply appropriate disciplinary measures, if necessary, based on the facts of the incident and the assailant's employment record.
- If the assailant is not an employee of IISD-ELA, the IISD Director, People and Culture shall report the incident in writing to the HR department of their employer. IISD-ELA management and IISD Director, People and Culture will determine whether the individual will be allowed to return to the field station.
- During an investigation, the investigator(s) must not disclose the names of the complainant or assailant, nor the circumstances related to the complaint, to any person other than where the disclosure is
 - necessary to investigate the complaint,
 - required to take corrective action in response to the complaint, and/or
 - required by law.
- The personal information that is disclosed as permitted in the above must be the minimum amount necessary for the purpose.

Reporting

Reporting of violent incidents to the Ministry of Labour shall be completed by the IISD-ELA operations manager. The investigator of the incident should contact the IISD-ELA JHSC as described below.

Critical Injury

In the event of a **critical injury**, the accident scene must be sealed off immediately and nothing within the scene disturbed except for the purpose of saving life, relieving human suffering, or preventing unnecessary damage to equipment or other property until the scene is released by the Ministry of Labour.

The following must be notified within the time period and manner indicated:

- **Ministry of Labour, Health and Safety Inspector** – immediately by telephone or other direct means.
- **IISD-ELA JHSC** member – immediately by telephone or other direct means.
- **Ministry of Labour, Training and Skills Development** – within 48 hours after the occurrence by written report in the manner prescribed by Ontario's Occupational Health and Safety Act.

Minor Injury

In the event of workplace violence where an individual is disabled or requires medical attention but there is no **critical injury**, the following shall be notified in writing within the time period and manner indicated:

- **Ministry of Labour, Health and Safety Director** – if required by an inspector, within 4 days of the occurrence; in writing, containing such information and particulars as are prescribed.
- **IISD-ELA JHSC member** – within 4 days of the occurrence; in writing via **IISD-ELA Hazardous Occurrence Incident Report**, containing such information and particulars as are prescribed.

Violations of This Policy

Appropriate disciplinary action for violations of this policy and program will be determined by IISD HR, will consider the nature and impact of the violations, and may include oral or written reprimand, removal/ban from future attendance at the field station, suspension (with or without pay), or termination (with or without notice). Similarly, deliberately false accusations are of an equally serious nature and will also result in disciplinary action up to and including termination without notice for just cause.

IISD-ELA recommends that any employee who has been harmed because of a violence or harassment incident at the workplace consult their health care provider for treatment or referral for post-incident counselling through the confidential Employee Assistance Program, if appropriate.

Protection Against Reprisal

Retaliations or reprisals are prohibited against any individual who has complained in good faith under this policy and program or has provided information regarding a complaint. Any retaliation or reprisals are subject to immediate corrective action, up to and including termination. Alleged retaliation or reprisals are subject to the same complaint procedures and penalties as complaints of violence or harassment.

Privacy Protection

To ensure no individual finds it difficult to come forward because of confidentiality concerns, all complaints under this policy and program, as well as the names of the parties involved, shall be treated as confidential to the extent possible. IISD-ELA will not disclose the name of a complainant or an alleged harasser/assailant, or the circumstances related to the complaint to any person except where disclosure is either (a) necessary to investigate the complaint or take corrective action with respect to the complaint, or (b) required by law. IISD-ELA's obligation to investigate the complaint may require limited disclosure.

How to Report Misconduct Anonymously

In situations where the affected person prefers to place an **anonymous** report in confidence, they are encouraged to use the ethics hotline, EthicsPoint, hosted by a third-party hotline provider, NavEx Global.

The affected person may use any of the following methods to submit a report:

1. Select the “**Make a Report**” link on the [EthicsPoint web page](#). The web page is hosted on a third-party server and therefore is completely confidential.
2. Dial the toll-free hotline number within the United States and Canada: 1-844-955-1643
3. Use the [NavEx mobile app](#).

Forms

The workplace violence and harassment incident report form can be accessed by scanning this QR code with your mobile device.



Related Policies, Procedures, and Guidelines

- IISD-ELA Safeguarding and Protection of Children Policy
- IISD-ELA Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest
- IISD-ELA Whistleblower Policy
- IISD-ELA Workplace Harassment Prevention and Violence Preventing Policy
- IISD-ELA Gender and Equality and Diversity Policy

Policy Review and Revision

Review cycle: This policy will be reviewed regularly, and at least every 5 years by the policy owner to ensure its relevance and accuracy.

Revision history:

Date	Version	Description of Changes	Approved By
June 16, 2026	1.0	Initial policy release, in the IISD-ELA template	IISD-ELA Board through a Board Resolution