Workplace harassment and violence risk-assessment checklist

Insert organization logo

Background

According to the Canada Labour Code, Employers must prevent workplace harassment and violence. [CLC, 125(1)(z.16)]. In addition, Employers need to make sure that everyone involved in the workplace assessment process has had the appropriate training, education or experience before participating in workplace assessments. [Regulations, 7]

Conducting workplace assessment helps an employer to identify risk factors that may contribute to harassment and violence and to devise suitable measures to prevent, reduce or eliminate risks identified from the assessment.

This workplace harassment and violence risk assessment tool could be used as a guide and must be modified to suit your organization's needs. As an employer, you may need to assess other conditions for workplaces that have specific hazards that this assessment tool does not address.

The designated employer representative must complete this assessment, in collaboration with the applicable partner, such as the policy committee. If there is no policy committee, the designated employer representative must complete the assessment with the workplace committee or the health and safety representative. This assessment should be completed whenever there are changes to the risk factors within the organization that may warrant a reassessment or once every 3 years.

Company name……

Company address……

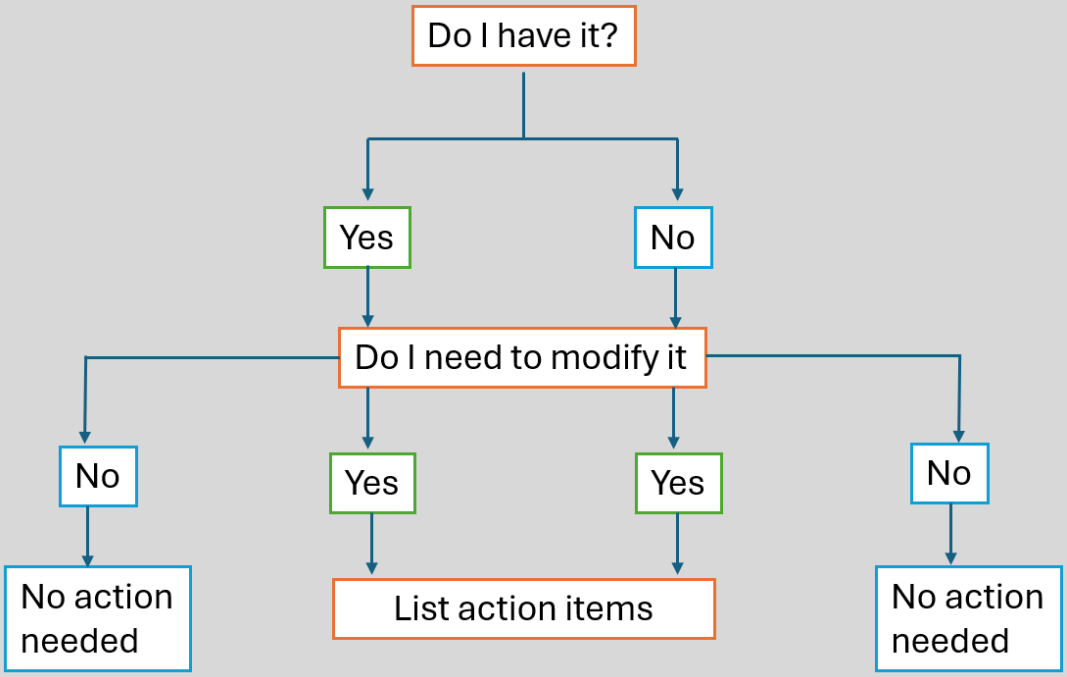
Name of person (or committee) conducting the assessment……..

Applicable partner:…….

Initial assessment date:……

Reassessment date (if applicable)…….

For each question or checklist item below, use the flow chart to determine if further action is required. A "yes" response should be interpreted in the context of the workplace does not automatically suggest control measures or an action is required.



1. Organizational & Policy Foundations

1.1 Written Policies & Procedures

- ☐ A written workplace-violence prevention policy exists *"Is there a written policy and procedure on preventing workplace violence?"*
- ☐ Policy defines violence consistent with regulations *"The attempted or actual exercise of physical force… includes threatening statements or behaviour…"*
- ☐ Policy outlines roles of employer, supervisors, workers, and OHS committee
- ☐ Policy includes reporting procedures and investigation requirements
- ☐ Policy is communicated to all workers

1.2 Training & Awareness

- ☐ Workers trained in violence-prevention procedures
- ☐ Workers trained in emergency response
- ☐ Workers trained in de-escalation / crisis-prevention techniques

- ☐ Workers know how to report incidents
- ☐ Supervisors trained in hazard identification and incident response

1.3 Emergency Procedure

- ☐ Emergency procedures are readily available to address occurrence that pose immediate danger to the health of and safety of employees (e.g bomb threat, riot, highjack, active shooter, armed threat, robbery, employee distress or threat of self-harm

1.4 Resolution Process

- ☐ The policy and/or practice ensures that notices of occurrences of harassment and violence can be submitted anonymously.
- ☐ The designated recipient has received training before assuming their duties under the Regulations.
- ☐ There are alternative avenues for submitting a notice of an occurrence of harassment and violence when the designated recipient is the principal or responding party in the occurrence.
- ☐ The employer responds to all notices of occurrences of harassment and violence.
- ☐ There is a formal process to inquire into occurrences of harassment and violence that happen outside of the workplace.
- ☐ There a process in place to make the option of conciliation available.
- ☐ The investigators appointed to harassment and violence investigations are chosen in accordance with the Regulations.

2. Hazard Identification

2.1 Work Activities

- ☐ Workers interact with the public
- ☐ Workers handle money, valuables, or medications
- ☐ Workers provide care, advice, or enforcement
- ☐ Workers work alone or in small numbers
- ☐ Workers work late at night or early morning
- ☐ Workers travel, drive, or work in community settings
- ☐ Workers use public transportation during work
- ☐ Workers stay in hotels or travel to other cities *"Some work activities put workers at higher risk for violence."*

2.2 Past Incidents

- ☐ Any history of threats, verbal abuse, or physical violence

- ☐ Any history of robberies, hold-ups, or assaults
- ☐ Workers aware of incidents involving co-workers
- ☐ Incident reports are documented and reviewed

3. Physical Environment Assessment

3.1 Parking Lots

- ☐ Adequate lighting
- ☐ Not isolated / monitored
- ☐ Security patrols or cameras present
- ☐ Signage indicating security system
- ☐ No history of break-ins
- ☐ Escort available after dark *"Is there enough lighting in the parking lots?"*

3.2 Building Exterior

- ☐ Located away from high-crime areas
- ☐ Entrances/exits visible from street
- ☐ Exterior well lit
- ☐ No obstructive shrubs or objects
- ☐ Fences limit public access
- ☐ Surveillance signage posted

3.3 Workplace Security

- ☐ Security system installed
- ☐ Security guards present
- ☐ Cameras or mirrors installed
- ☐ Entrances/exits locked or controlled
- ☐ Employee ID or coded access used
- ☐ Visitor sign-in/out system in place
- ☐ Panic buttons or personal alarms available *"Are panic buttons or personal alarms available for workers?"*

3.4 Reception & Waiting Areas

- ☐ Reception visible and staffed
- ☐ Public cannot enter unmonitored
- ☐ Adequate lighting
- ☐ Glass barriers installed

- ☐ Panic buttons at reception
- ☐ No objects that can be used as weapons

3.5 Public/Store Counters

- ☐ Cash registers visible from outside
- ☐ Barriers or screens installed
- ☐ Workers elevated above customers
- ☐ Adequate lighting
- ☐ Panic buttons under counters
- ☐ Low shelving for visibility *"Install panic buttons or alarms under counters."*

3.6 Meeting Rooms & Offices

- ☐ Furniture arranged for quick exit
- ☐ No isolated meeting rooms
- ☐ Panic buttons installed
- ☐ No heavy/sharp objects accessible
- ☐ Windows or glass walls allow visibility *"Place office furniture so employees are located closer to a door or exit…"*

3.7 Stairwells & Elevators

- ☐ No hiding areas under stairs
- ☐ Stairwell doors lock automatically
- ☐ Elevators have emergency phones/buttons

3.8 Washrooms

- ☐ Public does not use staff washrooms
- ☐ Lights cannot be turned off from inside
- ☐ Washrooms checked before closing

3.9 Emergency Preparedness

- ☐ Emergency response program in place
- ☐ Emergency numbers posted
- ☐ Quick-exit design in work areas
- ☐ Refuge room designated
- ☐ Post-incident protocol written *"Is an emergency preparedness and response program in place?"*

4. Risk Evaluation

4.1 Probability Assessment

- ☐ Past frequency of incidents reviewed
- ☐ Likelihood of recurrence assessed
- ☐ Occupational experience considered *"How often has this happened in the past?"*

4.2 Severity Assessment

- ☐ Potential for minor injury
- ☐ Potential for serious injury
- ☐ Potential for fatality *"Could it be considered serious or severe?"*

4.3 Risk Rating (Low / Moderate / High)

- ☐ Probability × Severity matrix applied
- ☐ High-risk hazards prioritized for immediate action

5. Control Measures

5.1 Existing Controls

- ☐ Current controls documented
- ☐ Controls evaluated for effectiveness *"Is it working?"*

5.2 Recommended Controls

- ☐ Elimination options considered
- ☐ Workplace design changes identified
- ☐ Administrative practices updated
- ☐ Work practices revised *"Always begin with the aim of eliminating the risk of violence."*

6. Implementation & Follow-Up

6.1 Implementation Plan

- ☐ Responsibilities assigned
- ☐ Target dates set
- ☐ Budget and resources identified

- ☐ Communication plan developed *"Identify someone who will be responsible… choose a target date."*

6.2 Monitoring & Review

- ☐ Controls monitored for effectiveness
- ☐ Incident trends reviewed
- ☐ Annual review of procedures
- ☐ Adjustments made as needed