

Decon Group Violence and Harassment Policy & Procedure

Purpose:

Decon Group (“Decon”) has zero tolerance for workplace violence or harassment of any kind; We will be proactive in the prevention of workplace violence and harassment.

Decon is committed to: Investigating reported incidents of violence and harassment in an objective and timely manner, taking necessary action, and providing appropriate support for victims.

To ensure that employees at Decon have a work environment that is free of violence and harassment of all kinds, whether it arises from another employee or any other person visiting the workplace, or interacting with staff, this policy will ensure that:

- Individuals are aware of, and understand that, acts of violence or harassment are considered a serious offence for which necessary action will be imposed;
- Those subjected to acts of violence or harassment are encouraged to access any assistance they may require in order to pursue a complaint; and individuals are advised of available recourse if they are subjected to, or become aware of, situations involving violence or harassment.

Definitions

Workplace harassment means:

- 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. This includes unwelcome words or actions that are known or should be known to be offensive, embarrassing, humiliating or demeaning to a worker or group of workers. It includes behavior that intimidates, isolates or discriminates against the targeted individual.

Workplace violence means:

- The exercise or attempt of physical force by a person against a worker in a workplace that causes or could cause physical injury to the worker,

- A threat to exercise physical force against the worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker.

The types of violence will be defined as:

Criminal Intent Involves; a person with no relationship to the workplace, who commits a violent act (e.g. theft, hostage taking/kidnapping, physical assault)

Customer/Client; A client with willful intent to cause harm to the employee

Employee Related; Employee who engages in repeated and persistent negative acts towards one or more employees resulting in the creation of a toxic or unhealthy work environment

Personal Relationship; Relationship violence that occurs at the workplace (e.g. family member that commits a violent act against a worker within the workplace)
If any employee engages in workplace violence or harassment, an investigation will take place immediately. The employee involved will face discipline which may include up to and including immediate termination.

Responsibilities

General Manager

It is the responsibility of the General Manager of Decon to ensure that:

- All reasonable preventative measures are in place to protect employees and others at Decon from workplace violence and harassment;
- A workplace violence risk assessment is conducted;
- Advise the Joint Health & Safety Committee of the assessment results and provide a copy in writing;
- Establish procedures, policies and work environment arrangements to eliminate the risk to employees from violence;
- Proper maintenance and testing of all security systems including, but not limited to, surveillance cameras, lighting, panic button, intercom, etc.
- Ensure all employees are trained on this policy;
- Review the policy annually with the Joint Health & Safety Committee to ensure any new violence hazards are identified;
- Reporting procedures are established with respect to workplace violence and harassment;
- Process is in place for responding to, and investigating incidents of workplace violence and harassment; and
- This policy and procedure is posted and communicated to all staff.
- This policy shall be reviewed after any violent or harassment events take place to determine if changes need to be made.

Managers/Supervisors

- It is the responsibility of Managers and Supervisors at Decon to ensure that:
- This policy is properly enforced and communicated to the employees;
- All employees within their department are adequately trained in Decon procedures addressing workplace violence and harassment risk factors;
- Encourage employees to report complaints or incidents of workplace violence and harassment;
- All reports/complaints/incidents of workplace violence and/or harassment will be addressed in an
- appropriate and timely manner; and
- All complaints or incidents of workplace violence and/or harassment will be reported promptly to senior management and investigated immediately.

Employees

- It is the responsibility of every employee or contract personnel to:
- Comply with this policy and all related procedures at all times for their own protection and the protection of others within the workplace;
- Immediately report any violent or potentially violent incident to their manager/supervisor. In the event of an extreme or imminent threat of physical harm to themselves or any person at Decon the worker should contact Emergency Services; and fully cooperate in any investigation of complaints or incidents of workplace violence or harassment as indicated within this policy.

Procedure

Risk Assessment for Workplace Violence

Besides taking into consideration the general layout/environment of the workplace, the following risk factors will be taken into consideration as well when Decon completes their workplace violence risk assessment;

Working with unstable or volatile clients

Handling cash

Contact with clients

Working in a high-crime area

Securing/protecting valuables

Working alone or in small numbers

Zero Tolerance

Decon will not tolerate any incidents of workplace violence or harassment perpetrated against or by any employee, customer, vendor, contractor, visitor, or any other person at Embassy Hotel & Suites. With respect to workplace violence and harassment as defined by this policy, any contravention may result in the following:

- Removal from the property;
- Discipline or dismissal;
- Police involvement.

All physical assaults involving an employee or occurring at Decon will be reported to the police. Threats of physical violence will be reported to the authorities, as appropriate.

Domestic Violence

Any employee, or knowledge of another employee, experiencing violence outside of the workplace that may create a risk of danger to themselves or others in the workplace is encouraged to report such violence to their manager/supervisor so that necessary preventative precautions may be taken to protect all employees.

Sharing Information

Where Decon acknowledges that a person employed has a history of violent behavior, Decon will provide the necessary minimum information to any worker who is at risk if they may encounter this person, and is at risk of likely physical injury. Decon will make every effort to respect the privacy of the potentially violent person as much as possible.

Response to a Violent or Harassment Event or Complaint

Any employee who observes workplace violence or harassment, or is a victim thereof, shall immediately go to a safe location and report it to their manager, the department manager, or the general manager. At the discretion of management, the police may need to be contacted. In the event that the G.M. is not available, staff shall contact the police if they feel it is necessary.

All complaints and incidents are to be recorded in writing using the Violence and Harassment Reporting Form, by the reporting person or employee, providing a copy to the supervisor/manager and the Human Resources Department.

One or more of the above managers will promptly carry out an investigation. All reports will be investigated and information will be kept confidential, to the extent possible. The results of the investigation will be communicated to the complainant and the accused as soon as possible, but no later than 3 weeks from the time the complaint was made.

Management or the Human Resources department will undertake:

- A documented interview with the complainant and/or victim;
- A documented interview with the alleged perpetrator(s);
- A documented interview with any witnesses with relevant information to provide;
- Any other step the investigator(s) deems relevant to the investigation of the complaint or incident. At the conclusion of the investigation of a complaint or incident, the manager or Human Resources department will provide a written report of the findings and provide any recommendations to prevent a recurrence, to senior management.

Following the investigation, the appropriate corrective action will be determined by the General Manager and the manager(s) of the employee(s) involved. There will be no reprisal for any employee making a genuine complaint. However, if it is determined that a false accusation has been made in bad faith, appropriate measures will be taken. All employees who are subject to workplace violence or

harassment also have the option of pursuing recourse through the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal, the Criminal Code and/or the Ontario Criminal Injuries Compensation Board.

External Reporting

The WSIB or Ministry of Labour may need to be contacted, as stated in the policy. The police may also need to be contacted (if they have not been contacted already) if the conclusion of the investigation involves crimes that fall under the Criminal Code.

Support

Decon will provide support to victims of violence or harassment through an employee assistance program (EAP). Employees who are victims of violence or harassment are encouraged to seek assistance through this program and can be assured that any counseling and/or treatment administered are completely confidential.

Reprisals

If any employee engages in workplace violence or harassment, an investigation will take place immediately. The employee responsible for the violence or harassment may face discipline, which may include immediate termination. The complainants and witnesses to the acts of violence or harassment will be protected from reprisals as long as they have acted in good faith and they have complied with the *OHSA*.

Communication and Training

Decon Workplace Violence and Harassment Prevention Policy Statement shall be posted in the workplace on the Health and Safety Bulletin Board. In addition, all employees including new or returning employees (leave of absence of six months or more) at Decon, as well as managers at all levels will be trained on the contents of this violence prevention policy and program. The general and senior managers need to make themselves aware of all legislation applicable to violence in the workplace in order to take the appropriate steps during and after violent situations. Applicable legislation includes the *Occupational Health & Safety Act*,

Criminal Code of Canada, Ontario Human Rights Code and Workplace Safety & Insurance Act.

Monitoring of the Program

The Workplace Violence and Harassment Policy and program will be reviewed annually or as needed with the Joint Health & Safety Committee to ensure any new violence or harassment hazards are identified and employees are properly protected from these hazards. This policy should be reviewed after any violent events take place to determine if changes need to be made.

Violence Risk Factor Definition Examples

Working with unstable or volatile clients

Workers are providing service or products to persons with physiological, psychological, psychiatric condition and substance abuse issues

Caregivers, social service workers,

Receptionists

Handling cash, workers required to handle cash in a fixed location who might become a target for theft or loss handling petty cash

Workers required to perform services in a fixed location that is located in a high-crime area

Securing/protecting valuables

Working alone or in small numbers

Workers required to work alone or with very few other workers at a fixed location

Identifying a Potentially Violent Person

Signs that a person is potentially violent may include, but are not limited to:

- ✓ Their face is turning red or white.
- ✓ Their expression is angry, sneering, or glaring.
- ✓ They are pacing, making nervous, repetitive, or violent movements, shaking, clenching jaw or fists,
- ✓ approaching too near, or perspiring heavily.
- ✓ They are using a loud voice and/or abusive language.
- ✓ Their breathing is shallow or rapid.
- ✓ If you notice these signs, TAKE ACTION. Get help from your manager immediately!

Communicating with a Potentially Violent Person

- ✓ DO NOT confront the person by glaring or staring.
- ✓ Remain calm and use a calm manner.
- ✓ Speak slowly and clearly in a sure tone.
- ✓ DO NOT attempt complicated explanations during a tense situation.
- ✓ Ask the person to talk and pay close attention.
- ✓ DO NOT advise the person to relax or be calm.
- ✓ Use silence to placate the person.
- ✓ DO NOT defy, criticize, insult, interrupt or patronize.
- ✓ DO NOT crowd the person. Allow them about 2 to 4 feet of space.
- ✓ DO NOT fight with the person. Leave the situation and if necessary, get help from the police.
- ✓ Problem Solving with a Potentially Violent Person
- ✓ Try to see the situation from the person's point of view in order to figure out how to fix the problem.
- ✓ DO NOT take the situation lightly.
- ✓ Direct the person's attention to the issue.
- ✓ Ask the person how to fix the problem.
- ✓ Be positive about criticism. If you agree with it, admit this. If you disagree, try to discuss the situation.
- ✓ DO NOT lie or make unreasonable commitments.
- ✓ Make minor requests, such as taking the discussion to a quiet area.
- ✓ Divide the problem into smaller chunks and deal with them one at a time.
- ✓ Be clear about the consequences of violence and provide other options.
- ✓ If the person is an employee, do not discuss discipline until the situation is more stable.
- ✓ DO NOT immediately turn down the person's request.
- ✓ DO NOT try to negotiate with someone who is making threats. End the conversation calmly and if necessary, get assistance.

Ending an Abusive Telephone Call

- ✓ Interrupt in a courteous but firm tone.
- ✓ Make it clear that abusive behavior is not acceptable, and that you will end the conversation if they don't stop. Report the abusive call to your manager.
- ✓ Halt the call in a courteous but firm tone if the abusive person calls again.

- ✓ Make it clear that abusive behavior is not acceptable, and that you will forward the call to your manager/police if they don't stop.
- ✓ Put the caller on hold.
- ✓ Report the holding caller to your manager.
- ✓ Forward the caller to your manager.

In the Event of a Robbery

- ✓ Stay calm;
- ✓ Do not argue;
- ✓ Listen;
- ✓ Do not follow or attempt to capture the thief–this puts you and others in great danger;
- ✓ Do not surprise the thief or move unexpectedly,
- ✓ Try to be observant and remember details:
 - What is he/she wearing;
 - What does he or she look like? How tall are they; What colour hair does he or she have;
 - Does he or she have any unusual characteristics such as tattoos or piercings;
 - If he or she had a weapon, describe it, and;
 - After he or she leaves, try to avoid touching anything the thief has touched. Make a note of the items that were touched.

After a Robbery

- If you can do so safely, record the license plate and the make and model of the vehicle the thief used;
- NEVER try to chase the thief;
- Notify police immediately by calling 911 and provide them with as much information as possible
- including the route the thief took when leaving (remember not to try to follow the thief);
- Record all information observed about the thief;
- Lock all doors and do not let anyone enter;
- Ask all witnesses to remain until police arrive;
- Contact your Supervisor;
- Do not discuss the robbery with media or bystanders;
- Cooperate fully with the police investigation;
- If the thief was within sight of one of the cameras, advise the Supervisor and they

- will check the recording system to see if the thief's image was captured, and;
- Report the incident immediately.

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