



Titre : Workplace Violence Prevention Policy	
Codification :	2000_03_05_00_F
Responsible for the application:	Human Resources Department
Approved by :	Executive Committee
Policye :	New <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Revised <input type="checkbox"/>
Related procedure:	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Destination:	<input type="checkbox"/> Intra-departmental: Please specify the department <input type="checkbox"/> Inter-departmental: Please specify the departments or services concerned <input type="checkbox"/> Multidisciplinary: Please specify the disciplines (e.g., social workers, physicians, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> Governance and senior management <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The entire CIUSSS of the Central-West Island of Montreal

1. Scope of application

This policy applies to all staff members of the organization, whether unionized or non-unionized. It covers relationships between managers and employees, colleagues, staff, physicians, residents, interns, clients and their families, volunteers, subcontractors, and suppliers.

It applies regardless of the nature of the relationship between the victim and the person engaging in the violent behavior, whether in the workplace or in any work-related activity. No form of violence will be tolerated.

For specific information on harassment, please refer to the CIUSSS Policy on Promoting Civility and Preventing Harassment.

2. Framework

- The CIUSSS's policy on the promotion of prevention, presence, quality of life, safety, and well-being in the workplace.
- Organizational practices that promote staff health.
- The CIUSSS policy on promoting civility and preventing harassment and violence in the workplace.
- The Act to modernize the occupational health and safety regime.
- Accreditation Canada standards and requirements.

3. Objectives

- 3.1. Protect the health, safety, integrity, and dignity of staff, users, volunteers, and visitors by implementing appropriate measures both on CIUSSS premises and in users' homes and in the community.
- 3.2. Establish guidelines for prevention, information, training, and evaluation activities related to violence prevention.
- 3.3. Establish procedures for developing and implementing safety standards tailored to the types of interventions performed by the institution.
- 3.4. Specify each person's responsibility for the prevention and management of violence.
- 3.5. Inform CIUSSS employees of the prevention strategies to be applied.
- 3.6. Notify all CIUSSS employees, clients and their loved ones, subcontractors, and suppliers of the existence of the policy on the prevention of violence.
- 3.7. Provide guidance to all CIUSSS employees on how to integrate prevention and intervention strategies into their practices in the event of violence to ensure their safety in the course of their duties.
- 3.8. Ensure that the consequences of violence against a CIUSSS employee are dealt with promptly to reduce the resulting physical and psychological health problems.

Effective date: February 2024	Revision date: Enter the revision date, if applicable	Next revision: February 2026
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4. Definition of terms

▪ Workplace violence

“Any action, incident, or behavior that deviates from reasonable conduct, whereby a person is attacked, threatened, harmed, or injured during or as a direct result of their work. [...] The various manifestations of violence are part of a continuum, and, for this reason, the concept of violence should be interpreted broadly¹.”

Such behavior may come from users, suppliers, partners, or colleagues at any level of the organization.

▪ Assault

A behavior is considered violent when it may cause harm to a person's physical or psychological integrity, or when it causes fear for the safety of a person or others. This is referred to as assault.

Assaults are expressions of certain forms of violence. In terms of OHS, the different types of assault refer to concrete, identifiable, and measurable behaviors.

Verbal and written aggression towards others

- Shouting angrily
- Insulting
- Using foul language
- Verbal threats

Physical assaults against others

- Hitting (punching, kicking, slapping)
- Grabbing
- Pushing, shoving
- Biting - Pinching - Scratching

Nonverbal aggression towards others

- Making threatening gestures (showing your fist)
- Spitting
- Throwing objects
- Threatening with an object (scissors, pencil)

Assaults against objects

- Throwing objects
- Slamming doors
- Breaking objects
- Attacking personal belongings

- ⊗ These different types of aggression do not exhaust the complexity of violence. Very often, violent behavior presents as a combination of these types.

5. Guiding principles

- 5.1. All forms of violence, whether verbal, physical, sexual, or psychological, are strictly prohibited at all times and in all places.
- 5.2. All situations of violence, as well as all our concerns about the risk of violence, must be taken seriously. With this in mind, it is essential to share our concerns or impressions of the risk of violence with our immediate supervisor or their representative.
- 5.3. The CIUSSS recognizes its obligation to take all measures at its disposal to put an end to violence, protect the safety of users and staff, prevent situations in which they could be victims of violence, support users and staff in situations where they may face violent behavior, and offer the necessary assistance to those who are exposed to or victims of violence.
- 5.4. This policy is part of a service delivery framework that respects the health, safety, and physical and mental integrity of each individual.
- 5.5. The institution's intervention with users and staff must be carried out with respect for the rights and freedoms of each individual.

6. Terms of application

- This policy is part of a framework for providing services that respect the health, safety, and physical and mental integrity of each individual.
- It stipulates procedures for developing and implementing safety standards tailored to different types of interventions. To this end, the institution has put in place measures to optimize a healthy and safe working environment.

¹ Pelletier M., Lippel K., Vézina M. (2018). La violence en milieu de travail. Dans INSPQ. (2018). *Rapport québécois sur la violence et la santé*. <https://www.inspq.qc.ca/rapport-quebecois-sur-la-violence-et-la-sante/la-violence-en-milieu-de-travail>

7. Roles and responsibilities

7.1. The Executive Committee

- Approves this policy.
- Takes note of the management indicators related to violence and the action plan.
- Ensures that preventive and corrective measures are in place to address acts of violence against anyone working under their responsibility.
- Supports their managers in this responsibility.

7.2. Human Resources Department

Occupational Health, Safety, and Wellness Prevention Service

- Develops and implements the required procedures.
- Responsible for promoting, preventing, training managers, and applying the process and management tools of this procedure.
- Inspects the work environment to prevent violence against staff based on the grid developed by the joint occupational health and safety association for the social services sector (ASSTSAS).
- Advises or supports managers, particularly in the application of measures that may be taken during or following an intervention.
- Offer psychological support through the mental health prevention team or the EAP in situations of violence experienced in a service or department.
- Participate in the organization of information and training activities for all staff members related to violence.
- Ensure that the policy is reviewed every two years or sooner if necessary.

Work attendance management service

- Follows up with the SSMET prevention team.
- Coordinates compensation claims with the CNESST.
- Develops strategies for maintaining and reintegrating employees into the workplace (e.g., gradual return, temporary assignment, accommodation) in collaboration with the employee, the attending physician, and the manager of the department concerned.
- Evaluates the return to work with the manager and staff member who was the victim of an assault to ensure that everything is going well to avoid a relapse, recurrence, or aggravation.

7.3. The managers

- Ensures that those working under his or her responsibility are informed of the policy and apply it on a daily basis.
- Ensures the prevention of violent situations in the workplace by identifying risk factors and implementing preventive and corrective measures in collaboration with staff.
- Provides guidance and promotes the development of skills for all persons working under his or her responsibility who are faced with potentially violent situations.
- Ensures that persons working under his or her responsibility attend training and integration activities related to violence prevention.
- Ensures that staff are trained (OMEGA training) to intervene safely with violent or potentially violent patients.
- Quickly adjusts user intervention plans with the multidisciplinary team to put an end to any form of violence against staff.
- Requests assistance from the prevention team for any situation with a potential risk of violence where corrective measures have not been successful.

During an assault

- Meet promptly with the employee and those who witnessed the incident to assess the situation and provide immediate support to the victim.
- Offer staff the opportunity to take advantage of psychological support from the mental health prevention team of the occupational health, safety, and wellness department and the Employee Assistance Program (EAP).
- Conduct the workplace accident investigation and analysis, compile the information in the workplace accident report form, and forward it to the team and the Occupational Health, Safety, and Wellness Prevention Team.
- Provide the necessary psychological support to staff who have been victims of workplace viol

7.4. The staff

- Follows procedures and preventive measures put in place to ensure their safety and that of others when providing services to customers
- Adapts their approach and actions to customer needs
- Reports any warning signs of violence or any violent situations observed to their supervisor
- Participate in identifying training needs to develop the ability to anticipate and manage potentially violent situations and attend the sessions offered
- Reports any type of incident or accident related to violence to their manager
- Participates in the support measures put in place by the employer following an act of violence
- Encourages others to take action in such circumstances and to follow this procedure.

7.5. Patients, their relatives, or visitors

- Refrain from any behavior that could constitute violence on CIUSSS premises.
- Specifically for patients:
 - Participate, to the extent possible, in any decision affecting their health or well-being.
 - Participate, to the extent possible, in developing their intervention plan when required.

7.6. Security service

- Coordinates the CIUSSS Emergency Response Plan.
- Ensures that security officers are trained to respond safely during code white situations and when dealing with violent or potentially violent individuals.
- Works with staff and managers to develop preventive safety measures when required.
- Coordinates safety measures and assists departments as needed with the purchase and maintenance of safety equipment (e.g., portable transmitters).
- Assists, as needed, staff members who are victims or alleged victims in filing a complaint with the Montreal Police Service (SPVM).
- Collaborates in internal and external investigations, when required.
- Records information in their internal security report.

7.7. Quality Management. Transformation, evaluation, value, clinical and organizational ethics, and virtual care.

- Works with the occupational health, safety, and wellness prevention department to implement measures to reduce the risk of violence in the workplace.
- Participates in workplace inspections for workplace violence with the occupational health, safety, and wellness prevention department to identify risks to users.

7.8. Committee for the Prevention of Violence in the Workplace

- Periodically analyzes management indicators for all types of workplace violence.
- Evaluates and ensures the implementation of prevention and intervention strategies for violence prevention.

7.9. Occupational Health and Safety Committee

- Participates in the implementation of safety principles adapted to each environment.
- Proposes promotional activities for the prevention of violence.
- Participates in the action plan for the prevention of violence.
- Conducts analysis and investigation following a report of a workplace accident or occupational illness and works with the team concerned to develop preventive and corrective measures.
- Participates in the periodic evaluation and review of the policy.

7.10. Communications Department

- Collaborates in disseminating this policy and the procedures derived from it.

7.11. Service for replacement activities

- Informs staffing agencies of this policy and its scope.

7.12. Teaching Department

- Informs educational institutions of this policy on staff vaccination and its scope of application.

7.13. The Commissioner for Complaints and Service Quality

- Handles user complaints and reviews them.

- Acts as a consultant to managers and stakeholders in cases of violence involving patients or their loved ones, if required.
- Informs users of this procedure and how it is applied when processing their requests.

8. Policy implementation and evaluation process

- The management indicators on violence against staff are presented periodically to the management committee, along with a follow-up on the actions implemented.
- Indicators evaluating the integration of training.

9. References

- Violence prevention program, Joint Association for Occupational Health and Safety in the Social Services Sector. ASSTSAS – 2023
- Workplace violence prevention program – CNESST June 2023.

10. Procedures arising from the policy

- Procedure for using the white code - algorithm
- Procedure concerning communication systems: walkie-talkie - panic button
- Crisis intervention procedure - psychological support
- Procedure for inspecting workplaces for risks of workplace violence