

Workplace Health and Safety Policy

1. Purpose of this Policy

The purpose of this Health and Safety Policy (“the Policy”) is to provide an overview of Vector Institute’s (“the Corporation”) commitment to providing a safe and healthy workplace and to protecting the health, safety, and wellbeing of its workers. The policy is set in accordance with the requirements of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* (the “*OHS Act*”) and outlines the expectations of the Corporation’s employees and management relating to workplace health and safety.

2. Scope

This policy applies to workers, which is broadly defined in the *OHS Act* to include “a person who performs work or supplies services for monetary compensation.” This definition of workers includes all employees (permanent, temporary, part-time, and full-time), faculty, research scientists, secondees, volunteers, students/trainees, and service providers. The Policy also applies to Board members.

3. Definitions

3.1. Workplace Harassment

Workplace harassment is defined in the *OHS Act* as follows:

- 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 (defined below).

Reasonable action taken by the employer relating to the management and direction of workers or the workplace is not workplace harassment. The normal exercise of supervisory responsibilities, including scheduling, training, evaluation counseling and discipline when warranted, does not constitute workplace harassment.

While harassment is usually based on an ongoing pattern of conduct, in some instances a single incident can be sufficiently serious to constitute harassment.

3.2. Workplace Sexual Harassment

Workplace sexual harassment is defined in the *OHS Act* as follows:

- a) 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
- b) 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.

3.3. Workplace violence

Workplace violence is defined in the *OHSA* as follows:

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

3.4. Workplace Locations

The Policy will be enforced on the Corporation's premises and locations, where workers perform Corporation work, and where activities related to the business of the Corporation take place. Where workers perform Corporation work outside the Corporation's premises and where activities related to the business of the Corporation take place outside the Corporation's premises, the health and safety policies of the host organization will also apply.

4. Principles

To provide a safe and healthy work environment, the Corporation has put the following principles in place:

- The Corporation strives to create a safe and healthy workplace for all, with protection from accident, injury, occupational illness, violence, and harassment.
- The Corporation will take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances for the protection of its workers.
- Acts of violence or harassment in the workplace will not be tolerated.
- Every individual is responsible for working in a manner that does not pose a health and safety risk to himself/herself or others; for maintaining a safe and healthy workplace environment; and for reporting any unsafe working conditions and acts, and any contraventions of the *OHSA*.

5. Content

5.1. Training

The Corporation will develop, maintain, and administer a mandatory health and safety training program. It will provide information, instruction, and training as required on duties and rights under the *OHSA*; the roles of the Ministry of Labour, Workplace Safety and Insurance Board, and Joint Health and Safety Committee; common workplace hazards; occupational illness; safe workplace practices; and control procedures for safety in the workplace. All workers are required to complete this training as soon as practicable. The Corporation will maintain a record of the training completed by workers.

5.2. Joint Health and Safety Committee

In accordance with the *OHSA*, the Corporation will establish and support a trained and competent Joint Health and Safety Committee ("JHSC"). The JHSC is composed of at least two persons, with both management and non-management workers. At least half of the JHSC's members are non-managerial, and selected by the workers they represent. The JHSC is co-chaired by one management representative and one non-management representative. At least one management representative and one non-management representative are to receive and maintain certification from the Ministry of Labour's Chief Prevention Officer, by completing the Ministry's initial and refresher training requirements.

The JHSC's mandate is to consider and raise awareness of health and safety issues in the workplace, and to make recommendations to the Corporation's leadership to address those issues. JHSC members inspect the workplace on a

regular basis to ensure that no undue safety concerns exist in the workplace, and report on any deficiencies and accidents at regular meetings. Workers are required to report any actual or potentially unsafe or harmful conditions to the JHSC without delay.

5.3. Assessment

The JHSC will assess the risks of accident, injury, occupational illness, violence, and harassment at the workplace. The JHSC will reassess these risks as often as necessary to ensure that this Policy and the related programs continue to protect individuals from risks of accident, injury, occupational illness, violence and harassment.

The JHSC will communicate with the Corporation's leadership regarding identification of risks and mitigate any risks identified.

5.4. Programs

The Corporation will develop and implement programs and procedures for the prevention of accidents, injuries and occupational illness in the workplace. It will develop programs and procedures to prevent violence and harassment as set out in the Workplace Harassment and Workplace Violence Policies. It will also develop and maintain a program to implement this Health and Safety Policy.

6. Responsibilities

6.1. Duties of Management

Management will take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances to protect all workers, including from risks of accident, injury, occupational illness, violence and harassment. Management will advise workers of any and all health and safety rules that apply to the performance of their function, and will provide information, instruction, and supervision to workers to protect their health and safety. Management is responsible for ensuring that all equipment is safe and in good working order, and that workers follow established safe work practices and procedures. Management will also fulfil all its additional obligations under the *OHS*A and also has a responsibility to ensure compliance with this Policy and the *OHS*A.

6.2. Duties of Employees

All workers have some responsibility for ensuring health and safety in the workplace. Workers will work safely and in compliance with the *OHS*A. Workers are responsible for reporting and unsafe working conditions and or contraventions of the *OHS*A to the CEO, COO, Manager, Human Resources, or the JHSC, as soon as possible.

7. Penalties

Any employee found to be violating this policy will be held accountable and may be subject to discipline up to and including dismissal. Other individuals who violate this policy will be subject to penalties that are appropriate in view of their relationship to the Corporation.

8. Distribution of the Policy

This Policy will be posted in a conspicuous location. It will be provided to all workers and board members and will be sent out to new hires.

9. Amendment

This Policy will be reviewed as often as is necessary, but at least annually. This Policy may be amended by the Board.