

	<b>Workplace Violence &amp; Harassment Policy</b>	<b>Policy #</b> HR-03
		<b>Policy Type:</b> Human Resources
		<b>Approved Motion:</b> 2026-14
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**PURPOSE**

The Ramara Township Public Library is committed to fostering a safe, healthy, and respectful workplace for all employees, board members, volunteers, and others who engage with the Library. The Library will not tolerate violence, harassment, or discrimination and is dedicated to preventing and addressing any workplace violence or harassment incidents that may arise.

This policy outlines the framework for identifying, reporting, investigating, and resolving workplace violence and harassment issues in accordance with *Bill-168* and the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*.

**SCOPE**

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, board members, contractors, and temporary workers. The Library is dedicated to maintaining a work environment free from all forms of violence and harassment. The Library will not tolerate workplace harassment or violence from any person, including:

1. Employees
2. Board members
3. Volunteers
4. Library CEO
5. Patrons
6. Other individuals conducting business at or interacting with the Library

**DEFINITIONS**

**Complainant:** A person who has made a complaint about another individual who they believe committed an act of violence or harassment against them.

**Respondent:** A person whom another individual has accused of committing an act of violence or harassment.

**Worker:** an employee, board member, temporary worker, contractor, or volunteer that acts on behalf of the Ramara Township Public Library.

**Workplace:** any land, premises, location or thing at, upon, in or near which a worker works. This includes but is not limited to physical and digital locations such as social media, email,

phone, and text messages.

**Workplace harassment:** 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.

**Workplace sexual harassment:** 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.

**Workplace Violence:** workplace violence as the exercise of physical force by a person against a worker, in a workplace, that causes or could cause physical injury to the worker. This also includes a statement that could be reasonably interpreted as a threat of physical force against a worker or an attempt of force that could cause physical injury. This does not include accidents that are unintentional.

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

The Library is committed to preventing and addressing workplace harassment and violence by promoting an environment of respect, inclusiveness, and safety for all workers. The Library will ensure the safety, dignity, and well-being of all employees by taking prompt action in response to any incidents or complaints of violence or harassment.

The Library's program includes:

- Training in preventing and addressing violence and harassment
- Clear reporting procedures for workers to report incidents of violence and harassment
- Timely investigation of any incidents or complaints
- Corrective action to address substantiated complaints, which may include disciplinary measures, reassignment, counseling, and other measures

A complaint filed under this Policy does not preclude an individual from pursuing other appropriate avenues of resolution.

## **SOURCES OF VIOLENCE/HARRASSMENT**

**Co-worker / Worker/ Employer** - the perpetrator is a co-worker / employer, volunteer or a past employee who attacks or threatens fellow employees and/or volunteers.

**Domestic** - the perpetrator usually does not have a legitimate relationship with the Library but has or has had a relationship with an employee and/or volunteers.

**Member of Public** - the perpetrator is a visitor to the Library and may be a user of library services.

## **EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

### **Mandatory Training**

All employees and volunteers will receive training on preventing and recognizing workplace violence and harassment during their onboarding process. Any updates or changes to policies, procedures, or legislation will result in updated training to be provided.

### **Ongoing Education**

The Library will offer regular workshops to reinforce the importance of creating a safe and respectful work environment. The Library also provides a *Workplace Violence and Harassment Program* document for staff-use only that outlines in depth the policy, procedure, reporting process, investigation and resolution process.

### **Communication**

This policy will be communicated to all workers and posted in visible locations throughout the Library, including on the Library's intranet and notice boards.

## **REPORTING PROCEDURES**

### **How to Report**

Reports should be made in person or via email to the CEO or Library Board Chair depending on who the alleged harasser is. Reports should be made in writing using the Workplace Violence and Harassment Form.

### **Alternative Reporting**

In situations where the worker feels uncomfortable reporting the incident internally, they may seek external avenues such as government agencies or third-party services.

### **Confidentiality**

All reports of harassment and violence will be treated as confidential, and the identity of the complainant and any individual involved will only be disclosed as necessary for the investigation or corrective actions.

## **INVESTIGATION AND RESOLUTION**

### **Investigation Process**

Once a report is received, an impartial investigation will be initiated.

A designated investigator will be appointed to assess the situation, gather evidence, and interview the complainant, respondent, and any relevant witnesses.

The investigation will be carried out as promptly and discreetly as possible.

### **Corrective Action**

If the investigation confirms harassment or violence occurred, appropriate corrective actions will be taken. These actions may include disciplinary measures such as counseling, suspension, reassignment, or termination.

#### Interim Measures

If necessary, interim measures may be implemented during the investigation, such as temporary reassignment or safety measures to protect the complainant and others involved.

### **RESPONSIBILITIES**

Employer (CEO and Board):

- Ensure the work environment is free from harassment and violence
- Review the policy annually and update as needed
- Provide training and resources for staff
- Respond promptly to complaints and take corrective action

Employee and Volunteer:

- Report any incidents of harassment, discrimination, or violence immediately
- Cooperate with investigations and adhere to the policies and procedures
- Participate in training and educational programs

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

- Handling of Information: All records related to harassment, discrimination, and violence complaints will be kept confidential except where disclosure is necessary for:
  - Investigating the incident
  - Taking corrective action
  - Complying with legal obligations
- Retention of Records: Records related to complaints will be kept separate from personnel files and maintained for a period as required by law. Investigative files will be kept permanently in the CEO's office.

### **PROHIBITION AGAINST RETALIATION/REPRISAL**

Victims of violence or harassment are assured that no retaliation will occur as a result of filing a complaint. Retaliatory actions, including harassment, dismissal, or discipline for filing a report, will not be tolerated and will result in disciplinary action.

However, the misuse of this policy, such as making false or malicious claims, will lead to appropriate corrective actions, which may include disciplinary measures.

## **REVIEW AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT**

The Library will review this policy annually to ensure it remains effective and in compliance with legal requirements. Any amendments will be communicated to all staff, and feedback from staff and the Health and Safety Committee will be incorporated to improve the policy.