



## Thunder Bay Rowing Club Violence in the Workplace Prevention Policy

### **Policy**

Thunder Bay Rowing Club (TBRC) is committed to providing a respectful, supportive, healthy, safe, accessible and inclusive work environment for all employees. Workplace Violence has no place in TBRC.

### **Purpose**

TBRC will be proactive in working with its employees to prevent violence in the workplace by establishing and implementing a comprehensive workplace violence prevention program to fulfill the requirements of relevant legislation including the:

- Occupational Health and Safety Act
- Criminal Code of Canada
- Ontario Human Rights Code
- Workplace Safety and Insurance Act

This Policy defines Workplace Violence (violence) and identifies the responsibilities of Employees and Management. It identifies behaviours that constitute violence and identifies the process for reporting and resolving incidents of violence.

### **Scope**

This Policy applies to all employees of TBRC, including regular, temporary and contract employees and consultants. This Policy also applies to volunteers, including Board of Directors.

This Policy covers incidents of violence, as defined below. This Policy does not apply to Workplace Harassment, which is covered by TBRC *Workplace Harassment Policy* and TBRC *Workplace Harassment Program*.

### **Definitions**

- “Workplace Violence” - Workplace violence includes acts of physical violence, abuse (verbal or physical), bullying, intimidation, or other threatening behaviour that occurs in the work place.
- “Workplace” - For the purposes of this Policy, workplace includes any location in which employees and/or volunteers are engaged in TBRC business activities necessary to perform their assignments, including out-of-town events.
- “Bullying” - Bullying is offensive, cruel, intimidating, insulting or humiliating behaviour. It includes physical violence or the threat of physical violence. It can be physical or verbal, direct or indirect (e.g. gossip). Although bullying is generally considered ‘harassment’, in cases where there is physical contact or a threat of violence, it is considered ‘violence’. Bullying is ill treatment that is not addressed under human rights legislation or criminal codes.

### **Policy Application**

If you witness an act of workplace violence in progress or if an individual becomes violent and your safety is at risk, leave the area immediately and call 911 or the emergency services number in your area.

Workplace violence may be triggered by a variety of actions in the work environment, or may be triggered by non-work related situations such as family crises, alcohol or drug abuse, financial pressures, or legal difficulties. Workplace violence may be inflicted by an abusive employee, volunteer, supervisor, manager, co-worker, client, family member, or even a stranger. While there is no sure way to predict

human behaviour and no specific profile of a potentially dangerous individual, there may be warning signs. The best prevention comes from identifying problems early and dealing with them.

### **Prevention**

Prevention of workplace violence is key. At its core, it involves awareness by management, employees and volunteers of any potential for violence. Steps that TBRC will take to lessen the possibilities of an incident include:

- Pre-employment screening – The adherence to TBRC *Screening Policy* regarding employee and volunteer screening helps identify potential offenders before they are hired or engaged.
- Code of Conduct – All employees and volunteers are obliged to abide by the TBRC *Code of Conduct and Ethics* which sets out a clear set of expectations for the behaviour of directors, committee members, staff, athletes, coaches, volunteers, umpires, parents, guardians and spectators; and sets out how TBRC will deal with breaches of the Code of Conduct.
- Security – TBRC will strive to maintain a physically safe and secure workplace.
- Dispute resolution – An employee or volunteer may turn violent from a build-up of workplace frustrations. Provisions in TBRC's *Workplace Harassment Policy and Program*, TBRC's *Harassment, Discipline and Complaints Policy* and TBRC's *Appeal Policy* provide individuals with a constructive outlet for their concerns.

Finally, TBRC encourages everyone to respect human dignity and be kind to one another. Be willing to listen to and assist fellow staff members and volunteers. This can go a long way towards mitigating feelings of depression and helplessness that might otherwise lead to violent behaviour.

### **Rights**

Everyone has the right to an environment free from violence or threat of violence. Employees have the right to file a complaint without fear of discrimination or retaliation. Employees have the right to refuse unsafe work where workplace violence is likely to endanger them. While work refusal is being investigated, the employee is to remain in a safe place as near as possible to their work location, making themselves available for the purposes of the investigation.

### **Responsibilities**

Employees & volunteers are responsible for:

- Being familiar with applicable policies, procedures and programs affecting violence in the workplace, including TBRC's *Workplace Harassment Policy and Program*, and this TBRC *Workplace Violence Policy*; securing their own workplace; questioning and/or reporting strangers to supervisors/managers.
- Reporting any physical or verbal threats and any disruptive behaviour, by any individual, to the appropriate supervisor/manager.
- Being familiar with any local procedures for dealing with workplace threats and emergencies.
- Taking all threats seriously.
- In the event of an incident of violence, reporting it immediately to the supervisor/manager or police, as the case may necessitate.
- Disclosing knowledge of any criminal activity in the workplace.

Management is responsible for:

- Informing employees and volunteers of applicable policies, procedures and programs affecting workplace violence, including TBRC *Workplace Harassment Policy and Program* and this TBRC *Workplace Violence Policy*.

- Ensuring that employees and volunteers know specific procedures for dealing with workplace threats and emergencies, and how to contact police, fire, and other safety and security officials.
- Ensuring that employees and volunteers with special needs are aware of emergency evacuation procedures and have assistance, if needed, in emergency evacuation situations.
- Ensuring the security of buildings.
- Including workplace violence awareness as part of employee and volunteer orientation. Training is to be updated for any new site or situation that may present a risk for workplace violence.
- Ensuring compliance with applicable provincial Health and Safety legislation.
- Responding to potential threats, escalating situations and incidents of violence, by summoning first aid providers, local law enforcement and medical services. TBRC should consider involving the police even on suspicions of criminal activity.
- Ensuring that all incidents of violence in the workplace are reported on a *TBRC Incident Report Form* and/or *TBRC Workplace Complaint Form*, as appropriate. The President shall ensure Workers' Compensation is notified whenever there is lost time at work due to injury.
- In consultation with President or Board, determining whether sufficient evidence exists to justify taking disciplinary action or discharging the employee/volunteer once the investigation of any misconduct is complete.
- Taking all threats seriously.
- Providing information about third party support resources for any employee who experiences violence in the workplace.

### **Process**

Where an act of violence has occurred, workplace injury protocols are to be followed, the perpetrator removed (by police, where there is an ongoing threat) and the site secured. Appropriate authorities, the President and the Board of Directors shall be notified. An investigation will then be conducted.

Where a threat of violence has occurred, the President and Board of Directors are to be notified. The person who is uttering the threat shall be removed from the worksite prior to any further investigation. An investigation will then be conducted.

If there has not been a threat or an act of violence, the act may be considered harassment. Refer to *TBRC Workplace Harassment Policy and Program*.

No investigation information is to be kept on the employee/volunteer's personnel file with the exception of official disciplinary/termination papers. Investigation information should be kept indefinitely in a separate file. Proven allegations of violence, including disciplinary action taken shall be documented and form part of the employee/volunteer's permanent record.

### **Disciplinary action**

- An employee or volunteer who threatens or commits violence will be subject to immediate disciplinary action, which may include dismissal.
- An employee or volunteer whose complaints are frivolous or vexatious may be subject to disciplinary action.
- Any interference with the conduct of an investigation, or retaliation against a complainant, respondent or witness, may result in disciplinary action.
- Criteria for determining the level of disciplinary action shall be based on the facts of the case, the harm to the individual, the harm to TBRC and TBRC's reputation, and whether or not there was an unequal power relationship.

**Legal parameters**

Nothing in this Policy shall be deemed to limit the right of an employee or volunteer to pursue criminal charges or civil legal action.

**Responsibility**

The Board of Directors is responsible for maintaining, monitoring, and revising this Policy; and for authorizing exceptions. The Board is responsible for reviewing this Policy annually.

The TBRC Management is responsible for applying and implementing this Policy throughout their organization.

Approved by the Board of Directors

DATE: February 7, 2022