



Workplace Respect Model Policy

Construction Owners Association of Alberta

MAY 2004

COAA

Construction Owners
Association of Alberta



2.0 WORKPLACE RESPECT

2.1 Guiding principles

COAA and its affiliated organizations are firmly committed to ensuring a positive and professional working environment in which all people are treated with respect and dignity. We believe in a proactive approach to workplace respect and are committed to providing employees with a healthy and safe workplace, free from physical or psychological bullying, harassment and violence.

2.2 Policy

This policy prohibits all forms of bullying, harassment and violence (hereinafter, referred to as a violation of “*respect*”) by management, supervisors, workers, subcontractors, agency staff/contractors, suppliers and clients. Violations of *respect* will be investigated and if substantiated will be dealt with expeditiously. Violations of *respect* will not be tolerated and appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, not eligible for rehire, loss of camp privileges, loss of bussing privileges and/or loss of site access will be taken.

To support the objective of providing all employees with a healthy safe workplace, it is required that managers, supervisors and workers take preventative action to ensure that risks to individual’s health and safety due to violations of *respect* are eliminated or reported.

Bullying – definition

Bullying is interpersonal hostility that is deliberate, repeated and sufficiently severe as to harm the targeted person’s health, safety or economic status. It is driven by the perpetrator’s (bully’s) need to control another individual, not by a legitimate business need.

Harassment – definition

Harassment occurs when a worker is subjected to unwelcome verbal or physical conduct because of:

- race
- age
- religious beliefs
- colour
- place of origin
- gender
- mental or physical disability
- ancestry
- marital status
- sexual orientation
- source of income
- family status of that person or of any other person

Violence – definition

Violence whether at a worksite or work related means the threatened, attempted or actual conduct of a person that causes or is likely to cause physical injury. These acts include threats, menacing or threatening behaviour and all types of physical or verbal assaults.

Employees are encouraged to seek resolution of the incident.

There shall be no adverse job consequences against any person for notifying management of a violation of this policy unless investigation determines that the person intentionally fabricated the complaint against the accused.

Complaints that are made in bad faith, are malicious or frivolous are considered serious and will result in discipline.

There shall be no retaliation from co-workers directed at an individual making a complaint. In the event it is found that retaliation against a worker who exercises his or her rights under this policy has occurred, severe discipline up to and including termination and not eligible for rehire will be imposed.

Investigations will be conducted with as much confidentiality as can practicably be afforded.

Investigators will advise workers involved or consulted through the course of the investigation that discretion is an important part of the process.

Persons found in violation in this policy may be subject to discipline and/or corrective action including: fulfilling a requirement to take a course and/or undergo counselling, participate in mediation, verbal and/or written warning, suspension, termination, loss of camp privileges, loss of bussing privileges and/or loss of site access and/or not eligible for rehire.

2.3 Definitions

Bullying: Interpersonal hostility that is deliberate, repeated and sufficiently severe as to harm the targeted person's health and safety. It is driven by the perpetrator's (bully's) need to control another individual, not by a legitimate business need.

Contingent controls: Actions that can mitigate the impact or the severity of the incident should an incident occur.

Customers/clients: Individuals who are recipients or providers of a product or a service provided by the affected workplace or victim.

Employees and co-workers: Individuals who have an employment-related relationship with the workplace victim. Current or former employees are included.

Employee-related outsider: Individuals who are possibly a current or former spouse, a relative, an acquaintance or some other person who has a dispute involving an employee of the workplace.

Harassment: Occurs when a worker is subjected to unwelcome verbal or physical conduct because of race, age, religious beliefs, colour, place of origin, gender, mental or physical disability, ancestry, marital status, family status of that person or of any other person, sexual orientation or source of income. Alberta human rights laws and norms for human conduct prohibit harassment in the workplace on these grounds.

Hazard assessment: Hazard assessment is a formal process used to capture information from past situations, employee's input and worksite layouts that can help identify a potential for incidents of occupational violence.

Outsiders: Individuals who have no legitimate relationship with the workplace or the victim and sometimes only enter workplaces to commit criminal acts.

Preventative controls: Controls or interventions designed to completely prevent an incident from happening.

Racial and religious harassment: Behaviour that is disrespectful or causes humiliation to a person because of their race, colour, national or ethnic origin, or the adornments and rituals associated with religious beliefs. It includes, but is not limited to slurs, gestures, name calling, swearing, taunts about a worker's religious or racial background; unwelcome banter, teasing or jokes that are insulting to the individual's race or religion; displaying racist, derogatory or offensive pictures, materials or graffiti; and refusing to work with or have eye contact with workers on the job because of their religious background.

Repeated: Refers to the persistent nature of the behaviour, not the specific form the behaviour takes. Behaviour is considered repeated if an established pattern can be identified. It may involve a series of diverse incidents – for example, verbal abuse, deliberate damage to personal property and unreasonable threats of dismissal.

Repeated behaviour: Includes actions of individuals or a group, which involves using a system or work as a means of victimizing, humiliating, undermining or threatening.

Risk assessment: The formal process to assess and deal with the risks associated with each and every identified hazard.

Risk to health and safety: includes risk to the, mental or physical health of the worker.

Sexual harassment: A form of discrimination based on gender. It is offensive, degrading, threatening and unlawful. Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual conduct, which includes unwanted sexual advances, unwanted requests for sexual favours and other unwanted verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. It may also include, pinching, patting, rubbing, and leering "dirty" jokes, pictures, materials, comments, suggestions, innuendos, requests or demands of a sexual nature. The behaviour need not be intentional in order to be considered sexual harassment.

Targets: Individuals or groups of individuals who are victims of, or have been singled out for, bullying, harassment or occupational violence.

Violence: Whether at a worksite or work related means the threatened, attempted or actual conduct of a person that causes or is likely to cause physical injury. These acts include threats, menacing or threatening behaviour and all types of physical or verbal assaults.

Witnesses: Individuals who have observed a violation of the Workplace Respect Policy.

3.2 Bullying awareness

Bullying can occur wherever people work or interact together. Under certain conditions, most people are capable of bullying. Bullying is not always intentional. Sometimes people do not realize that their behaviour can be harmful to others.

3.2.1 Definition

Bullying is interpersonal hostility that is deliberate, repeated and sufficiently severe as to harm the targeted person's health, safety or economic status. It is driven by the perpetrator's (the bully's) need to control another individual, not by a legitimate business need.

"Repeated" refers to the persistent nature of the behaviour, not the specific form the behaviour takes. Behaviour is considered repeated if an established pattern can be identified. It may involve a series of diverse incidents – for example, verbal abuse, deliberate damage to personal property and unreasonable threats of dismissal.

A critical defining characteristic of workplace bullying is that it harms the health of the targeted individual. Health endangerment distinguishes bullying from routine office politics, teasing, joking, horseplay and rudeness.

3.2.2 Examples of bullying

The following types of behaviour, where repeated or occurring as part of a pattern of behaviour, could be considered bullying:

- verbal abuse
- excluding or isolating employees
- psychological harassment
- intimidation
- gossiping or spreading rumours
- assigning meaningless tasks unrelated to the job
- giving employees impossible assignments
- deliberately changing work rotations to inconvenience particular employees
- deliberately withholding information that is vital for effective work performance.

A single incident of bullying-style behaviour does not constitute bullying. However, since employers have a duty to provide their employees with a safe workplace, single incidents of bullying should not be ignored or condoned.

Bullying is best understood through the bully's behaviours, which are driven by the bully's need to control the employee or target. These behaviours can be described as acts of commission (such as hostile verbal, nonverbal communication and interfering actions) or acts of omission (such as the withholding of resources, time, information, training, support, equipment – any of which can guarantee failure).

It is important to note that bullying is not a form of tough management. The perpetrator's need to control becomes more important than the employer's legitimate business interest.

3.2.3 Examples of how bullying might occur

Following are specific examples of how people enable bullying and continue to allow it to poison a working environment.

Abusive, harmful mistreatment is confused with tough, but fair, treatment. We blame victims.

- "She's probably doing it to teach you a lesson"
- "Just grow thicker skin"
- "You must have provoked him"

Bullying is not yet illegal

- "Sorry, but we have no policies or laws that compel us to respond"
- "I know she is a jerk. You will just have to learn to live with it"

A bully picks a 'target' then coerces co-workers to bully this same target, primarily by discrediting the target's personality, performance, contributions etc.

- "No one likes him anyway"
- "She is not like us. She just doesn't fit in"
- "I don't know what 'he' does around here anyway"
- "I wouldn't give that project to him. He will be gone before you know it"
- "She is a 'political' hire (wink) if you know what I mean"

Anyone who supports the target instantly finds themselves being 'targeted' in the same way by the bully and eventually the group. This consequence reinforces that it is better to be on the same side as the bully versus against them.

Bullies shame and coerce targets and witnesses into silence.

- "No one said they saw what happened"
- "Why did you wait so long to tell someone?"
- "I think it is a communication problem or misunderstanding"
- "I think you have trouble fitting in"

3.3 Harassment awareness

Alberta human rights laws and norms for human conduct prohibit harassment in the workplace on these grounds. Employers are legally responsible for actively discouraging and prohibiting humiliating conduct or language that results in the working conditions of one employee being less favourable than those of another employee.

3.3.1 Definition

Harassment occurs when a worker is subjected to unwelcome verbal or physical conduct because of their:

- race
- age
- religious beliefs
- colour
- place of origin
- gender
- mental or physical disability
- ancestry
- marital status
- sexual orientation
- source of income
- family status of that person or of any other person.

3.3.2 Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment is a form of discrimination based on gender. It is offensive, degrading, threatening and unlawful. Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual conduct, which includes unwanted sexual advances, unwanted requests for sexual favours and other unwanted verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. The behaviour need not be intentional in order to be considered sexual harassment.

Some examples may include:

- pinching
- patting
- rubbing
- leering
- "dirty" jokes, pictures, materials, comments, suggestions or innuendos
- requests or demands of a sexual nature.

3.3.3 Racial and religious harassment

Racial and religious harassment is behaviour that is disrespectful or causes humiliation to a person because of his or her race, colour, national or ethnic origin or the adornments and rituals associated with religious beliefs.

It includes, but is not limited to:

- slurs
- gestures
- name calling
- swearing

- taunts about a worker's religious or racial background
- unwelcome banter, teasing or jokes that are insulting to the individual's race or religion.

It can also include the display of racist, derogatory or offensive pictures, materials or graffiti, as well as refusing to work with or have eye contact with workers on the job because of their religious background.

3.4 Violence awareness

As part of the new OHS Code, employers now have legal requirements that must be adhered to. (See Part 27 of the OHS Explanation Guide) Effective April 30, 2004, employers are required to:

- implement a policy and procedures
- provide employees with awareness, instruction and training
- investigate and be able to report on all incidents of workplace violence, and
- conduct hazard and risk assessments to safeguard workers from injury as a result of incidents of workplace violence.

3.4.1 Definition

Occupational violence is any act against an employee in the workplace that has or is likely to cause any negative physical or psychological effects. These acts include threats, menacing or threatening behaviour and all types of physical or verbal assaults.

3.4.2 Characteristics

Targets of occupational violence can include all levels management or supervision, workers, customers or any other workplace visitors. The following are examples of types of behaviours that constitute occupational violence:

- argumentative behaviour, in which threats are perceived or implied but are not overt
- unusual, bizarre or menacing behaviour, intensely focused on a grudge or grievance
- direct or indirect threats of harm or violence, or intentional damage targeting personal or company property
- menacing with a fist or brandishing a weapon
- low-level physical assault, such as prodding, poking or pushing
- overt physical violence, striking at another with a fist or weapon
- throwing an object with the intent to strike
- more serious attempts to seriously injure or maim

3.4.3 Sources of violence

Violence can occur for many reasons. There are four main sources that may cause acts of violence to occur in the workplace.

Employees and co-workers: Individuals who have an employment-related relationship with the workplace victim. Current or former employees are included.

Customers/clients: Individuals who are recipients or providers of a product or a service provided by the affected workplace or victim.

Employee-related outsider: Individuals who are possibly a current or former spouse, a relative, acquaintance or some other person who has a dispute involving an employee of the workplace.

Outsiders: Individuals who have no legitimate relationship with the workplace or the victim and sometimes only enter workplaces to commit criminal acts.

5.0 EMPLOYEES' GUIDE AND TOOLKIT

All employees can contribute to an atmosphere of mutual trust, support and respect. Politeness, respect, tolerance and restraint are the basic tools everyone needs to get along with each other. These tools are as indispensable in the workplace as they are in any other situation(s) that bring(s) people together.

Remember that violations to *respect* affect everyone, not just individuals directly involved. Others are likely to suffer if it is not stopped.

5.1 Workplace expectations

Understand that violations to *respect* will not be tolerated or supported in your environment.

5.2 If you're not sure, ask!

If you're not sure whether something you do or say could offend someone, ask! This is simply a part of working in a diverse environment that involves people of different genders, cultures, religions, sexual orientation and beliefs. Some comments and behaviours are obviously degrading, embarrassing or insulting. Others are not so clearly offensive. As well, what is considered offensive varies from person to person and may also change according to the context.

Think before you speak or act. Remember, when in doubt, ask.

5.3 Who to contact

If you are in a situation, or see a situation, that violates Workplace Respect, you are required to report this situation immediately.

You must report this situation to the immediate supervisor(s) of the people involved. A copy of the report must also be filed with the Employer's "Workplace Respect Officer" (Section 4.2.2).

If you believe that the immediate supervisor(s) will not handle the situation promptly and appropriately you may report the situation to a higher-level supervisor, up to and including the project superintendent. Again, a copy of the report must be filed with the Employer's "Workplace Respect Officer" (Section 4.2.2).

The employer will deal with the report according to the procedures set out by the Workplace Respect Policy.

5.4 Monitor your own behaviour

- Have you humiliated, embarrassed or intimidated a co-worker?
- Have you assigned a task beyond the scope of a person's job, hoping he or she will fail?
- Have you denied or discounted someone's contributions at meetings or on a project?
- Have you refused to pass on crucial information to someone or sabotaged work because you did not want his or her to succeed?
- Have you shouted at, cursed at or in some way threatened a co-worker?
- Have you played malicious pranks on a new co-worker?
- Have you stolen someone's ideas and taken credit for yourself?
- Have you started or failed to stop destructive gossip about a co-worker, or exaggerated or embellished an event to cause trouble?

- Have you targeted someone new, or someone you don't want to succeed or to continue on your team? Have you denied access to resources such as training or information because you want to see him or her fail?
- Have you targeted someone to be fired, because you can't control him or her?
- Have you publicly discredited someone?

If you answered yes to any of the above then you should look at your actions and evaluate your motives for behaving in this manner. All of the above behaviours are a form of bullying and contribute to a toxic and poisoned working environment.

5.5 Document incidents

If you find yourself in a situation where you are being victimised, the most important thing you can do is to record the incidents.

One incident of bullying does not generally constitute bullying. In isolation the events appear to be trivial, however, there is nothing trivial about them. The most important thing you can do is document all the incidents. It is this pattern of abuse that identifies itself as bullying.

5.6 Watch body language

Body language, tone of voice and sudden silences often show if a person is uncomfortable with what you are doing or saying. Persons who feel offended with certain comments or behaviours should let you know; however, they often feel uncomfortable doing so. You need to be aware as to how individuals react to your behaviour.

5.7 Intention

Regardless of intention, if you made someone feel uncomfortable, embarrassed, degraded or exploited, then your behaviour caused a problem. Learn to apologize and consider changing your behaviour.

5.8 Observing inappropriate actions

Anyone may witness the inappropriate actions that display a lack of respect: bullying, offensive posters or other materials, name-calling, outbursts of profanity or threats, or even physical intimidation such as throwing objects, getting in someone's face, finger poking, or other physical and inappropriate behaviours.

If you see someone acting in a way that seems unacceptable in the workplace, you can speak privately to the person(s) responsible and explain how the behaviour comes across.

If you see a situation that looks like harassment, you can discuss it privately with the person who was the recipient of the act or behaviour. Be discreet and supportive, and encourage that person to take appropriate steps to stop the problem. You can also approach a manager or supervisor or someone else you trust for guidance and advice.

The worst thing you can do is ignore or continue to 'enable' the disrespectful behaviour.

6.0 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

6.1 Bullying

6.1.1 Management-related questions

How do I know if my workplace “promotes” bullying?

Workplace bullying is often subtle or hidden. Those with little experience of bullying may find it difficult to identify. You should not assume that the workplace is free of bullying simply because there are no immediate obvious signs. There are a number of risk factors that can increase the likelihood of bullying occurring in a workplace. Factors can be revealed through reports from human resource department, through workplace audits or through organizational climate/employee opinion surveys. You must be willing to take a good look at your organization and be prepared to promote respect.

What are some sources of bullying?

Bullying comes in many different forms. It usually comes from a source inside the workplace such as an employee bullying another employee or a group bullying an individual or group of employees. An employer may also be the bully while an often overlooked area of bullying are clients and customers who bully employees.

How do I handle a complaint?

It is important to conduct an investigation as soon as possible on all complaints and to document all activity. You must develop guidelines and procedures that you will consistently follow while conducting an investigation and it must include disciplinary action if the complaint is substantiated. By conducting investigations on all activities you demonstrate commitment to your policies and to your employees. It is important to remember that the person who is alleged to have committed the bullying should be treated as innocent unless the allegations are proved to be true.

Are there costs associated with Workplace Bullying?

Few employers understand how an unhealthy workplace impairs productivity, hinders performance, and damages profitability. In Australia the cost of workplace bullying has been estimated at somewhere between \$A6 - \$A13 (\$6Cdn - \$13Cdn) billion per annum. One study out of the UK determined that bullying could cost £20 - £32 (\$48Cdn - \$77Cdn) billion per annum.

Although it may be difficult to put general costs to the effects of bullying you could determine your indirect costs based on lost productivity, or a high turnover in staff. Do you have a high absenteeism rate through stress or medical leaves? Do you have difficulty in hiring good qualified people because your company has a reputation of being a bad place to work? Remember, should litigation occur, the damage to your company's reputation could be irreversible.

6.1.2. Worker-related questions

Why do people bully?

The characteristic common to all bullies is that they are controlling competitors who take advantage of their targets. Most bullies would stop if the rules changed and bullying was punished. Often time bullies lack emotional self-awareness and are unable to adapt to new or different situations. They do not easily trust other's and are not concerned with other people's feelings. They are not good at conflict resolution and may have limited social or communication skills.

What should I do if someone is bullying me?

The best thing is to talk to the person and tell him or her to stop bullying you. If they know that you will not be pushed around, more often than not, a bully will stop. If that doesn't work or you aren't comfortable speaking up, you can talk to a trusted third party for help or go to your employer. You should report to your employer any conduct that continues to bother you.

Where can I get more information on Bullying?

www.bullybusters.org
www.bullyinginstitute.org

6.2 Harassment

6.2.1 Management-related questions

What is illegal harassment?

Illegal harassment is a form of employment discrimination that is prohibited by federal and provincial laws. To be harassment, the conduct or words must be (1) unwelcome; (2) directed against someone because of their "protected class status" (their race, sex, religion, national origin, disability, and other specific bases set out in each law) and (3) sufficiently frequent or severe as to cause the reasonable person to find their workplace offensive, hostile or intimidating.

The above is the basic legal definition of illegal harassment. Some employers, however, have broader definitions of harassment in their employee policies. So it is wise to check your employer's rules if you have a question about prohibited harassment in your workplace.

Is sexual harassment something different?

No, sexual harassment is one type of harassment. However, there is one form of sexual harassment that is separate: "quid pro quo" sexual harassment. That occurs when an owner, manager or supervisor uses their authority to obtain sexual favours from an employee.

What if the accused harasser is just joking or didn't intend any harm?

It does not matter if the harasser was just joking or didn't mean any harm. What matters is the impact on the target of the behaviour or comments.

How do you know if the conduct is unwelcome? Must the target say so?

The target is not required by law to tell the harasser they don't like the behaviour because the courts recognize that people often don't speak up because they fear they will be retaliated against, will be ostracized by their co-workers, or will hurt the person's feelings. However, it is always better to tell the harasser the conduct is unwelcome if possible. To determine if the behaviour was unwelcome, the courts look at the target's body language; whether the target ever engaged in the same conduct herself, etc.

Do comments or conduct have to be sexual to be sexual harassment?

No. If a manager constantly yells at a woman and calls her a "stupid broad," that could be sexual harassment if he doesn't behave the same way to men.

Can women sexually harass men? Can a man sexually harass another man or a woman another woman?

Yes. If a woman's conduct toward a man meets the definition of sexual harassment, she can be a harasser. Similarly, if a woman's conduct toward another woman or a man's conduct toward another man meets the definition, it can be harassment. In the case of same sex harassment, however, it can be hard to show that the conduct was directed toward the other person "because of their sex." For example, it may be hard to show that a man directed words or conduct toward another man because he is a man. Just using sexual language is not enough and the courts are clear that sexual "locker room" talk or teasing is not necessarily harassment.

Must the harasser be another employee?

No. The harasser can be a customer, client, vendor or anyone else who comes into the workplace. The employer's duty is to provide a workplace free of harassment and it doesn't matter if the harasser is an employee. However, the employer is responsible for stopping the harassment only if it knows the harassment is occurring and if it is able to do something to stop it.

6.2.2 Worker-related questions

What should I do if I think I'm being harassed?

The best thing is to talk to the harasser and tell him or her you are uncomfortable with the conduct and would like it to stop. If that doesn't work or you aren't comfortable speaking up, you can talk to a trusted third party for help or go to your employer. You should definitely report to your employer any conduct that continues to bother you—even if you're not sure it is illegal harassment. It is better to nip a problem in the bud than to wait until things have gotten really bad. The law prohibits retaliation against a person who complains in good faith of workplace harassment.

How do I make sure that I am not harassing someone else?

Ask yourself these questions: Is my behaviour welcome? Would I engage in this behaviour in front of my spouse or parents or child? Would I want the same behaviour directed toward my spouse or parent or child? Would I want it directed toward me? Would I like this to follow me throughout my career?

Where can I get more information on Harassment?

www.albertahumanrights.ab.ca
www.chrc-ccdp.ca

6.3 Violence

Who is ultimately responsible for work site safety?

Employers and employees have duties under the *OHS Code*, for prevention of harassment and violence in the workplace.

6.3.1 Management-related questions

How far should my training go? Do I need to provide personal safety training?

It is important that you first conduct a hazard/risk assessment to determine where the potential risks are. Only then will you know what will be required.

I'm a small company that doesn't have the budget to hire extra staff or implement security systems, panic buttons, safe room etc. What do I do?

Once you have reviewed your hazard/risk assessment you will be in a better position to determine what your immediate needs would be. You do not need to put everything in place all at once but you must ensure that you have done what is required in order to meet due diligence. Sometimes the solution may not cost any money at all such as appropriate administrative work procedures.

Should I investigate every complaint/threat/act conducted against my employees?

Yes. It is important to conduct an investigation as soon as possible on all complaints and to document all activity. You must develop guidelines and procedures that you will consistently follow while conducting an investigation and it must include disciplinary action if the complaint is substantiated. By conducting investigations on all activities you demonstrate commitment to your policies and to your employees.

What can I do for my employees who are receiving threats from the outside (spouse etc.)?

It is important that your employees know it is safe to come to you. You and your employee may need to develop a plan to determine what action may be required should something occur at work and possibly at home. It is important that your employee feels comfortable with the plan and that they believe you will follow through.

When is it appropriate to call in the police?

It is important that you have administrative procedures outlining when police will be involved. Once you have conducted your hazard/risk assessments, you would be determining the required procedures. Contact your local police department to assist you with the possible development of procedures as well as understanding what it is that they are able to do for you.

How often should I review the risks?

It is important to review your procedures to determine that they are still viable. Review your hazard/risk assessments at least every three years or when ever a new procedure/ program/ division/ serious incident occurs.

Should I get my employees to sign a 'non-violence' agreement?

You may either create a separate document or incorporate a paragraph into your new employee orientation agreement. It is not mandatory but if employees sign such an agreement it is very important that management do the same.

Can I request a criminal check prior to hiring and/or on regular basis throughout my employee's tenure with us?

Yes, but you must ensure that your employment policies clearly outline your practices and procedures and the employee is aware of these. Employment advertisements would need to state that you may require a criminal record check prior to employment.

How can I get union on side?

Have the union participate in the hazard/risk assessments and when developing your policies and procedures. Ensure that management, union and workers alike will not tolerate any criminal activity. When individuals understand that everyone is working together towards creating a healthy workplace, all concerned will deal with any unwanted activity immediately.

6.3.2 Worker-related questions

What if someone threatens me but no one else witnessed it?

It is very important that you inform your supervisor of every type of threat. Document the date and time and try to remember the exact words and/or gestures that were used.

What if I'm getting threatened at home/phone from co-workers?

Document the date and time and try to remember the exact words that were used and inform your supervisor. If the call was recorded on voice mail or a message machine, do not delete the call. If the phone calls are persistent you may contact the phone company and with them, determine what the best course of action would be.

If my supervisor is threatening me, whom do I go to?

If applicable, report your concern to your supervisor's manager. Ensure you document the date and time of the occurrence and any witness to the act.

I work alone but visit customers/ work sites/ etc. Do I need to do anything?

If you are working alone, you must adhere to the Working Alone Policy as outline in the *OHS Code*. Ensure that you have completed a hazard assessment of the tasks that you do and develop procedures that would best suit your needs

Can I refuse to take harassment training?

No. If personal safety training or harassment awareness training are requirements for employment you cannot refuse. This type of training is no different than WHMIS or forklift training as it ensures that you have the skills to do your job safely and competently.

Where can I get more information on Violence?

www.wcb.ab.ca

www.worksafely.org

www.leadership.gc.ca

www.workcover.vic.gov.au