

## **POLICY ON VIOLENCE AND HARASSMENT IN THE WORKPLACE**

### **POLICY:**

Rosedale United Church is committed to reducing the risk to its employees of any violence or harassment in the workplace.

Rosedale United Church will not tolerate any acts or threats of workplace violence or harassment from any employee, former employee, member or adherent of the congregation or other member of the public.

This policy applies to all activities that occur while on church premises or while engaging in church business, activities, or social events.

### **WHAT IS WORKPLACE VIOLENCE?**

Workplace violence means:

- (a) the exercise of physical force against an employee;
- (b) an attempt to exercise physical force against an employee;
- (c) a statement or behaviour that it is reasonable for an employee to interpret as a threat to exercise physical force against the employee.

### **WHAT IS WORKPLACE HARASSMENT?**

“Workplace Harassment” means engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct against an employee that is known or ought reasonably be known to be unwelcome.

### **EMPLOYEES’ RESPONSIBILITIES:**

Employees must not engage in any acts of workplace violence or workplace harassment.

Employees must immediately report any instances of workplace violence or harassment, or threatened violence or harassment to their supervisor, the Clerk of Session or the Chair of the Ministry and Personnel Committee who must evaluate the situation to determine the appropriate course of action and take measures to secure the workplace when a threat of workplace violence is disclosed.

Call 911 if danger is immediate.

**PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING WORKPLACE VIOLENCE OR WORKPLACE HARASSMENT:**

All reports of workplace violence and workplace harassment will be taken seriously.

No employee who makes a genuine complaint or is involved in the process will be penalized for doing so. However, any individual who deliberately makes false accusations regarding violence or harassment will be subject to discipline.

If emergency services are not required, the complainant will be directed to initiate a formal documentation and complaint process (if appropriate under the circumstances). The complainant should carefully record details of the incident including the date and time of the incident, the nature of the violence and/or harassment, and the names of the people who may have witnessed the incident.

Upon receiving the documentation, a formal investigation process will be initiated either pursuant to this policy or pursuant to Section 72 of *The Manual of the United Church of Canada* as appropriate.

The investigation process will involve interviews of the complainant, the respondent (if appropriate) and any witnesses named by either. If the investigation discloses that an individual has violated this policy, disciplinary action may be taken up to and including termination.

Strict confidentiality is required to properly investigate an incident.

The investigator will prepare a written report of their findings and forward the report to the Clerk of Session within 30 days of the incident.

**PREVENTION:**

The following steps will be taken to prevent acts of violence at Rosedale United Church:

1. All upper floor doors will remain locked at all times except when in use For Sunday services or Sunday School and the main floor doors will be locked when there are limited staff on the premises or any staff member feels it appropriate to keep them locked;
2. “Good Samaritan” drop-ins will be told to call Doug Norris before attending the Church. When they arrive they will be restricted to the main floor;
3. Emergency numbers for police and mental health response will be posted in a visible location on each floor of the building;
4. Any staff required to conduct visitations off the premises must carry a cell phone with them;

5. Staff should ensure that another person is present when visiting anyone who could pose a potential threat to their safety;
6. There must be at least 2 people (in addition to the leader) present for any group activity to proceed;
7. A telephone will be installed on the second floor of the Church where it is readily accessible by staff.

Pre-employment screening will be conducted of all applicants for a paid position with Rosedale United Church.

References will be checked to obtain information about the candidate's conduct in previous positions. Criminal record checks may also be conducted in accordance with Church policy.

The following warning signs of unacceptable behaviour should be reported to the Clerk of Session or the Chair of the Ministry and Personnel Committee immediately:

1. Unco-operative behaviour;
2. Belligerence;
3. Profanity;
4. Unwanted or inappropriate sexual comments;
5. Refusal to obey policies;
6. Increased absenteeism;
7. Direct or indirect threats;
8. Writing of violent or intimidating notes;
9. Involvement in fights or assaults;
10. Bullying;
11. Stalking.