

## Health and Safety of Staff Policy

Policy Number: **HR-02**

(Includes Safety, Security and Emergencies; Working Alone)

Initial Policy Approval Date: **Mar. 2020**

Review/Revision Dates: **Feb. 2021, Mar. 2022, Mar. 2023, Mar. 2024, Mar. 2025**

Year of Next Review: **2026**

---

The library board and CEO are committed to the establishment of a healthy and safe workplace and to the integration of health and safety practices in all areas of the workplace. The underlying principle of this policy is the responsibility of all employees in maintaining a safe workplace, which is best achieved through consultation and co-operation between management and employees.

The board also acts to protect and secure library property.

This policy applies to all Port Colborne Public Library Board members, all library staff, and all library volunteers who participate in various work-related activities at the library or off-site.

### Section 1: Legislative Requirements

1. The Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) requires those who have any degree of control over the workplace to ensure a safe and healthy work environment.
2. The requirements of the OHSA apply to every worker who is being paid, regardless of the location where the work is performed. If workers work at home and are being paid or are driving and being paid en route, they are covered under the Act.
3. If a paid worker suffers a critical injury, the OHSA requires that the employer immediately notify the Ministry of Labour Health & Safety Contact Centre and the Workplace Health and Safety representative. The employer and the employee health and safety representative must prepare a written report (see Section 4), and forward to a director of the Ministry of Labour within 48 hours. (See Appendix B).
4. The OHSA sets out duties with respect to workplace safety and materials and equipment in the workplace. Section 25(2) of the Act requires employers to prepare

and review at least annually a written Occupational Health and Safety Policy and develop and maintain a program to implement that policy.

5. Ontario Regulation 297/13 Occupational Health and Safety Awareness and Training requires a worker to complete a basic occupational health and safety awareness training program.

## **Section 2: Rights of the Worker**

1. A worker has the following rights:
  - a) to participate in the process of identifying and resolving workplace health and safety concerns
  - b) to know about potential hazards to which he or she may be exposed
  - c) to refuse work that he or she believes is hazardous to either his or her own health and safety or that of another worker
  - d) all other rights indicated in the Occupational Health and Safety Act

## **Section 3: Responsibilities**

1. The Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act and its regulations impose a legal duty on employers and on supervisors for ensuring the well-being of workers under their supervision, and to take reasonable measures to protect their safety.
2. The Board delegates authority to administer and direct health and safety to the Library CEO.
3. The Board, CEO, and library staff share the responsibility to ensure a safe and secure space for all.
4. The Library CEO is responsible for:
  - a) ensuring adherence to the principles of this policy
  - b) ensuring compliance with all applicable health and safety legislation
  - c) ensuring training and procedures for effective health and safety program management, including adequate allocation of funds and resources
  - d) investigating all accidents involving personal injury and reporting incidents to proper authorities when required
  - e) addressing employees' safety concerns promptly
  - f) ensuring that health and safety infractions are addressed

5. The Library Services Manager is responsible for:
  - a) making sure that work is done safely
  - b) ensuring employees are aware of hazards and how to protect themselves
  - c) maintaining an orderly and uncluttered work area
  - d) providing adequate training to employees in order to protect their health and safety
  - e) investigating in the presence of the employee health and safety representative, refusals to work or, in the event that he or she is not available, a fellow employee
  
6. Employees are responsible for:
  - a) knowing procedures to follow in the case of accidents or sudden illnesses
  - b) reporting any known hazards to their supervisors
  - c) reporting any accidents or injuries to their supervisors
  - d) understanding the hazards associated with any materials they used and all relevant safety information regarding their use
  - e) reporting any missing or defective equipment
  - f) maintaining an orderly and uncluttered work area
  - g) operating any equipment in a way that will not endanger any employee
  - h) knowing the location of the first aid kit(s)
  - i) knowing the locations and use of the fire extinguishers as well as the location of emergency exits
  - j) participating in fire drills and other emergency evacuation procedures

## **Section 4: Emergency Response Information for Employees with Disabilities**

1. In accordance with Ontario Regulation 165/16 Integrated Accessibility Standards, the library will provide individualized workplace emergency response information for an employee who has a disability, if the disability is such that the information is necessary and the library is aware of the need for accommodation due to the employee's disability.
  
2. With the employee's consent the workplace emergency response information shall be provided to the person designated to provide assistance.
  
3. The individualized workplace emergency response information shall be reviewed when:
  - a) the employee moves to a different work location,

- b) the employee's overall accommodation needs are reviewed, and
- c) the overall emergency response procedures are reviewed

## **Section 5: Health and Safety Representative**

The library is identified as a work site in the City of Port Colborne's Multi-Workplace Joint Health and Safety Committee and shall participate and be represented on the Committee.

1. The OHSA requires that a workplace with fewer than 20, but more than five employees, have a workplace Health and Safety Representative. In accordance with Section 8 of the Occupational Health and Safety Act:
  - a) Employees will appoint one health and safety representative from among the workers who does not exercise managerial functions and has powers as set out in Section 8(11) of the OHSA.
  - b) The library board will pay the representative while carrying out his or her duties.
2. The Health and Safety Representative will, in accordance with Section 8 of the OHSA:
  - a) identify workplace hazards
  - b) inspect the workplace at least once a month
  - c) be consulted about workplace testing
  - d) make recommendations to the CEO and Library Services Manager
  - e) investigate work refusals and serious accidents
  - f) maintain a health and safety bulletin board which will include but not be limited to:
    - a copy of the Occupational Health and Safety Act
    - copies of the following Port Colborne Public Library policies: HR-09 Health and Safety, HR-08 Prevention of Workplace Violence, and HR-07 Human Rights – Discrimination and Workplace Harassment
    - the most recent version of the poster from the Ministry of Labour entitled What You Should Know About the Ontario Employment Standards Act
    - the most recent version of the poster from the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board entitled In Case of Injury--1234
  - g) be trained in basic first aid by an accredited agency

- h) maintain the first aid box which meets the requirements of the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act Regulation 1101 (For contents, see Appendix C of this policy)

## **Section 6: Working Alone**

1. Working alone describes a situation where a person is the only employee in the library, or where the employee does not have direct contact with a co-worker.
2. Library staff are not typically assigned to work alone however, from time to time, staff may work alone in the following situations:
  - outreach (programming off-site such as schools, retirement homes, market, and other similar venues)
  - conferences, meeting, and training
  - opening or closing the library alone for a special event
  - call-in for an emergency situation

In these and similar circumstances, prior consent to work alone must be obtained from the CEO, or Library Services Manager as designated.

3. The library board directs the CEO to develop a plan for working alone. The plan identifies the occupational hazards, risks, procedures for personal safety, special training, and emergency assistance in the event of an incident when working alone. In addition:
  - a) all employees will be made aware of potential risks and will be trained on procedures when working alone
  - b) volunteers and students will not work alone

## **Section 7: Adoption of Municipal Policies**

1. The Port Colborne Public Library adopts the current Health and Safety Policies of the City of Port Colborne and the City of Port Colborne's current Health and Safety Policy Statement.
2. Health and Safety policies include but are not limited to:
  - working alone
  - workplace harassment and discrimination
  - prevention of workplace violence

- safety, security and emergencies
3. The Board may adopt policies of the municipality with the understanding that those policies must also apply to and satisfy the specific legal obligations of the Board in terms of its governance structure, its duties and responsibilities to its employees, library operations, and the public library building.
  4. The Board reserves the right to establish additional Health and Safety policies and to modify the City's policies in order to satisfy the Board's specific legal duties and responsibilities.
  5. Additions, modifications, or exclusions to any policy adopted from the municipality will be stated in the Board policy and communicated to the City's Human Resources Department.
  6. The Board shall be notified of any amendments to the City's Health and Safety policies and the Health and Safety statement that may occur in the future.
  7. The City will ensure that policies are reviewed and amended according to legislative requirements.
  8. The Library will be identified as a work site in the City of Port Colborne's Multi-Workplace Joint Health and Safety Committee and will be represented on the Committee.
  9. This policy and appendices will be reviewed annually or more frequently as deemed necessary by the Board to ensure compliance with legislation and to accurately reflect current practices.
  10. All programs, including the City's Workplace Violence Program, the Workplace Discrimination Program, and Harassment Program will be reviewed annually or more frequently as deemed necessary by the Board. All programs will be posted on the library's Health and Safety Bulletin Board.
  11. An audit of the workplace environment (using, in part, the Risk Assessment Recommendations, 2017) will be conducted annually.

**Related Documents:**

- Port Colborne Public Library. HR-12: Workplace Harassment and Discrimination

- City of Port Colborne. Health and Safety Policies
- City of Port Colborne. Health and Safety Policy Statement
- Occupational Health and Safety Act, R.S.O. 1990, chapter O.1
- Ontario Regulation 191/11 Integrated Accessibilities Standards s. 27
- Ontario Regulation 297/13 Occupational Health and Safety Awareness and Training

## **Appendix A: Additions, Modifications and Exclusions**

### **1. Reporting Structure: Applies to all Human Resources Polices**

- a) Library staff report to the CEO, or Library Services Manager as designated
- b) The Library Services Manager reports to the CEO
- c) The CEO reports to the Port Colborne Public Library Board

### **2. Safety, Security and Emergencies: Clarification to the City's Policy**

- a) The Board requires individual staff members to take responsibility for their own health and safety, as well as that of library users. Each person will take initiative on health and safety issues and will work to solve problems and make improvements on an ongoing basis.
- b) All Board members, library staff, and volunteers will take initiative on public safety issues and will work to solve problems and make improvements on an ongoing basis.
- c) The City of Port Colborne, on behalf of the Board, will ensure that funding, time, and resources are dedicated to training library staff, Board members, and volunteers in safety, security, and emergency procedures. The Board will provide the cost of any training not covered by the City.
- d) The CEO will work in coordination with the City to develop safety and security programs that include procedures, implementation plans, enforcement, and reporting for:
  - safe work practices, including WHMIS, ergonomics, working alone, harassment, and indoor air quality
  - events that compromise the safety and health of library staff and the public, including bomb threats, harmful, abusive and dangerous behaviour by individuals, and medical emergencies
  - crime prevention including theft, vandalism, and drug-dealing and/or use in the library
  - disasters that threaten library collections, furniture and equipment, including fire and flood



- e) All library staff will enforce policy OP-03: Code of Conduct (Public) to ensure safety and security in the library.
- f) Closing the library may be necessary in emergencies or catastrophes including, but not limited to, extreme weather and power failure. The primary consideration is the safety of all persons in the building and on the property. The CEO, or the Manager of Library Services in consultation with the CEO, will determine when to close the library during an emergency or catastrophe.
- g) The Library cooperates with other agencies responsible for health and safety and local emergency preparedness.

### **3. Violence in the Workplace: The Board has adopted its own policy**

See: Policy HR-03: Prevention of Workplace Violence

See: Port Colborne Public Library. Risk Assessment Report and Recommendations (2017)

### **5. Workplace Harassment and Discrimination: The Board has adopted its own policy**

See: Policy HR-12: Workplace Harassment and Discrimination

---

## **Appendix B: Ministry of Labour Health and Safety Contact Centre**

---

Toll-free: 1-877-202-0008

TTY: 1-855-653-9260

- Call any time to report critical injuries (see note below), fatalities or work refusals.
- Call 8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Monday – Friday, for general inquiries about workplace health and safety.
- In an emergency, always call 911 immediately.

A critical injury:

- places life in jeopardy
  - produces unconsciousness
  - results in a substantial loss of blood
  - involves the fracture of an arm or leg (but not a finger or toe)
  - results in the amputation of an arm, leg, hand or foot (but not a finger or toe)
  - involves burns to a major portion of the body, or
  - causes the loss of sight in an eye
- 

## **Appendix C: First Aid Station Requirements**

1. As outlined in Workplace Safety and Insurance Act 1997, Regulation 1101, Section 8, the Library will have a first aid station with a first aid box which is furnished and provided by the Library itself. It will contain as a minimum:

- a current edition of a standard St. John Ambulance First Aid Manual, or other City of Port Colborne approved manual
- 1 card of safety pins
- dressings consisting of:
  - 12 adhesive dressings individually wrapped
  - 4 sterile gauze pads, 3 inches square
  - 2 rolls of gauze bandage, 2 inches wide
  - 2 field dressings, 4 inches square or 2 four-inch sterile bandage compresses, and
  - 1 triangular bandage

The first aid station and a first aid box is located in the staff kitchen on the administrative level of the Library. Two more first aid boxes are located in the library:

one at the Circulation Desk on the main floor and in the staff closet on the administrative level.

2. The employer will ensure that the first aid station is at all times in the charge of a worker who:
  - is the holder of a valid St. John Ambulance Emergency First Aid Certificate or its equivalent
  - works in the immediate vicinity of the station