



## The Lee Wiggins Childcare Centre WORKPLACE VIOLENCE POLICY

### Commitment Statement

The Lee Wiggins Childcare Centre (LWCC), the health and safety of our employees is paramount. Priority is given to protecting our employees and our visitors from violence and/or intimidating behaviours. Such conduct interferes with everyone's ability to perform their job and is not in keeping with the Centre's philosophy of trust and mutual respect.

By working together, and giving the utmost attention to the safety and well-being of each other, we will meet our shared objective of a healthier and safer working environment for all.

LWCC employees, client's, parents and Board are entitled to have a work environment free from violence and intimidating behaviours as prescribed by the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*. This policy applies to all employees and agents/representatives of the LWCC while in the workplace, during work-related field trips or travel, or during any work-related and/or social functions.

Employees are expected to assist the LWCC in its attempts to prevent and eliminate violence in the workplace. The LWCC will treat any form of violence that occurs in the workplace seriously irrespective of the alleged perpetrator's position.

Nothing in this policy limits an individual's right to file a complaint with the Ministry of Labour should they feel the situation warrants such action.

### Definition

The *Occupational Health and Safety Act* defines 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;
- An attempt to exercise physical force against a worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker;
- A statement or behaviour that is reasonable for a worker to interpret as a threat to exercise physical force against the worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker.



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### Forms of Workplace Violence

- 1) Violence by Strangers
  - Usually enters the place of work on the pretense of being a customer.
  - Normally commits robbery or other violent act.
- 2) Violence by Customers/Clients/Parents
  - May be an expected or unexpected situation.
- 3) Violence by Co-workers
  - Could include; current employee and manager, former employee and manager, a prospective employee, and may occur inside or outside the workplace.
- 4) Violence by Personal Relations
  - This includes spouse, partner, relative, or friend and usually occurs when a personal dispute occurs with the worker and enters the workplace to harass, threaten, injure, or kill the employee.

### Behaviours Constituting Workplace Violence

Such threats or acts include, but are not limited to:

- Harming or threatening to harm any employee or guest;
- Damaging or threatening to damage property or the property of any employee or guest;
- Possessing a dangerous weapon or incendiary device on property without prior authorization;
- Engaging in stalking behaviour of any employee;

### Responsibilities of the Board of Directors and the Coordinator

- Assess risks of violence at the LWCC;
- Promote and ensure a non-violence workplace;
- Provide employees with information and instruction regarding the workplace policy and program with respect to workplace violence including appropriate steps to be taken and investigation procedures;
- Take every reasonable precaution for the protection of the worker;
- Inform employees of potential risk situations;
- Ensure employees know who to contact with concerns about the policy or when to report an incident;
- Model behaviour, which helps support a positive work environment;
- Respond to complaints brought to attention and respect the confidentiality and sensitivity of issues;
- Document all information and investigation results;
- Request an investigation into allegations of violent situations be conducted; and
- If witnessing elements of a poisoned work environment, take action.



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### Responsibilities of Employees

- Compliance with this policy is the responsibility of all employees;
- Employees must avoid any behaviour or conduct that could reasonably be interpreted as a violation of this policy;
- Employees must maintain a work environment free from violence, and/or intimidation;
- Call 911 if the situation warrants it and you find a peer or yourself in immediate danger.

### Process for Making Violence-Related Complaints

If employees have witnessed or experienced conduct which they believe to be inconsistent with this policy, they have a responsibility to:

- Call 911 if the situation warrants it and you find a peer or yourself in immediate danger.
- Make the behaviour/actions known to your Coordinator immediately.
- A written record of the action/behaviour should be provided to Coordinator including the dates, times, nature of the action/behaviour, and witnesses (if any).

### Removal of a Person from the Workplace

Any person who makes substantial threats, exhibits threatening behaviour, or engages in violent acts against employees, visitors, guests, or other individuals while on the LWCC property shall be removed from the premises as quickly as safety permits, and shall remain off the premises pending the outcome of an investigation.

Employees are not to remove individuals from the premises. Assistance must be requested from the Police or security.



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### **Investigation Process by the Board of Directors and Coordinator**

- All complaints will be investigated promptly.
- All those directly involved and witnesses will be spoken with.
- Notes/statements will be prepared during each interview, reviewed by the person(s) being interviewed and signed for accuracy.
- Records or other documents relevant to the incident being investigated (this may include safety reports, incident reports, work schedules, injury reports, complaints and observation notes and may involve taking pictures of the scene) will be reviewed.
- Relevant collective agreement or employment contract language or organizational policies/procedures will be reviewed.
- A final summary/report of the investigation will be prepared by the parties involved.

#### *Corrective Action*

Any employee found to have engaged in conduct that violates this policy will be subject to discipline, up to and including termination of employment. Because allegations of acts of violence are very serious, frivolous complaints found to have been made for improper purposes will result in disciplinary action being taken against the complainant.

#### *Confidentiality*

Employees should feel secure in knowing that their concerns will be handled discreetly and sensitively.

As such, employee issues will usually remain between the employee, and their Coordinator. On occasion, however, an investigation may require consulting with another employee, Coordinator, the Board, in order to ensure an appropriate resolution. In such cases, the employee will be consulted prior to involving others.

#### *Reprisals*

This policy strictly prohibits reprisals against an employee because s/he has brought forward a concern or has provided information regarding a concern under this policy. Any employee who commits or threatens reprisal against another employee for following this, or any of the Centre's policies in good faith, may be subject to discipline, up to and including dismissal for cause.