

## **Purpose**

The West Perth Public 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. The underlying principle of the 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.

## **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, and forward to a director of the Ministry of Labour within 48 hours.
4. The *OHSA* sets out duties with respect to workplace safety, and materials and equipment in the workplace. Section 25 (2) requires employers to prepare and review at least annually a written occupational health and safety policy, and develop and maintain processes 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.

## 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 they may be exposed;
  - c. to refuse work that they believe is hazardous to either their own health and safety or to that of another worker;
  - d. all other rights indicated in the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*.

## Responsibilities

1. The *Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act* (OHSA) and its regulations impose a legal duty on employers and supervisors for ensuring the well-being of workers under their supervision, and to take reasonable measures to protect their safety.
2. The Library Board delegates authority to administer and direct health and safety to the Library CEO.
3. 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 processes, 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.
4. Supervisors are 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 they are not available, a fellow employee.
5. Employees are responsible for:
- a. knowing procedures to follow in the case of accidents or sudden illnesses;
  - b. reporting any known hazards to their supervisor;
  - c. reporting any accidents or injuries to their supervisor;
  - 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.

## **Emergency Response Information for Employees with Disabilities**

1. In accordance with *Ontario Regulation 191/11 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;
  - c. the overall emergency response procedures are reviewed.

## Health and Safety Representative

1. The *OHSA* requires that a workplace with fewer than twenty, but more than five employees, have a workplace Health and Safety Representative. In accordance with the *Occupational Health and Safety Act, section 8*:
  - 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 their 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;
  - e. investigate work refusals and serious accidents;
  - f. maintain a health and safety bulletin board which will include but not be limited to:
    - i. the most recent edition of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*;
    - ii. copies of the following West Perth Public Library policies: *Health and Safety, Prevention of Workplace Violence, and Workplace Discrimination and Harassment*;
    - iii. the most recent version of the poster from the Ministry of Labour entitled '*What You Should Know About the Ontario Employment Standards Act*';
    - iv. 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 kit(s) which meets the requirements of the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act Regulation 1101*.

## 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. The Library Board directs the CEO to develop a procedure for working alone.

The procedure identifies the occupational hazards, risks 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. employees will not work alone in the library without the prior consent of the CEO;
- c. volunteers and students will not work alone.

## **Thermal Workplace Conditions**

### Indoor Spaces:

As outlined in Ontario's *Occupational Health & Safety Act, R.R.O. 1990*:

1. *Regulation 851, s. 129 (1)* stipulates the minimum workspace temperature for enclosed workspaces is 18 degrees Celsius;
2. *Regulation 213-91* indicates a maximum enclosed workspace temperature of 27 degrees Celsius.

If ambient temperatures within West Perth Public Library or partner facilities fall outside of these regulation limits, the Library CEO or designate may stop all library-related activities and/or evacuate the library building until the heating/cooling issues are resolved. Indoor temperatures within 18-27 degrees Celsius contribute to the physical comfort of staff and visitors, as well as the safe usage of equipment and materials.

### Outdoor Spaces:

*Environment Canada* and the *Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety* outline the bodily effects of outdoor temperatures in cold and warm weather:

1. **Cold:** Temperatures of -10 to -27 degrees Celsius (with wind chill) present a moderate risk of hypothermia and frost bite when exposed for prolonged periods of time and/or without adequate protection;
2. **Warm:** Temperatures above 31 degrees Celsius and/or a humidex value of 40 degrees Celsius result in a Heat Warning from *Environment Canada* due to the potential for heat rash, cramps, exhaustion or heat stroke.

If outdoor temperatures in West Perth fall below -10 degrees Celsius (with wind chill) or above 31 degrees Celsius (and/or a 40 degrees Celsius humidex value), the Library CEO or designate may cancel outdoor, library-related activities for the duration. Activities may be rescheduled depending on staff and space availability.

## **Related Documents:**

West Perth Public Library Policy. *Prevention of Workplace Violence.*

West Perth Public Library Policy. *Safety, Security and Emergencies.*

West Perth Public Library Policy. *Workplace Discrimination and Harassment.*

Municipality of West Perth. *Employee Policy Manual.*

Municipality of West Perth. *Health and Safety Manual.*

Government of Ontario. *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, R.R.O. 2005.*

Government of Ontario. *Integrated Accessibility Standards.*

Government of Ontario. *Occupational Health and Safety Act, R.R.O. 1990.*

Government of Ontario. *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act.*

Government of Canada. *Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety.*

Government of Canada. *Environment Canada.*

**Issued:** January 2015

**Revised:** March 2026