

Violence Prevention Program - Update

Ensuring a Respectful and Safe Work Environment for Employees

City Council Presentation

RTS # 18109

Office of the Chief Safety Officer

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1 Context



Addressing the Issues

1. Incidents are **increasing in numbers and severity**
2. Incidents are impacting **staff physical and psychological health**
3. Incidents are impacting **personal lives**
4. Incidents have become **regular occurrences**
5. More **guidance needed** for difficult situations



PREVENTION

- ◆ Clarification of **public behaviour expectations** across all public facing services in Bylaw and/or Policy, whether the service is offered in a City facility or not.
- ◆ Clear expression of **potential consequences** of inappropriate conduct or treatment of COV staff.
- ◆ Increased **disengagement by staff and intervention** by management and/or security services.
- ◆ Increased **measures to ensure staff safety**, such as security presence, body-worn cameras, administrative consequences



RESPONSE

- ◆ Expanded implementation of **administrative consequences** of non-compliance.
- ◆ Procedurally-fair, **staged approach to inappropriate customer behaviour**: i.e., stepped warnings/notices, similar to what is already implemented in many public facilities and services.
- ◆ Consequences could include a **range of impacts**: restrictions on contact with certain staff, access restrictions, denial of service, or pursuit of legal remedies. Appeal process will be provided.

2 Expectations of Respectful Conduct

The conduct we expect from members of the public and City staff to ensure safe interactions

Key Objectives

- ◆ Ensure a safe and respectful environment for staff, residents, and clients in all spaces and across all services.
- ◆ Provide clear expectations for public behavior across all interactions.
- ◆ Strengthen the City's ability to respond consistently and respectfully to public conduct incidents across all channels
- ◆ Promote consistency in handling negative public behavior City-wide.
- ◆ Ensure the public's right to provide feedback and criticize work and appeal decisions.

Expected outcomes

- ◆ Greater staff confidence and safety
- ◆ Faster, more consistent resolution of incidents
- ◆ Clear expectations and transparency for the public
- ◆ Stronger data to inform prevention and policy
- ◆ Alignment with City values and WorkSafeBC requirements
- ◆ Consistent, defensible response to public conduct

Venues incl. Council meetings, public engagement etc.



Streets, parks and private property



Phone



Written communication



Social media / online



2 Expectations of Respectful Conduct

Expanding “RESPECT WORKS HERE”

Program components

- ◆ City-wide Expectations of Respectful Conduct
- ◆ “Behavioural continuum”
- ◆ Guidelines for Managers and Staff
- ◆ Tools, templates and scripts
- ◆ Training modules
- ◆ Training pathways tailored to incident exposure
- ◆ Centralized incident management system/reporting
- ◆ A consequence framework
- ◆ An appeals procedure

Early rollout starting Q4-2025

- ◆ Revenue Services
- ◆ City Clerks
- ◆ Rezoning team in PDS
- ◆ Property use inspectors in DBL



2 Expectations of Respectful Conduct: Implementation

The “Behaviour Continuum”

	UNPLEASANT	UNACCEPTABLE	CRIMINAL
Example behaviours	- Expressing disapproval - Respectfully augmenting different point of view - Threats to follow legitimate avenues of complaint: “I’ll report this to the Ombudsperson” - Lengthy unproductive conversations - Loud verbal communication	- Yelling or screaming - Verbal abuse e.g., profanities, personal insults - Written abuse e.g., discriminatory language - Sexual misconduct and/or lewd behaviour - Intoxication resulting in disruption - Refusal to follow policies or staff directive - Causing a disturbance	- Hate speech (homophobia, transphobia, racism etc.) - Harassment (causes a person to reasonably fear for their safety) - Threats of violence - Physical assault - Sexual assault - Theft - Vandalism - Weapon possession, use and threats
Response guidance	Apply resilience tactics, seek relief from a Supervisor	De-escalate, remind, warn, enforce (ask to leave / disengage)	Contact VPD
Consequence	No Consequences	May be consequences	Consequences highly likely
Staff support	Based on staff need/incident impact		

Training

Exposure-based EPC training pathways

- ◆ The behavioural continuum
- ◆ Assessment of situational behaviour to trigger appropriate response
- ◆ Non-Violence Crisis Intervention (NVCI) training to staff in areas with more orange and red behaviours
- ◆ Managers: To assess and issue potential consequences
- ◆ Managers: To understand and support impacted staff
- ◆ Managers: How to report incidents
- ◆ Building Internal NVCI trainer Capacity

Violence Risk Assessment based training

- ◆ Training dependent on the risk rating (task or location)
- ◆ Alignment with the EPC training

3 Body Worn Camera Pilot

Background

Parking enforcement officers:

- ▶ Interact with the public daily while enforcing Parking and other By-laws
- ▶ Experience frequent (daily) verbal abuse or threats while on patrol
- ▶ Experienced, as a group, 1 assault every 2 weeks in 2024

Rationale

- ▶ A different approach beyond training needed to address the negative interactions
- ▶ Requirement to provide a safe work environment
- ▶ Positive feedback VPD
- ▶ BWC trialed elsewhere as means of violence deterrence with positive impact

Objective

Assess whether:

- ▶ Body Worn Cameras deter verbal abuse, threats and violence
- ▶ Body Worn Cameras have an impact on the physical and psychological safety of the work environment for PEOs



3 Body Worn Camera Pilot

Scope

- ▶ Duration: 6 months (Aug 2025-Jan 2026)
- ▶ Participants:
 - 15 PEOs
 - All genders, ethnic backgrounds, ages, shift patterns, and employment status
- ▶ Patrolling mode: On foot, bike and on vehicles
- ▶ Deployment: Staff across all areas of the City

Key features of pilot

- ▶ Officers manually activate the camera when they feel their safety is at risk.
- ▶ Officers informs individuals when recording begins, unless it's unsafe to do so.
- ▶ Cameras records audio and video
- ▶ Recordings stored only if an unacceptable or criminal incident occurs
- ▶ Not used for issuing tickets or general enforcement.

Initial findings (2 months)

- ▶ BWC pilot welcomed by staff
- ▶ Reduction in reported serious incidents (assaults)
- ▶ Shift in tone from derogatory to polite
- ▶ Presence of cameras appear to de-escalate negative interactions
- ▶ Continued need to train staff on when to activate cameras
- ▶ No hardware or software issues



4 Violence Risk Assessments

Regulatory Requirement

- ◆ VRA required whenever there is a potential risk of violence in the workplace.
 - Task based
 - Location based
- ◆ Objective: Identify, evaluate, and control potential risks of violence to protect workers from harm.
- ◆ Considerations in a Violence Risk Assessment
 - Historical incidents (number, nature, severity, frequency etc.)
 - Physical environment (e.g., setup, furniture placement, lighting)
 - Work procedures
 - Employee demographics and training
- ◆ VRA is used to inform controls to eliminate or minimize risks

What We've Done

- ◆ Inventory of completed Violence Risk Assessments
- ◆ Aligned and linked existing processes
 - Violence Risk Assessment (VRA)
 - Security Assessment Report (SAR)
- ◆ Created standardized templates for VRA, SAR
- ◆ Developed risk-rating systems
 - Task Risk Ratings
 - Location Risk Rating
- ◆ Designing training pathways based on risk ratings
- ◆ Completed 20+ Security Assessments across City of Vancouver facilities
- ◆ Established framework controls based on location risk ratings

What's Next

- ◆ City-wide roll-out of standardized VRAs and SARs.
- ◆ VRAs to help prioritize controls, interventions, resource allocation, and training
- ◆ Roll-out standardized risk-based training pathways

1. Workplace Violence Risk Assessment

City of Vancouver | Workplace Safety

Workplace Violence Risk Assessment
Rev 1.0 - Updated July 2023

Division	
Branch	
Workgroup	
Date of Assessment	Date:
	Review OR Initial Assessment
Initial Assessment Date	Creation:
Last Review Date	Last Review: (prior to this assessment)

2. Regulatory Framework

As required by section 4.28 of the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation of British Columbia, any workplace where there is a potential for risk of injury to workers from violence arising out of their employment must conduct a workplace violence risk assessment.

The risk assessment must take into consideration: the previous workplace violence experiences in that workplace, occupational experience in similar workplaces, and the location and circumstances where work takes place.

The definition of workplace violence is that outlined in the WorkSafeBC Occupational Health and Safety Regulation, section 4.27: 'The attempted or actual exercise by a person, other than a worker, of any physical force so as to cause injury to a worker and includes any threatening statement or behaviour, which gives a worker a reasonable cause to believe they are at risk of injury'.

Worker to Worker violence occurrences are not currently covered by the definition of Workplace Violence under section 4.27. Inappropriate Worker to Worker behaviour is covered under OHSR section 4.25. Any incidents of violence between workers must be reported and investigated as Workplace Conduct.

3. Scope, Circumstances, and Context Analysis

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5 Updating our Violence Prevention Program

WORK TYPE	✓ RECENTLY COMPLETED	🔄 UNDERWAY	🕒 PLANNED
 Regulations & Policy	▪ Body Worn Camera Policy completed ▪ Framework for “Expectations of Respectful Conduct” program	▪ Initial roll out of “Expectations of Respectful Conduct” program ▪ Implementation of escalating consequences (e.g., change of channel, access restrictions, service refusals, etc.) ▪ Update <i>Violence Prevention Program</i> ▪ Rewrite <i>Violence Prevention Policy</i> ▪ Review of <i>Respect In The Workplace Policy</i>	▪ Update By-laws ▪ Incorporate upcoming WSBC requirements ▪ Update policies as required
 Preventative Measures	▪ Name-change on PEO uniforms – By-law Enforcement ▪ Implementing safety plans for impacted staff (ongoing) ▪ VRA inventory completed ▪ Property Risk Ratings set for all CoV Facilities	▪ Body Worn Camera pilot ▪ Enhancing security at City Hall ▪ Development of training materials ▪ Updating PEO uniforms ▪ Provide staff with disengagement guidance and support (NVCI)	▪ Update and expand current training materials and develop e-modules ▪ Assess and evaluate new equipment and technology ▪ Organization wide roll-out of VRA process
 Response & Analysis	▪ Added additional departments to centralized reporting software ▪ Reporting portal for all staff on Currents	▪ Enhancing staff support ▪ Monitoring cases through the courts (ongoing) ▪ Expanding and aligning incident reporting & records keeping ▪ Standardizing response procedures across City	▪ Standardize metrics across City departments ▪ Continue to use data analysis to support program adjustments ▪ Improve current training materials

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