

# Guideline for Completing Investigations into Reported Incidents of External Harassment and Violence

This guideline is intended to support existing worker health and safety investigation practices and provide specific direction for addressing external harassment and violence in the motion picture and performing arts industries. Because workplace investigations can be complex, and those involving harassment and violence require particular care and sensitivity, they must be conducted with cultural respect, equity, and inclusivity in mind. All individuals must be treated with dignity and respect, with attention to cultural backgrounds, lived experiences, and any barriers that may affect how incidents are reported, understood, or resolved.

Investigations are to be carried out by a qualified person within the workplace or, where appropriate, by an external mediator or consultant. An internal investigation may be appropriate when the report is relatively straightforward, as it is typically less formal and lower in cost. However, if the incident is more serious, or if the investigation requires additional expertise or impartiality due to potential bias, an external investigator should be engaged to ensure fairness and effectiveness. In all cases, the investigator must remain impartial, document findings, and recommend corrective measures, as applicable.

## KEY PRINCIPLES FOR CARRYING OUT INVESTIGATIONS

- Prioritize immediate response and protection from further harm
- Respect confidentiality, dignity, and the choices of the worker who experienced the incident
- Recognize that incidents may involve criminal offences and contact law enforcement where appropriate
- Ensure access to medical, psychological, and workplace supports, as applicable

## GUIDELINES FOR INVESTIGATION

- Reports should be submitted in writing by the affected worker to provide an accurate and comprehensive record. Once an incident occurs, employers are to respond as quickly as possible to minimize the impact that the reported incident has on those involved and the workplace.
- Acknowledge receipt of the report, inform the affected worker of next steps, and determine whether interim measures (e.g. schedule changes, modified duties, security escort, remote work options etc.) are needed while the investigation is ongoing.
- Assign a qualified person with appropriate training, education, and experience to lead the investigation.
- Gather, review and take detailed notes on relevant materials, including:
  - Conduct interviews with the affected worker and any witnesses using open-ended, non-leading questions – allow individuals to speak in their own words, ask clarifying (not challenging) follow-ups, and document responses accurately and consistently
  - Review evidence (e.g. emails, texts, CCTV, shift logs, training records, risk assessment etc.)
  - Assessment of safety and security controls (e.g. barriers, staffing levels, search/screen protocols, risk factors, emergency protocols etc.) in place at the time of the incident
  - Assessment of protective measures outlined within the Workplace Harassment and Violence Prevention Policy (e.g. code of conduct, regular inspections, training, visual cues and reminders, toolbox talks and briefings etc.) in place at the time of the incident

- Prepare a written report including:
  - Incident summary (place, date, time)
  - Sequence of events leading up to the incident
  - Description and nature of the harassment or violence
  - Evidence reviewed and any findings
  - Unsafe conditions, acts, or procedures that contributed to the incident
  - Corrective actions to prevent reoccurrence (e.g. increased security presence, enhanced lighting, addition of motion sensors or convex mirrors, improved crowd management, further communication of the Code of Conduct through ticket terms, attaching to service agreements, social media or signage, updating risk assessments, worker training on early warning signs, working alone or emergency response etc.)

Where individuals are represented by a union or guild, any additional requirements under collective agreements must also be followed.

Employers must ensure that supports and steps outlined in the Workplace Harassment and Violence Prevention Policy and WorkSafeBC requirements are followed, including providing psychological safety supports and resources, ensuring no reprisal or retaliation, monitoring effectiveness of corrective actions taken, and check-ins with the affected worker following the incident.

Investigations must commence without delay after a report is made to ensure the process is timely, effective, and thorough. All timelines for completing investigations, as well as record retention requirements prescribed by WorkSafeBC, must be followed.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Part 4, General Conditions, sections 4.24 to 4.31.2 — Harassment and Violence](#)
- [Respectful Workplace in the Arts](#)
- [British Columbia Employers' Advisers Office](#)
- [ActSafe Safety Association](#)
- [WorkSafeBC](#)
- [Canadian Centre of Occupational Health and Safety \(CCOHS\)](#)

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Website: [www.actsafe.ca](http://www.actsafe.ca) | Email: [info@actsafe.ca](mailto:info@actsafe.ca)