

STANDARD 8
PREVENTION AND RESPONSE TO VIOLENCE/ABUSE

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POLICY:

To build and promote an agency which protects everyone from acts of Violence and Abuse through education on Prevention and Response to Violence and situations and/or behaviors of concern.

Core Value:

To treat **everyone** with integrity, dignity and respect by protecting all Albertans from acts of violence/abuse and maintain a reasonable level of safety in all environments.

Introduction:

Resourceful Futures has a responsibility to minimize potential workplace violence/abuse as part of a total health and safety program.

Mandate:

To prevent violence/abuse in the workplace by ensuring Resourceful Futures does everything we can to protect everyone from acts of violence/abuse.

“Prevention is the KEY, Inclusion is the PATH”. Everyone has a role.

RESPONDING TO AND REPORTING ALLEGATIONS OF ABUSE:

Although RFCSL’s focus is on PREVENTION, in the event that an act of violence/abuse has occurred there are three reporting methods to follow:

- **Report the area of concern immediately to Resourceful Futures.**
- **Abuse Protocol:** Developed by Persons with developmental Disabilities, Alberta Provincial Board. The best way to prevent abuse for all citizens is to be meaningfully included in regular community life, as neighbors, co-workers, volunteers and friends. One of RFCSL’s core values is to treat all people with integrity, dignity and respect. In keeping with this value, preventing abuse and addressing concerns in this area is part of our role. RFCSL is committed to responding to and reviewing all reported incidents of mistreatment towards adults with developmental disabilities. The protocol identifies that all of us share the ethical responsibility to take reasonable action to reduce the risk of

any type of mistreatment. This includes addressing concerns related to staff, roommate conflicts and community issues.

After a review is completed of a mistreatment allegation, recommendations are made and an action plan is developed (if required) which Persons with Developmental Disabilities could monitor.

- **Protection for Persons in Care: Developed by Alberta Seniors and Community Support:**

The protection for Persons in Care Act promotes the safety and well-being of adult Albertans who receive services from publicly funded agencies. These agencies must protect Albertans from abuse and maintain a reasonable level of safety.

Examples of publicly funded agencies:

- Nursing homes and other continuing care settings
- Group homes and other day programs
- Seniors lodges
- Hospitals
- Personal care homes
- Shelters

To report acts of abuse/mistreatment please contact at least one of the following organizations:

- **Resourceful Futures: Main Contacts :** Rob Halfyard 403-531-8631 ext 4
Julie Roach: 403-531-8631 ext. 3
- **Persons with Developmental Disabilities, Calgary Region Community Board:**
403-297-5077
- **Protection for Persons in Care: 1-888-357-9339**

For more information about Protection for Persons in Care Visit:

- www.resourcefulfutures.org
- www.pdd.org/Provincial/abuse.protocol.htm
- www.seniors.gov.ab.ca

NOTE: If you are concerned that an adult with a developmental disability (or if you are a person with a developmental disability) has been mistreated/abused, YOU MUST contact one of the agencies listed above and file a complaint.

Remember it is the law, that if you know an adult with a developmental disability and he/she is being abused, you have an obligation to report it.

ACTS of ABUSE/VIOLENCE THAT WILL BE ADDRESSED AT THE WORKPLACE:

- **Employee to Individual**
- **Individual to Employee**
- Employee to employee
- Individual and their significant other Violence
- Stranger Violence
- Domestic Violence
- Individual to Individual
- Community to Individuals

DEFINITIONS:

VIOLENCE:

An act of physical force (or threat of an act) that is intended to injure or intimidate others or intentional acts that may cause or causes destruction, i.e. an unjust, unwarranted, or unlawful display of force.

ABUSE:

For the purpose of Resourceful Futures' Policy, **Abuse** occurs when an employee acts in a way that intentionally causes harm or could potentially cause harm to a **individual**, or when a person in a position of authority takes advantage of his/her subordinates and or colleagues.

ABUSIVE STATEMENTS:

Insulting, derogatory, demeaning, racist or sexist statements directed at a specific person are considered abuse/harassment. Abusive statements do not necessarily contain profanities and are commonly used as an intimidation tactic. If not properly addressed they often escalate to more aggressive behavior. (Source WCB)

ACTS OF THREATS:

A statement or action expressing intent to cause harm or the destruction of property is considered a threat.

Types of Threats:

Direct Threats:

A direct threat is when a person says they will commit a violent act.

Indirect Threats:

An indirect threat occurs when a person makes a statement, often irrelevant to the business at hand, saying something violent or unspecific may happen.

Intimidation:

Intimidation is a statement or action, other than a direct or indirect threat, that makes you afraid for your own or another person's safety.

Coercion:

Coercion is a non-violent tactic used by someone to influence your judgment. It is when someone tries to convince you to participate in an activity that violates company policies/procedures, is illegal, immoral or inappropriate.

ACTS OF HARASSMENT:

Any unwelcome contact is considered harassment. This can include attention or pursuit, sexual advances or repeated contact that is a nuisance. Harassment can be carried out through several means including:

- in-person contact
- phone calls

- voice mail messages
- written correspondence or e-mail
- deliveries
- conveying information through a third party
- property damage
- stalking
- direct/unwanted comments to another person when asked to STOP

ACTS OF ASSAULT:

Assault occurs when a **person** attacks another person either physically or verbally with hostile intent.

Physical:

Physical acts (or threats of) that are not limited to but may include: hitting, punching, kicking, biting, throwing, burning or violent shaking that cause or could cause physical injury.

Possible Indicators of physical abuse/assault:

- Unexplained or unusual injuries
- Defensiveness in regards to injuries
- Sudden fear of physical contact
- Sudden inability to sleep at night

Sexual:

Sexual touching of a person's sexual features without consent and/or sexual harassment, such as any conduct, comment, gesture or contact of a sexual nature likely to cause offence or humiliation to an individual. Due to the power imbalance related to the employee's authority, it is unethical and unacceptable for an employee to engage in a sexual relationship with the individual that is under their direct care.

Possible indicators of sexual abuse/assault:

- Pain or injury to genital areas
- Difficult time walking or sitting
- Sudden childlike actions
- Sudden sexual acting out

NEGLIGENCE:

Failure to provide or make available necessities that are not limited to but include such things as food, clothing, shelter, hygiene, medical care, protection from hazardous environments, and support or supervision appropriate to the person's age, development, or situation.

Possible indicators of negligence:

- Health concerns that are ignored or go untreated
- Loss of weight or weight gain without a medical reason
- Always tired and falling asleep
- Frequent falls, injuries and recurring minor accidents

Emotional:

The rejecting, ignoring, criticizing, insulting, threatening, harassing, degrading, humiliating, intimidating or terrorizing of a person. Acts or omissions that cause, or are likely to cause conduct, cognitive, affective or other mental disorders, emotional stress or mental suffering.

Possible indicators of emotional abuse:

- Sudden onset of speech disorders
- Anxiety, anger and behavioral changes
- Constant apologies
- Nightmares or sleep disturbances

Exploitation:

Exploitation is taking advantage of a person, including but not limited to money, possessions, as well as persuasion to do things that are illegal, or not in the individual's best interest.

Possible examples of exploitation:

- Using someone's Treaty card to access benefits
- Borrowing money or possessions without permission
- Convincing someone to give away possessions
- Convincing someone to do something they do not want to do

UNAUTHORIZED USE OF RESTRICTIVE PROCEDURES:

- A restrictive procedure is an act that restricts the rights, freedoms, choices or self determination of an individual.
- It can be a response to a situation or behavior of concern that restrains an individual's normal range of movement or behavior.
- It can also be limiting a person's access to events, relationships, or possessions that would normally be available to that individual.

Examples of unauthorized use of restrictive procedures.

- Withholding an individual's personal possessions without following Resourceful Futures' approval process. (Unless in an emergency to protect the health and safety of the individual or others).
- Using medications and/or requesting that a doctor prescribe medications outside of the approved planned approach developed by Resourceful Futures and consented to by the individual and/or guardian.

Important Note:

Restrictive procedures for dealing with situations and/or behaviours of concern must follow RFCSL Situations and/or Behaviors of Concern standards 3, 3(a), 4.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE:

Domestic violence can endanger individuals, you and your co-workers. If an employee is experiencing any personal issues that are likely to impact the individual and/or employees at work, we ask that the

employee inform their immediate supervisor/coordinator to ensure an appropriate plan is developed to protect the individual and/or fellow workers. If the employee plans to enforce a protective order (e.g. restraining order) that identifies their work location, RFCSL ask that a copy of the order be provided to Resourceful Futures which enables the police to take action if a violation occurs.

WORKING ALONE POLICY:

It is imperative that anytime an employee is working alone, in any setting where there is evidence for potential acts of violence or there are incidents of actual violence, the employee **MUST** contact their supervisor/coordinator or call Resourceful Futures' emergency support line (403-510-5637) to develop and/or implement a safety plan: If there is imminent danger, **CALL 911 !!!**

OBLIGATION TO REPORT and DOCUMENT ACTS OF VIOLENCE AND INJURIES:

- It is **mandatory** for the employee to immediately stop their involvement in any activity and report potential and/or actual incidents of violence to their immediate supervisor. Activities will not resume until the act of violence is defused and the activity can resume without fear of the violence continuing.
- It is **mandatory** for the employee to document, (Critical Report) report and debrief any incidents of suspected abuse towards an individual immediately following the incident with their supervisor
- It is **mandatory** for the employee to report all incidents of assault acts: i.e. Individual to Individual and/or employee to employee
- It is **mandatory** for employee to document all unexplained injuries noted on a individual on a Critical Report.
- It is **mandatory** for an employee to complete a WCB Worker's Report of Injury Form whenever an employee receives a body injury or potential body injury while performing work related duties **immediately** following the incident.

NOTE:

Individuals and/or their employee should be and feel safe at all times and be treated with dignity and respect. It is **important to report** all concerns related to being mistreated or potential situations for violence, abuse and/or assault regardless of the setting. It is not up to the person reporting the matter to determine whether the observation is sufficient evidence for any type of investigation or review. When a person reports a concern related to an act of violence, abuse and/or assault, Resourceful Futures shall take no action against the person for reporting, unless it is proven that the report was made maliciously. **All** reported acts of Violence, Abuse and/or Assault will be reviewed.

RESPONSIBILITY OF RESOURCEFUL FUTURES FOR REPORTING ACTS OF ABUSE TO PERSON WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES, CALGARY REGION COMMUNITY BOARD.

The Director or his designate of Resourceful Futures is responsible for reporting **all** allegations of abuse by an employee toward an individual receiving services funded by Persons with Developmental Disabilities, Calgary Region Community Board, within 24 hours (**Preliminary Report**) of receiving the allegation or to PCA.

A thorough abuse review (**Final Report**) must be conducted by the Director or his designate within 30 days of receiving the allegation. A copy of the Final Report must be provided to Persons with Developmental Disabilities, Calgary Region Community Board. The police will be notified if the act is to be found criminal in nature.

PLANNED RESPONSE TO UNANTICIPATED AND/OR ANTICIPATED SITUATION(S) AND/OR BEHAVIOUR(S) OF CONCERN

Material to be used for training:

- Standards 3, 3(a), and 4
- Standard 8
- Planned Response to Unanticipated and/or Anticipated Situations and/or Behaviors of Concern
- Glossary
- Situations and/or Behaviors of Concern Flow Chart

WHO PROVIDES THE TRAINING?

Training will be conducted by an in house qualified trainer of Resourceful Futures.

RESOURCES USED FOR DEVELOPING RESOURCEFUL FUTURES'

POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND TRAINING:

- Resourceful Futures' Core Value: To treat all people with integrity, dignity and respect.
- Alberta Venture Magazine (Issue June 2004 pg 89)
- Alberta Occupational Health and Safety Website: www.ccohs.ca
- Worker's Compensation Board, Preventing Violence at Work Seminar (July 2004)
- Alberta Council of Disabilities Services, Certification Standard Numbers 26, 28, 30, 35, and 38
- Abuse Prevention and Response Protocol Literature (**Implemented January 1, 2004 by PDD**)
- Pamphlet, Preventing and Responding to Abuse (Developed by Persons with Developmental Disabilities, Alberta Provincial Board)
- Persons in Care Act

PROCEDURE(S) FOR TRAINING EMPLOYEES, INDIVIDUALS, THEIR GUARDIANS/PARENTS, FAMILIES AND/OR ADVOCATES.

a) Initial Training/Orientation for Individuals and their

Advocates:

- During the intake process, Resourceful Futures will provide the individual and/or their legal representative and/or advocate the following information and/or material:
- A copy of Resourceful Futures' policy and procedures on Prevention and Response to Violence, Abuse and Assault in the workplace
- A copy of the Persons with Developmental Disabilities, Alberta Provincial Board pamphlet (January 2004), Preventing and Responding to Abuse
- Make available Abuse Prevention and Response Protocol Literature (**Implemented January 1, 2004**)

by PDD)

- A pamphlet on Protection for Persons in Care, Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults
- Resourceful Futures will ensure the individual and their guardians and/or advocates receive an orientation/ training on the information Resourceful Futures provides
- Educating individuals, along with their guardians/advocates on understanding violence and how to Prevent and Respond to Abuse and/or Assault issues
- Encouraging all individuals to make natural connections in their communities (**community inclusion**) i.e. with friends, neighbors, co-workers, church etc.
- Provide an overview of the Protection for Persons in Care Act

Ongoing Training for Individuals and their Legal Representative:

- Resourceful Futures ensures that whenever there is a policy and procedure change, or an industry change, the individual and/or their guardian/advocate will be notified in writing
- Resourceful Futures provides abuse/assault prevention training whenever possible to individuals. E.g. As an activity during staff meetings
- Debriefing Critical Reports with individuals (when appropriate) provides another opportunity to educate individuals/guardians on potential violence issues
- Guardians and/or advocates are encouraged to participate in the formal training with employees as scheduled by Resourceful Futures
- Day to day training (if and/or when appropriate) will be provided to employees

Initial Training/Orientation for Employees affiliated with Resourceful Futures.

- All employees will be provided specific training on Resourceful Futures' policy and procedure Prevention and Response to Workplace Violence and Situations and Behaviors of Concern during their initial orientation
- All employees will be provided training by Resourceful Futures within their first day of employment
- Employees will be required to complete a Questionnaire that has specific questions pertaining to the Prevention and Response to Workplace Violence and Situations and Behaviors of Concern policy within their three month probation period
- Employees will be provided a Certificate after they have completed formal Prevention and Response to Workplace Violence and Situations and Behaviors of Concern training. The certification will remain valid during the employee's time with Resourceful Futures

Ongoing Training for Employees affiliated with Resourceful Futures.

- Resourceful Futures ensures that whenever there is a policy and procedure change, an industry change, the employee will be notified.
- Resourceful Futures provides training whenever possible and/or appropriate. E.g. during staff meetings.
- Debriefing Critical Reports with the employee to educate them on potential violence, abuse and assault issues.
- Day to day training if and/or when appropriate.

REVIEWING REPORTED ACTS OF VIOLENCE:

All acts of violence will be reviewed by the Director or his designate. In the event the Director may have a conflict involving the allegation, an external review will be conducted.

Following the internal review process, Resourceful Futures will (whenever appropriate) inform; the individual and/or their guardian/advocate, the person making the report, and the alleged perpetrator as to the outcome of the review.

PROTECTION FOR EMPLOYEES WHO HAVE BEEN WRONGFULLY ACCUSED OF ABUSE:

It is Resourceful Futures intent to protect their employees who have been wrongfully accused of abuse allegations. Should such an allegation occur, the employee is expected to review the matter with the Director or his designate to fact find. Once the matter has been reviewed and found unfounded. The Agency will place a letter on the employee file. The employee will also be ask what would be the appropriate support for a wrongful allegation.

WHAT HAPPENS IF AN EMPLOYEE CHOOSES NOT TO PARTICIPATE and/or COOPERATE IN AN ALLEGATION OF ABUSE/VIOLENCE REVIEW?

- Suspension of employment until issue is resolved
- Subject to immediate dismissal
- Depending on severity of allegation, matter may be handed over to the Calgary Police Service

FOLLOW UP ACTION TO REPORTED ACTS OF VIOLENCE: (Critical Reports)

Resourceful Futures Board and Management will review all acts of violence, abuse and assault to ensure:

- All employees and individuals are appropriately trained to prevent, recognize and respond to acts of violence, abuse and/or assault issues
- changes are made to policies, procedures and/or training and educating whenever necessary
- The employee involved demonstrated care, compassion and respect towards the individual during and after the incident
- That if the incident was an external issue, appropriate follow up action occurred to protect the individual and/or the employee.
- That there is a prevention plan developed to ensure abuse is prevented

POTENTIAL CONSEQUENCES FOR BREACH OF POLICY:

- Retraining
- Suspension from service or employment
- Termination from service or employment
- If criminal in nature, police and/or other appropriate authorities will be notified

WORKPLACE RISK ASSESSMENT:

It is important to remember that any location where company business is performed is considered a work area. In addition to a traditional office, this includes home offices, field locations, private homes, vehicles, or other off-site and non-traditional work locations.

Information Collected from the following sources will be used by the management team to monitor Resourceful Futures' Workplace Risk Assessment:

- **Critical Reports: Number of Critical Reports reviewed per month regarding Acts of violence. (Abuse/Assault)**

- **Type of allegation:** e.g. physical, sexual, negligence, etc.
- **Status of allegation(s):** e.g. Founded, unfounded, inconclusive, etc.
- **Reported by:** e.g. Internal Source, External, Individual etc
- **Type of Review:** e.g. Internal, External,
- **Prevention Training:** e.g. number of staff training sessions, number of individuals educated, issues related to training and/or educating etc.
- **WCB Reports**
- **Police Reports**

Important Websites:

For additional information regarding Alberta's Occupational Health and Safety

Code 27, Prevention and Response to Violence in the workplace visit the following websites:

- **Protection for Persons in Care:** www.seniors.gov.ab.ca
- **Alberta Occupational Health and Safety:** www.whs.gov.ab.ca
- **Alberta Council of Disabilities Services:** www.acds.ca
- **Persons with Developmental Disabilities:** www.pdd.org
- **Resourceful Futures Community Support Ltd.:** www.resourcefulfutures.org