

## Workplace Violence Policy

### **Purpose**

Shaar Shalom Congregation (the "Shaar") is committed to providing and maintaining a workplace that is safe and free of violence in compliance with Nova Scotia's *Occupational Health and Safety Act* ("OHSA"). The Shaar, in an effort to provide and maintain a workplace that is safe and free from violence will take such steps as it considers reasonable and appropriate to identify possible sources of violence and to implement procedures and precautions to eliminate or minimize risks that threaten the safety of the workplace and address any incidents of workplace violence that may occur.

### **Application of this Policy**

Violent behaviour in the workplace is unacceptable from anyone. This policy applies to any person in the workplace and individual doing business with the Shaar (including, without limitation, employees, members, volunteers, members of the board of directors, and contractors). Everyone is expected to uphold this policy and work together to prevent workplace violence.

For the purposes of this policy, the workplace includes any place where the business of the Shaar is conducted or where social or other functions of the Shaar occur, including locations off of the Shaar property.

### **Workplace Violence**

"Violence" is defined in the OHSA to include threats, including a threatening statement or threatening behaviour that gives an employee reasonable cause to believe that the employee is at risk of physical injury, as well as conduct or attempted conduct of a person that endangers the physical health or physical safety of an employee.

Examples of workplace violence include, but are not limited to:

- Yelling, emotional outbursts, berating others, using a harsh tone of voice;
- Withholding necessary information or deliberately giving wrong information;
- Criticizing or talking down to others in front of a group;
- Treating some less favourably than others;
- Criticizing a person persistently and constantly;
- Making threats; using intimidating tactics;
- Any malicious behaviour a reasonable person would find unprofessional, disturbing and harmful to their psychological health;
- actual and attempted physical attacks;
- threatening behaviour such as shaking fists, destroying property or throwing objects;

- verbal or written threats that express an intent to inflict harm; and
- any act or statement that the employee could reasonably interpret as a threat.

In accordance with the OHSA, the Shaar has an obligation to provide employees with information, including personal information, related to an individual with a history of violent behaviour where there is a risk of workplace violence being perpetrated by that person. Such information will only be provided to those members of the Shaar who could reasonably be expected to encounter that person at work, and where the risk of workplace violence is likely to expose those members of the Shaar to injury. Only information that is reasonably necessary to protect employees from physical injury will be disclosed. Confidentiality will be maintained wherever possible.

Where the Shaar is, or is made aware, that domestic violence that is likely to expose a member of the Shaar to physical injury that may occur in the workplace, the Shaar will take precautions to protect that member of the Shaar. Any member of the Shaar who feels that they are at risk of domestic violence should notify the Shaar's Respectful Workplace Advisor. Anyone who is aware of domestic violence that could enter into the Shaar is required to report this information to the Respectful Workplace Advisor immediately.

Acts of violence may occur as a single event or a continuing series of incidents.

Any act of violence committed by or against any member of the Shaar is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

### **No Retaliation for Using this Policy**

All employees have the right to make a complaint or enforce their rights under this policy without retaliation or threat of retaliation.

The Shaar prohibits reprisals or threats of reprisals against anyone who makes use of this Policy or takes part in an investigation under this Policy. Retaliation against such a person will be treated in the same manner as workplace violence.

### **Reporting Workplace Violence**

Every employee must comply with this policy. All employees are encouraged to raise any concerns about workplace violence and to report violent incidents or threats. In the event you have any concerns or wish to report any violent incidents or threats, you are encouraged to speak with the Respectful Workplace Advisor. You do not have to first speak with a supervisor or with the person whose conduct is the subject of the complaint. There will be no negative consequences for reports made in good faith.

In circumstances where violence is imminent or injury has been suffered, the Chair of the Board, Joanna Wexler, should be contacted immediately at 902-877-8708.

You may also file a formal written complaint under this Policy with the Board. Upon receipt of a written complaint, the Board will initiate an investigation. An investigation will be initiated whenever a formal written complaint is received or at the initiative of the Respectful Workplace Advisor if he/she becomes aware of a serious allegation or incident of workplace violence.

The investigation will ordinarily be conducted by the Respectful Workplace Advisor, in conjunction with at least two other members of the Board or in some circumstances, a third-party investigator/mediator, as the Shaar deems appropriate. The investigation will be completed, and the appropriate resolution decided upon within 60 days of receiving a formal written complaint or electing to initiate a complaint, unless a longer period is appropriate in the circumstances. Where a formal written complaint is received, the person who submits the complaint (the "complainant") will be notified of the proposed time frame or changes to it.

In the course of its investigation, the investigation team will do the following:

- give a copy of the written complaint (if any) to the person whose conduct is the subject of the complaint (the "**Respondent**");
- provide the Respondent with an opportunity to respond to the complaint orally or in writing and give a copy of any written response or a written summary of the oral response to the complainant; and
- advise both the complainant and Respondent of their entitlement to have representation with respect to the investigation.

While the Shaar is committed to resolving workplace violence concerns internally, nothing in this policy precludes an employee from exercising any legal avenues available to him or her, including laying criminal charges, filing a complaint with the Ministry of Labour and Advanced Education or instituting civil proceedings.

### **Disciplinary and Rehabilitative Action**

Disciplinary and rehabilitative action resulting from the informal resolution process or a formal complaint and subsequent investigation may include one or more of the following:

- a formal apology;
- a written warning;
- a change of work assignment;
- restricted access to the synagogue or Shaar events;
- suspension with or without pay; and
- termination of employment for cause.

### **Confidentiality**

Information provided by employees or otherwise obtained through the course of the investigation will be treated as confidential to the extent possible. Information will only be provided on a "need to know" basis or as required in the course of the investigation. All employees and members are responsible for cooperating with the investigation and maintaining the confidentiality of all information related to the allegation and investigation in accordance with this Policy.

## Restrictions

Workplace violence is a serious issue. This Policy must not be used maliciously or in bad faith. Bad faith or misconduct in the use of this Policy will be treated in the same manner as set out in the Workplace Harassment and Discrimination Policy.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
[Chair, Board of Directors]

Date: \_\_\_\_\_