

## **Workplace Violence Prevention**

As of June 15, 2010 changes to Ontario's Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) require that all employers prepare policies with respect to workplace violence and workplace harassment, develop and maintain programs to implement their policies and provide information and instruction to employees, volunteers, home maintenance workers and clients on the contents of these policies and programs. Renfrew and Area Seniors' Home Support is committed to providing a work and volunteering environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity; and the prevention of workplace violence and harassment and workplace discrimination, as we work together to ensure client, Home Maintenance worker, volunteer and staff health and safety.

Workplace harassment, workplace violence and discrimination as defined herein, will not be tolerated from any person in the workplace. Everyone is expected to uphold these rules and work together to prevent workplace violence, harassment and discrimination.

**Workplace violence** is defined as:

- The exercise of physical force by a person against a worker, in a workplace, that causes or could cause physical injury to the worker
- An attempt to exercise physical force against a worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker
- A statement or behavior that it is reasonable for a worker to interpret as a threat to exercise physical force against the worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker.

**Workplace harassment** is defined as:

- Engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct against a worker in a workplace that is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome.

**Workplace harassment** may include bullying, teasing, intimidating or offensive jokes or innuendos, displaying or circulating offensive pictures or materials, or offensive or intimidating phone calls.

**Workplace Discrimination** prevents discrimination and harassment on the following 15 grounds: race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed (religion), sex, sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family status, receipt of public assistance and record of offences.

As a client of Renfrew and Area Seniors' Home Support, your safety is a priority of ours. If at any time you feel that your safety is at risk or you are being harassed by a volunteer, home maintenance worker or employee, you have the right to refuse the service or ask the volunteer/home maintenance worker or employee to leave. Should this happen, we would ask that you call (613-432-7691) or come to the office immediately so that we can intervene and resolve the situation.

Clients are asked to provide the same courtesy by providing an environment where our home maintenance workers, volunteers and staff are free from violence and harassment.

Renfrew and Area Seniors' Home Support pledges to timely and fairly investigate and deal with all incidents and complaints of workplace violence, harassment or discrimination and to respect the privacy of all concerned as much as possible.

This policy is not intended to limit or constrain the reasonable exercise of management functions in the workplace (required qualifications and prerequisites, background checks, rules enforcement, rights to assign and re-assign work, mandatory abuse prevention, identification and reporting training); or reasonable client accommodation requests (gender preferences). Furthermore, nothing in this policy prevents or discourages a client/home maintenance worker/volunteer/employee from filing an application with the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal on a matter related to Ontario's Human Rights Code within a specified time after the last alleged incident. Workers/volunteers/employees/clients also retain the right to exercise such other legal avenues as may be available.

Our full policy on workplace violence, harassment and discrimination is available in our office and can be consulted whenever there are concerns about violence, harassment or discrimination in the workplace.

**All incidents of workplace violence, harassment and discrimination, whether alleged, suspected, done or witnessed, are to be reported to our office.**