

## **Heart Lake Baptist Church Workplace Violence Policy and Procedure**

Date Approved by Council: May 24, 2011  
Date approved by Congregation: June 14, 2011  
(Acknowledgement to CBOQ prototype policy)

### **POLICY**

This policy, and the Workplace Harassment Policy, are in response to June, 2010 amendments to the Occupational Health and Safety Act. These policies are intended to enhance the Heart Lake Baptist Church Protection Policy, which focuses on the protection of children, youth and vulnerable adults, and paid staff or volunteers who work with same. These policies apply to all employees, volunteers, agents, contractors, members/ adherents/visitors of/to HLBC.

Heart Lake Baptist Church (HLBC) respects the dignity, uniqueness and intrinsic worth of every person. It is the right of all who are employed by or volunteer with HLBC to work in an environment that is free from workplace violence. Workplace violence perpetrated by or against employees, volunteers, agents, contractors, or members/adherents/visitors will not be tolerated by HLBC and wherever possible will be redressed.

Everyone in the workplace must be dedicated to preventing workplace violence. The Council, employees, and volunteers of HLBC are expected to uphold this policy and procedure and will be held accountable by HLBC for doing so. In the event of an occurrence of workplace violence perpetrated by an employee or volunteer HLBC will take prompt action to deal with the issue

Retaliation or reprisals are prohibited against any employee who has complained under this policy or has provided information regarding a complaint. Any retaliation or reprisal is subject to immediate corrective action up to and including termination for cause. Alleged retaliation or reprisal is subject to the same complaint procedures and penalties as complaints of violence.

HLBC recognizes that individuals may find it difficult to come forward with a complaint under this policy because of concerns about confidentiality. Therefore, all complaints concerning workplace violence, as well as the names of parties involved, shall be treated as confidential. HLBC's obligation to conduct an investigation into the complaint may require limited disclosure. No record of the complaint will be maintained on the personnel file of the complainant. If there is a finding of improper conduct that results in disciplinary action it will be reflected only on the file of the person who engaged in such conduct in the same way as any other disciplinary action.

### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to:

- establish processes to minimize and/or prevent workplace violence;
- foster the safety and security of employees, volunteers, and visitors to our church; and
- to reassure employees or volunteers reporting alleged incidents that the matter will be treated confidentially and may be reported without fear of retaliation or reprisal.

## SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, agents, contractors, members/ adherents/visitors of/to HLBC.

This policy applies not only during regular business and ministry hours, but to any activities on or off HLBC premises which could reasonably be associated with the church.

Nothing in this policy prevents or discourages an employee or volunteer from exercising any other legal avenues that may be available.

## DEFINITIONS

“**employee**” or “**employees**” means all pastoral and administrative support staff and any contractors or agents of HLBC.

“**ministry lead**” means the individual designated by Council on the most recent update of the HLBC Officers and Committees, and Ministry Teams lists, or if vacant the Senior Pastor and/or Chair of Council. Under the HLBC Staff policy the Senior Pastor is responsible for the day-to-day leadership of the staff.

“**violence**” or “**workplace violence**” means 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 a worker, and/or a statement of behaviour that 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.

Violence also means physically or psychologically aggressive behaviours including but not limited to hitting, kicking, pushing, slapping and similar sort of action, carrying or brandishing weapons of any sort, throwing objects at an individual with a view to cause physical injury or fear, destruction of workplace or co-workers’ property, threats of violence, intimidating behaviour that causes the recipient to have a fear of physical violence, obscene or harassing telephone calls, and includes any incident in which:

- a. an Employee is threatened or assaulted on working premises or in circumstances relating to the Employee executing his or her job duties;
- b. a volunteer or visitor to the Workplace is threatened or assaulted on HLBC premises; or
- c. an Employee threatens or assaults a volunteer, visitor, co-worker or other individual in circumstances relating to the Employee’s execution of his or her duties.

“**volunteer**” means any member, adherent or visitor to HLBC who contributes their time, energy and skills to any ministry or service associated with HLBC.

“**workplace**” means any place where HLBC business or ministry activities are conducted. It includes the physical work premises (e.g. church building), on and off-site meetings, assignments, events and social events, ministry-related travel and includes conferences or training sessions.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **General**

#### **It is the responsibility of all employees and volunteers of HLBC to:**

- a. Treat everyone in the workplace with respect and to promote an environment free of workplace violence.
- b. Modify their behaviour when they become aware that there is potential for such behaviour to harm, threaten or intimidate others.
- c. Inform their supervisor or ministry lead of any violence or risk of violence in the workplace they may experience or witness without delay. This includes issues in the staff or volunteer's non-work life that may impact on his or her co-worker's safety.
- d. Co-operate fully during investigations of workplace violence.
- e. Preserve confidentiality during the course of any incident or investigation of workplace violence.

#### **Additional responsibilities of employees and volunteers:**

- a. Attending any training or information sessions provided by HLBC to raise awareness of and reduce violence or the risk of violence in the workplace.

#### **Responsibilities of ministry leads:**

- a. Assessing the risk of violence to staff or volunteers in their jurisdiction, minimizing those risks where necessary or reasonably possible, and informing any affected staff or volunteers of such risk or potential risk.
- b. Ensuring proper medical care is provided for anyone involved in an incident and for securing the safety of any employee or volunteer.
- c. Documenting the incident using a **Workplace Violence Incident Report Form** (Appendix A).
- d. Reporting risks or incidents of violence in the workplace to the Senior Pastor and Chair of Council as soon as practically possible.
- e. Co-operating fully with police, HLBC investigators or other authorities during any investigation related to workplace violence.

#### **Responsibilities of HLBC Council and Senior Pastor:**

- a. HLBC Council and the Senior Pastor are responsible for minimizing the risk of workplace violence wherever possible.
- b. Council and Senior Pastor are responsible for ensuring employees and volunteers are trained to:
  - i. Recognize the potential for violence in the workplace;
  - ii. Follow the policy and procedures developed to minimize risk;
  - iii. Respond to incidents appropriately; and
  - iv. Report and document such incidents.
- c. When a risk or incident of violence in the workplace is reported the Senior Pastor and Chair of Council are responsible for initiating appropriate investigation, further reporting of the incident as appropriate, and documenting the incident, and for informing all members of Council of the incident as soon as possible.

## **PROCEDURE**

### **Reporting and Investigation**

1. Every incident of alleged violence shall be reported immediately to the ministry lead.
2. The ministry lead shall ensure the safety of anyone alleging workplace violence and that proper medical care is provided for anyone involved in an incident.
3. The ministry lead will document the incident using a **Workplace Violence Incident Report Form** (Appendix A).
4. The incident will then be reported to the Senior Pastor and Chair of Council, and police depending upon the severity of the workplace violence as soon as possible.
5. The Senior Pastor and/or Chair of Council, in consultation with the ministry lead, will initiate an investigation.
6. The investigation will include questioning the victim and/or witnesses to determine if the incident is minor or serious. This will include keeping detailed notes of facts, times, witnesses, and witness accounts.
7. If the incident is considered minor the Senior Pastor and/or Chair of Council will determine if mediation is appropriate and if so, mediate or arrange for mediation of the situation.
8. If the incident is considered to be more serious the Senior Pastor or designate and/or Chair of Council or designate will report the incident to police.
9. Whether an incident is deemed to be minor or serious a detailed written report outlining the facts and witnesses of the incident will be prepared and submitted to the Chair of Council within twenty-four (24) hours.
10. The Chair of Council will advise all members of Council of the incident by whatever means deemed appropriate.
11. If a perpetrator of workplace violence is an employee or volunteer of HLBC Council shall apply appropriate disciplinary measures based on the facts of the incident and the individual's employment/volunteer record, regardless of any sanctions meted out by the law enforcement and justice system.
12. All aspects of the workplace violence prevention plan, including this policy, will be reviewed annually to ensure it is current and effective.

### **Training and Education**

1. All employees and volunteers are required to be trained on the contents of this policy when it comes into effect, upon their appointment, and at least once a year thereafter.
2. Training program for employees and volunteers shall include:
  - a. The means to recognize situations where workplace violence may occur;
  - b. Procedures, work practices, and administrative arrangements that have been developed to minimize or eliminate the risk to employees and volunteers;
  - c. The appropriate responses to incidents of violence in the workplace, including how to obtain assistance.

### **Risk Assessment**

1. The Senior Pastor and Council shall initiate a process to assess the risk of violence in the workplace as defined in this policy on a periodic basis.
2. If areas of risk are identified actions shall be taken and documented to remove as many risks as can be reasonably removed.
3. A written report shall be provided to all employees and volunteers about the risk assessment process, any areas of risk identified and mitigative measures.
4. The risk assessment shall be reviewed annually.

## Appendix A: Workplace Violence Incident Report Form

<b>Complaint Information</b>			
<b>Name:</b>	<b>Position:</b>		
<b>Date/Time of Incident:</b>			
<b>Type of Incident:</b>	<b>Physical</b>	<b>Verbal</b>	<b>Other</b>
<b>Description of Incident (attach additional pages if required):</b>			
<b>Location of Incident:</b>			
<b>Medical Attention required:</b>			
<b>Reported to Ministry Lead:      Yes / No</b>			
<b>Name:</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>Time:</b>	
<b>Reported to Senior Pastor and/or Chair of Council:      Yes / No</b>			
<b>Name:</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>Time:</b>	
<b>Investigation conducted:      Yes / No</b>			
<b>Names of investigators involved:</b>			
<b>Police called:      Yes / No      If yes, give details:</b>			