



Human Resources Legislative Update

Ontario Government Releases Guide on Preventing Workplace Violence in the Health Care Sector

Date: August 28, 2019

On August 26, 2019, the Ontario government released a [guide](#) to help employers, supervisors and workers in hospitals, long-term care homes and private home care facilities better understand their obligations relating to preventing workplace violence under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* (OHSA) and the *Health Care and Residential Facilities Regulation* (O. Reg 67/93).

Among other things, the guide outlines:

- the definition of workplace violence and workplace harassment under the OHSA
- the role of the Joint Health and Safety Commission or Health and Safety Representative, as well as best practices for committee members to further workplace violence prevention goals
- the requirements under O. Reg 67/93
- a step by step approach to developing a successful workplace violence policy and program. This includes the recommended process for controlling risks of workplace violence and communicating risks to workers, reporting obligations under the OHSA and the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act*, the process for investigating incidents or complaints, providing information to workers, refusals to work due to workplace violence, domestic violence awareness and the prohibitions against reprisals.

The guide also speaks to the reporting obligations outlined under the provincial quality improvement plans. It notes that Health Quality Ontario (an agency of the Minister of Health and the Minister of Long Term Care) included workplace violence prevention as a key component of the quality improvement plan process for hospitals in 2018-2019. Under these plans, hospitals, private care organizations, long-term care homes and Local Health Integration Networks are required to submit reports annually to describe how their organization will address its quality improvement goals including in relation to workplace violence.

For more on the topic of workplace violence prevention in the health care sector see [“HR Healthcheck: Taking a Closer Look: From Ministry of Labour Inspections to the Wettlaufer Inquiry Report.”](#)