

Lake of Bays Township Public Library Board

Date Approved November 28th 2016

Title **Respect in the Workplace** Date Reviewed: Nov. 2020

Workplace Discrimination, Harassment & Violence

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By this resolution The Lake of Bays Township Public Library Board adopts the Respect in the Workplace (Workplace Discrimination, Harassment and Violence) Policy of the Township of Lake of Bays as adopted by Township Council in Bi-Law No. HR-3.18 on August 18th 2016 subject to the following amendments. These amendments reflect the specific business of The Lake of Bays Township Public Library and its particular governance and organizational structure.

By this resolution The Lake of Bays Township Public Library Board (the Board) further adopts the following amendments to the Township Policy cited above:

For “Township of Lake of Bays” (“Township” or “municipality”) read the “Lake of Bays Township Public Library” (“Library”)

Any reference to the **Human Resources Department** or the **Township CAO** is read as by a “designated Lake of Bays Township Public Library Board member”.

1. Purpose:

- 1.1. The Township of the Lake of Bays (“Township”) is committed to providing and maintaining a working environment that is based on respect for the dignity and rights of everyone in the organization. It is the Township’s goal to provide a healthy, safe, fair and equitable work environment that is free of any form of harassment or violence.

2. Scope:

- 2.1. This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, contractors and consultants. It applies in any location in which you are engaged in work-related activities. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - the workplace
 - during work-related travel
 - at restaurants, hotels or meeting facilities that are being used for business purposes
 - in company owned or leased facilities
 - during telephone, email or other communications; and
 - at any work-related social event, whether or not it is company sponsored

This policy also applies to situations in which you are harassed or subjected to violence in the workplace from individuals who are not employees of the organization, such as clients, customers and suppliers, although the available remedies may be constrained by the situation.

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2.2. Definitions:

a) Discrimination

Workplace discrimination includes any distinction, exclusion or preference based on the protected grounds in the Ontario *Human Rights Code*, which nullifies or impairs equality of opportunity in employment, or equality in the terms and conditions of employment.

The protected grounds of discrimination are:

- race, colour, ancestry, citizenship, ethnic origin or place of origin
- creed, including religion
- age
- sex (including pregnancy and breast feeding)
- gender identity, gender expression
- sexual orientation
- family and marital status, (including same-sex partnership) and single status
- disability, including perceived disability
- a record of offences for which a pardon has been granted under the *Criminal Records Act* (Canada) and has not been revoked, or an offence in respect of any provincial enactment

b) Workplace Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment includes conduct or comments of a sexual nature that the recipient does not welcome or that offend him or her. It also includes negative or inappropriate conduct or comments that are not necessarily sexual in nature, but which are directed at an individual because of his or her gender. Comments or conduct of a sexual nature or that are based on gender that are not necessarily directed at a particular individual but are unwelcome or offensive to an individual or group can also constitute sexual harassment.

The *Occupational Health and Safety Act* defines **workplace sexual harassment** as:

- (i) Engaging in a course of vexatious comment or conduct against a worker in a workplace because of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression, where the course of comment or conduct is known or ought reasonably to be known to be unwelcome, or
- (ii) making a sexual solicitation or advance where the person making the solicitation or advance is in a position to confer, grant or deny a benefit or advancement to the worker and

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the person knows or ought reasonably to know that the solicitation or advance is unwelcome.

The Ontario *Human Rights Code* provides for protection from **sexual harassment** in employment as follows:

Every person who is an employee has a right to freedom from harassment in the workplace because of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression by his or her employer or agent of the employer or by another employee.

Every person has a right to be free from a sexual solicitation or advance made by a person in a position to confer, grant or deny a benefit or advancement to the person where the person making the solicitation or advance knows or ought reasonably to know that it is unwelcome; or a reprisal or a threat of reprisal for the rejection of a sexual solicitation or advance where the reprisal is made or threatened by a person in a position to confer, grant or deny a benefit or advancement to the person.

Both men and women can be victims of sexual harassment, and someone of the same or opposite sex can harass someone else. Some examples of sexual harassment are:

- sexual advances or demands that the recipient does not welcome or want
- offering a benefit in exchange for a sexual favour
- demanding hugs
- invading personal space
- making unnecessary physical contact, including unwanted touching, etc.
- using language that puts someone down and/or comments toward women (or men, in some cases), sex-specific derogatory names
- leering or inappropriate staring
- making gender-related comments about someone's physical characteristics or mannerisms
- making comments or treating someone badly because they don't conform with sex-role stereotypes
- showing or sending pornography, sexual pictures or cartoons, sexually explicit graffiti, or other sexual images (including online)
- sexual jokes, including passing around written sexual jokes (for example, by email)
- rough and vulgar humour or language related to gender
- using sexual or gender-related comment or conduct to bully someone
- spreading sexual rumours (including online)

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- making suggestive or offensive comments or hints about members of a specific gender
- making sexual propositions
- verbally abusing, threatening or taunting someone based on gender
- bragging about sexual prowess
- demanding dates or sexual favours
- asking questions or talking about sexual activities
- making an employee dress in a sexualized or gender-specific way
- acting in a paternalistic way that someone thinks undermines their status or position of responsibility
- making threats to penalize or otherwise punish a person who refuses to comply with sexual advances (known as reprisal)
- displaying sexually offensive material such as posters, pictures, calendars, cartoons, screen savers, pornographic or erotic web sites or other electronic material
- sexually suggestive or obscene comments or gestures
- unwelcome remarks, jokes, innuendoes, propositions or taunting about a person's body, clothing or sex
- persistent, unwanted attention after a consensual relationship ends
- physical contact of a sexual nature, such as touching or caressing; and
- sexual assault
- gossip or rumours regarding a person's sexual activities or relationships

c) Discriminatory Harassment

Discriminatory harassment includes comments or conduct based on the protected grounds in the Ontario *Human Rights Code*, which the recipient does not welcome or that offends him or her. Some examples of discriminatory harassment include:

- offensive comments, jokes or behaviour that disparage or ridicule a person's membership or perceived membership in one of the protected grounds, such as race, religion or sexual orientation
- imitating a person's accent, speech or mannerisms
- persistent or inappropriate questions about whether a person is pregnant, has children or plans to have children; or
- inappropriate comments or jokes about an individual's age, sexual orientation, personal appearance or weight.

Harassing comments or conduct can poison someone's working environment, making it a hostile or uncomfortable place to work, even if the person is not being directly targeted. This is commonly referred to as a **poisoned working environment** and it is also a form of harassment.

Some examples of actions that can create a poisoned work environment include:

- displaying offensive or sexual materials such as posters, pictures, calendars, web sites or screen savers

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- distributing offensive e-mail messages, or attachments such as pictures or video files
- practical jokes that embarrass or insult someone; or
- jokes or insults that are offensive, racist or discriminatory in nature.

d) Workplace Harassment and Bullying

Workplace harassment is a health and safety issue that is covered under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*.

The *Occupational Health and Safety Act* defines **workplace harassment** 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; or

Workplace sexual harassment (as defined in section 2.02 (b) of this Policy).

Workplace harassment may have some or all of the following components:

- it is generally repetitive, although a single serious incident may constitute workplace harassment if it undermines the recipient's psychological or physical integrity and has a lasting harmful effect
- it is hostile, abusive or inappropriate
- it affects the person's dignity or psychological integrity; and
- it results in a poisoned work environment.

In addition, behaviour that intimidates, isolates or discriminates against the recipient may also be included.

Some examples of workplace harassment are:

- verbally abusive behaviour such as yelling, insults, ridicule and name calling, including remarks, jokes or innuendos that demean, ridicule, intimidate or offend
- workplace pranks, vandalism, bullying and hazing
- gossiping or spreading rumours, regardless of whether they are malicious
- excluding or ignoring someone, including persistent exclusion of a particular person from workplace-related social gatherings
- undermining someone else's efforts by setting impossible goals, with short deadlines and deliberately withholding information that would enable a person to do their job
- providing only demeaning or trivial tasks in place of normal job duties
- humiliating someone
- sabotaging someone else's work
- displaying or circulating offensive pictures or materials

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- offensive or intimidating phone calls or emails
- impeding an individual's efforts at promotions or transfers for reasons that are not legitimate; and making false allegations about someone in memos or other work related documents

e) *What Isn't Harassment*

The *Occupational Health and Safety Act* states:

A reasonable action taken by an employer or supervisor relating to the management and direction of workers or the workplace is not workplace harassment.

Workplace harassment should not be confused with legitimate, reasonable management actions that are part of the normal work function, including:

- measures to correct performance deficiencies, such as placing someone on a performance improvement plan,
- imposing discipline for workplace infractions; or
- requesting medical documents in support of an absence from work

It also does not include normal workplace conflict that may occur between individuals or differences of opinion between co-workers.

f) *The Test of Harassment*

It does not matter whether you intended to offend someone. The test of harassment is whether you knew or *should have known* that the comments or conduct were unwelcome to the other person. For example, someone may make it clear through their conduct or body language that the behaviour is unwelcome, in which case you must immediately stop that behaviour.

Although it is commonly the case, the harasser does not necessarily have to have power or authority over the victim. Harassment can occur from coworker to co-worker, supervisor to employee and employee to supervisor.

g) *Workplace and Domestic Violence*

Workplace and domestic violence that may occur in the workplace are health and safety issues, which are covered under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*.

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h) Workplace violence

Workplace violence is defined under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* 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 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.

It is defined broadly enough to include acts that may be considered criminal. Examples of workplace violence include:

- physically threatening behaviour such as shaking a fist at someone, finger pointing, destroying property, throwing objects
- verbal or written threats to physically attack a worker
- leaving threatening notes or sending threatening emails
- wielding a weapon at work
- stalking someone; and
- physically aggressive behaviours, including hitting, shoving, standing excessively close to someone in an aggressive manner, pushing, kicking, throwing an object at someone, physically restraining someone or any other form of physical or sexual assault.

Violence that occurs outside the normal workplace but which has an impact on the working environment, including working relationships, may also be considered violence in the workplace.

i) Domestic Violence

If you are experiencing domestic violence that would likely expose you, or other workers, to physical injury that may occur in the workplace, we will take every precaution reasonable to protect you and your co-workers in the circumstances. This may include some or all of the following:

- creating a safety plan
- contacting the police
- establishing enhanced security measures such as a panic button, code words, and door and access security measures
- screening calls and blocking certain email addresses
- setting up priority parking or providing escorts to your vehicle or to public transportation
- adjusting your working hours and location so that they are not predictable; and

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- facilitating your access to counselling through the Employee Assistance Program or other community programs.

We appreciate the sensitivity of these issues and will do our best to assist you as discreetly as possible while maintaining your privacy.

2.02 Preventing Harassment and Violence

It is our mutual responsibility to ensure that we create and maintain a harassment and violence-free workplace and address violence and/or the threat of violence from all possible sources (including customers, clients, employers, supervisors, workers, strangers, family, friends and domestic/intimate partners).

2.03 Township's Commitment

The Township of Lake of Bays will do its part by not tolerating or condoning discrimination, harassment, including sexual harassment, or violence in the workplace. This includes making everyone in our organization aware of what behaviour is and is not appropriate, assessing the risk of workplace violence, investigating complaints and incidents and imposing suitable corrective measures. The Joint Health and Safety Committee will review this policy as often as necessary or at least annually.

2.04 Duties of Supervisors and Management

Supervisors and members of management are expected to assist in creating a harassment-free workplace and to immediately contact the Human Resources Department if they receive a complaint of workplace harassment or violence or witness or are aware of harassing or violent behaviour. Supervisors and members of management must also take every reasonable precaution to protect employees from workplace violence, including evaluating a person's history of violent behaviour to determine whether and to whom this employee poses a risk. In making this evaluation supervisors and members of management should consider:

- whether the person's history of violence was associated with the workplace or work;
- whether the history of violence was directed at a particular employee or employees in general; and
- how long ago the incidence of violence occurred.

In certain circumstances, supervisors and members of management may have a duty to provide information about a risk of workplace violence from a person with a history of violent behaviour if an employee can be expected to encounter that person during the course of his or her work, and the risk of workplace violence is likely to expose the employee to physical injury. Supervisors and members of management will only release as much personal information about the person

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with a history of violent behaviour as is reasonably necessary to protect the employee from workplace violence.

2.05 Duties of All Employees

You must do your part by ensuring that your behaviour does not violate this policy and by fostering a work environment that is based on respect and is free of harassment.

You are also required to report to your supervisor, or any other supervisor or member of management, or the Human Resources Department, the existence of any workplace violence or threat of workplace violence.

3 Administration

3.01 Procedure for Resolving and Investigating Harassment Incidents and Complaints

a) Informal Procedure

If you believe that you are being harassed, the first thing to do is to tell the person to stop. Do so as soon as you receive any unwelcome comments or conduct. Although this may be difficult to do, telling the person you don't like their actions is often enough to stop the behaviour.

Some of the things you can say that might stop the behaviour include:

"I don't want you to do that."

"Please stop doing or saying..."

"It makes me uncomfortable when you ..."

"I don't find it funny when you ..."

If the harassment continues after you have confronted the individual, you may want to provide him or her with a written statement of the situation. Include specific details of the behaviours you consider to be harassing, your request to the harasser to stop and your expectations that he or she will stop. Provide details of the next steps you plan to take if the harassment does not stop e.g., filing a formal complaint. Make sure you keep a copy of this statement for yourself.

It helps to keep a record of any incident(s) that you experience. This includes when the harassment started, what happened, whether there were any witnesses and what was your response. You can also speak to your supervisor. If this requirement results in you having to report the incident or complaint to your harasser, you can report your incident or complaint to any other supervisor, member of management or the Human Resources Department.

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If you believe that someone who is not a member of our organization, e.g., a customer, supplier, etc., has harassed or discriminated against you, please report the harassment to your supervisor or the Human Resources Department. Although the Township has limited control over third parties, we will do our best to address the issue and prevent further problems from arising.

b) Formal Procedure *Human Resources Department*

If the incident or complaint cannot be resolved informally or if it is too serious to handle on an informal basis, you may bring a formal complaint to the Human Resources Department or your supervisor. If this requirement results in you having to make the formal complaint to your harasser, you can report your incident or complaint to any other supervisor or member of management. Human Resources act's as our workplace coordinator with respect to harassment and violence in the workplace.

If you bring a formal complaint we will need as much written information as possible, including the name of the person you believe is harassing you, the place, date and time of the incident(s), and the names of any possible witnesses. A copy of the Workplace Respect Complaint form is available from the Human Resources Department.

It is important that we receive your complaint as soon as possible so that the problem doesn't escalate or happen again.

Once we receive your complaint, we will initiate an investigation. The investigation may be informal or formal as deemed necessary and appropriate by the Human Resources Department.

Discrimination and harassment are serious matters. Therefore, if you decide not to make a formal complaint, we may still need to investigate the matter and take steps to prevent further harassment. For example, we may need to continue with an investigation if the allegations are serious or if there have been previous complaints or incidents involving the respondent.

Please note that it is our policy not to investigate anonymous complaints unless there are extenuating circumstances.

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Investigation Procedure

The Human Resources Department will commence an investigation as quickly as possible. We may choose to use either an internal or external investigator, depending on the nature of the incident or complaint.

The investigation may include:

- interviewing the complainant and respondent to ascertain all of the facts and circumstances relevant to the incident or complaint, including dates and locations
- interviewing witnesses deemed relevant by the investigator, if any
- reviewing any related documentation; and
- making detailed notes of the investigation and maintaining them in a confidential file

Once the investigation is complete, the investigator(s) will prepare a detailed report of the findings for the CAO. A written summary of the findings will also be provided to the complainant and respondent.

It is our goal to complete any investigation and communicate the results to the complainant and respondent within thirty days after we receive notice of an incident or receive a complaint, where possible. However, in some cases the investigation may take longer.

Corrective Action

The CAO will determine what action should be taken as a result of the investigation.

The Human Resources Department will inform the complainant and respondent of the results of the investigation and what corrective measures were taken, if any were necessary. The Human Resources Department and CAO will determine the appropriate amount of information to be shared.

If a finding of harassment is made, the Township will take appropriate corrective measures, regardless of the respondent's seniority or position in the Township.

Corrective measures may include one or more of the following:

- discipline, such as a verbal warning, written warning or suspension without pay
- termination with or without cause
- referral for counseling (sensitivity training), anger management training, supervisory skills training or attendance at educational programs on workplace respect
- a demotion or denial of a promotion

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- reassignment or transfer
- financial penalties such as the denial of a bonus or performance related salary increase, and
- any other disciplinary action deemed appropriate under the circumstances

If there is not enough evidence to substantiate the complaint, corrective measures will not be taken.

If you report an incident or make a complaint in good faith and without malice, regardless of the outcome of the investigation, you will not be subject to any form of discipline. The Township will, however, discipline or terminate anyone who brings a false and malicious complaint forward with specific and directed intent to harm or that is made in bad faith with reasonable knowledge of intent to harm.

Preservation of Employee Rights

These procedures do not prevent complainants from exercising their rights under other complaint avenues (i.e. a grievance under a collective agreement, an application to the Human Rights Tribunal of Ontario, an application to the Ontario Labour Relations Board). The Township has no role in deciding the complaints under these other complaint avenues.

What to Do If You are Accused of Harassment

If you are asked by a co-worker to stop behaviours which could reasonably constitute harassment, evaluate your behaviour. Even if you did not mean to offend, your behaviour has been perceived as offensive. Stop the behaviour that the person finds offensive and apologize. Failure to stop this behaviour will leave you more vulnerable to disciplinary action if it is determined the behaviour is inappropriate or constitutes harassment. If you believe the incident has been reported or the complaint has been made in bad faith or is malicious in nature, discuss this with the Human Resources Department, your supervisor, any other supervisor or member of management, or your union representative. You are entitled to know the nature of the allegations against you and to have an opportunity to respond. You are also entitled to representation or accompaniment by legal counsel or a union representative should you choose to have such representation.

3.02 Procedure for Resolving and Investigating Workplace Violence

Workplace Violence

You have the right to refuse work if workplace violence is likely to endanger you. In that instance, please immediately contact your supervisor at which point appropriate measures will be taken to protect you and investigate the situation. You will be moved to a safe place as near as reasonably possible to your normal work station and will need to be available for the purposes of investigating the

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incident. In some circumstances, you may be provided with reasonable alternative work during normal working hours.

In appropriate circumstances, we may contact the police, or other emergency responders as appropriate, to assist, intervene or investigate workplace violence.

Details about the measures and procedures for summoning immediate assistance will be provided and may include:

- equipment to summon assistance such as fixed or personal alarms, locator or tracking systems, phones, cell phones, etc.;
- emergency telephone numbers and/or email addresses;
- emergency procedures

Provided the situation is dealt with quickly and the danger to workers is removed, the necessity of a work refusal may be alleviated.

Investigation Procedure

You are required to report the existence of any workplace violence or threat of workplace violence to your supervisor, another supervisor, any other member of management or the Human Resources Department. The Human Resources Department will commence an investigation as quickly as possible. We may choose to use either an internal or external investigator, depending on the nature of the incident.

The investigation may include:

- conducting interviews of relevant individuals to ascertain all of the facts and circumstances relevant to the incident or complaint, including dates and locations
- reviewing any related documentation; and
- making detailed notes of the investigation and maintaining them in a confidential file

Once the investigation is complete, the investigator(s) will prepare a detailed report of the findings. A copy of the findings will be provided to the Joint Health and Safety Committee.

Corrective Action

The CAO will determine what action should be taken as a result of the investigation.

If a finding of workplace violence is made, the Township will take appropriate corrective measures, regardless of the respondent's seniority or position in the Township.

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Corrective measures may include one or more of the following:

- discipline, such as a verbal warning, written warning or suspension without pay
- termination with or without cause
- referral for counseling (sensitivity training), anger management training, supervisory skills training or attendance at educational programs on workplace respect
- a demotion or denial of a promotion
- reassignment or transfer
- financial penalties such as the denial of a bonus or performance related salary increase, and
- any other disciplinary action deemed appropriate under the circumstances

If you report an incident or make a complaint in good faith and without malice, regardless of the outcome of the investigation, you will not be subject to any form of discipline. The Township will, however, discipline or terminate anyone who brings a false and malicious complaint forward with specific and directed intent to harm or that is made in bad faith with reasonable knowledge of intent to harm.

3.03 Procedures for Addressing Domestic Violence

If you are experiencing domestic violence that would expose you to physical injury in the workplace or you are experiencing workplace violence or believe that workplace violence is likely to occur, you may seek immediate assistance by contacting the Human Resources Department, your supervisor, another supervisor or any other member of management, who will assist in preventing and responding to the situation.

3.04 Confidentiality of Complaints and Investigations

We recognize the sensitive nature of harassment and violence incidents and complaints and we will keep all incidents and complaints confidential to the extent that we are able to do so. We will only release as much information as is necessary to investigate and respond to the incident or complaint, to take corrective action with respect to the incident or complaint or if required to do so by law.

Out of respect for the relevant individuals, it is essential that the complainant, respondent, witnesses and anyone else involved in the investigation of an incident or complaint maintain confidentiality throughout the investigation and afterwards.

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3.05 **Protection from Retaliation**

The Township will not tolerate retaliations, taunts or threats against anyone who complains about harassment or violence or takes part in an investigation. Any person, who taunts, retaliates against or threatens anyone in relation to a harassment or violence incident or complaint may be disciplined or terminated.

4. **REVISION CONTROL**

Revision Date	Revision	Effective Date

5. **ATTACHMENTS**

5.01 Respect in the Workplace Complaint Form HR-3.18(a)

5.02 Respect in the Workplace Investigation Form HR-3.18(b)

Resolution No. 8(e)(i)/05/25/10

Rescind Ontario Human Rights Code HR-3.8

TOWNSHIP OF LAKE OF BAYS PROCEDURE MANUAL			
Chapter:	Human Resources	Index No.	HR-3.18(a)
Section:	Employment Practices	Effective Date:	May 25, 2010
Subject:	Respect in the Workplace HR-3.18(a) Complaint Form	Revision Date:	
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CONFIDENTIAL

Respect in the Workplace Complaint

Employee Name: _____ **Position:** _____

Supervisor: _____ **Date:** _____

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Potential Witnesses

List any individuals who may have information about, or who have observed the conduct in question.

Your Response

Outline what you have done in response to this problem to date if anything, including speaking to the person you are complaining about or raising your concerns with anyone else.

Complainant's Signature:

Date:

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License Plate#:

Identifying Marks: (dents rust, etc)

13. Your Identification

Name:

Signature:

Job Title:

Section 3

Following are some suggested questions to ask, but is not an all-inclusive list).

1. When did the incident happen?

2. Where did it happen?

3. Who was there?

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4. What happened?

5. Why did it happen?

What could have been done differently to prevent the incident from happening?

6

7. Investigation Recommendations:

8. Actions Taken:

Name:

Signature:

Title:
