

Workplace Violence Risk Assessment - OHS

March 3, 2026

As per the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHS) the employer is obliged to assess the risks of workplace violence that may arise from the nature of the workplace, the type of work or the conditions of work.

The University has over the years used a variety of means of assessing and mitigating risks of workplace violence. In order to formalize the University-wide risk assessment, Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) has now conducted a review of all job categories/titles and developed a General University of Toronto Workplace Violence Risk Assessment for all positions across the University and in University owned/operated workplaces.

The risk assessment has considered the following:

- (a) circumstances that would be common to similar workplaces across the University;
- (b) circumstances specific to the workplace; and
- (c) any other relevant factors

This assessment is intended to be at a high level, describing potential risks, and measures and procedures to mitigate those risks that are broadly applicable. Divisions will continue assessing and implementing local measures where applicable. For specific job or work site questions and concerns, employees should speak with their supervisors. Divisions who have amendments to the institutional [General University Workplace Violence Assessment](#) should complete the [Divisional Feedback Form](#) and submit to EHS (ehs.office@utoronto.ca).

General University of Toronto Workplace Violence Assessment

This assessment provides a University-wide overview of workplace violence risk factors relating to work at the University, and the risk mitigation strategies that are utilized in a systematic fashion across the University. This assessment should be viewed in the context of the University's

Workplace Violence Program including its section entitled: "Assessing Risk of Workplace Violence", as well as the rest of the Program which implements the University's Policy with Respect to Workplace Violence.

For procedures regarding workplace conduct including workplace violence and/or harassment please refer to:

- [Conflict of Interest and Conflict of Commitment, Statement on](#)
- [Guideline for Employees on Concerns and Complaints Regarding Prohibited Discrimination and Discriminatory Harassment \(Discrimination Guideline\)](#)
- [Harassment, Statement on Prohibited Discrimination and Discriminatory Harassment](#)
- [Human Resources Guideline on Workplace Harassment and Civil Conduct \(Civility Guideline\)](#)
- [Research, Policy on Ethical Conduct in](#)
- [Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment, Policy on](#)
- [Workplace Harassment, Policy with Respect to Workplace Harassment](#)
- [Workplace Violence, Policy with Respect to Workplace Violence](#)
- [U of T Workplace Violence Program](#)

The below assessment considered all job categories and divisional areas at the University of Toronto.

Assessment #1: General Physical Environment Assessment

-Considers ALL 42 job categories/titles and areas listed in Table 1 and Table 2

Assessment #2: Specific Risk Assessment – Direct contact with clients and members of the public

-Considers only those job categories and specific job titles identified in Assessment #1: General Physical Environment Assessment as having relevant risk associated with direct contact work with clients or members of the broader public.

Assessment #3 Specific Risk Assessment – Direct contact with clients (crisis situations /volatile populations)

-Considers only those job categories and specific job titles identified in Assessment #1: General Physical Environment Assessment as having relevant risk associated with direct contact work with clients comprised of crisis situations /volatile populations.

The controls and measures listed below (Assessment #1, 2, 3) are noted as already identified/implemented if appropriate and suitable to applicable areas within the divisions. Please note, the measures listed are NOT intended to be an exhaustive list rather they represent general risk mitigation measures. **Please speak to your supervisor for specific controls relevant to your work area. For more information, please refer to the “Additional Resources” section.**

Additional Resources

<https://people.utoronto.ca/memos/supporting-a-workplace-that-is-free-of-harassment-and-discrimination/>

Assessment Scope

The risk assessment is applicable to ALL employment job categories listed below (1-42) (Table 1). All below listed areas are reflected and accounted for within this assessment (Table 2).

Table 1: Listing of ALL Job categories and associated titles

	Job categories (ALL Employees) *union, PM, RAs, appointed, non- appointed, excluded etc.	Examples of Job titles – The job titles listed here not exhaustive and are meant to provide a high level overview of the category. Please speak with your supervisor if you have any questions regarding your specific job title.
1	Access	Access (data, information) services associates, CAF attendants
2	Acquisitions	Serial, access, acquisition etc.
3	Administration	Confidential, administration, business, office, records/data administrator, project administrator, medical administrator, parking administrator, duplication/mailroom technician etc.
4	Advancement & Alumni	All level advancement and alumni relations staff
5	Advocacy/Equity	Advocacy, equity
6	Arts & Culture	Music, theatre, wardrobe, curatorial, ticketing, etc.
7	Campus Safety	Constables (all level), campus safety
8	Cataloguing	Derived cataloguer, assistant, access service, reading room etc.
9	Chefs and Cooks	Chef, sous chef
10	Communications Operator	All levels - campus safety dispatchers
11	Driver	Utility, equipment, bus, disability service



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12	Early Learning	Teacher, early learning, assistants
13	Facilities	Shipping receiving, general maintenance, moving, athletics, arena, campus service, caretaker, landscape, maintenance, recycling, service worker, grounds, construction, utilities, telecommunication, waste, restoration, project management, property management
14	Finance	Financial officer, finance planning, data analysis, insurance, procurement, real estate
15	Governance/Admin Support	Governance administrative support
16	Health & Wellness	Dental assistant, lead, support, infection control, oral radiology, psychotherapy, RN, OT, PT, athletics therapist, sports massage, health & wellness reception and clinical staff (e.g. physician, counsellor, psychologist, psychiatrist, dietician)
17	Hospitality	Food service, attendants, cashier, hostess, banquet staff, cafeteria, food/beverage, event coordinator, room rentals, porters, hostess
18	People Strategy, Equity and Culture (PSEC), formerly the Division of Human Resources and Equity	All level PSEC staff
19	Information Technology	Media staff, digital collections, help desk, computer systems, technology/information systems/network/client support, database, programmers, multimedia
20	Legal	legal
21	Librarian	Librarians
22	Library	Library PM
23	Library	Archivist, bibliographic project, technician
24	Library Services	Photoduplication, digital scanning, photoduplication, library assistant, scholarly comm/copyright
25	Media/Communications/Public Relations	Graphic designer/artist, communications, public relations, circulations, digital media, editor, licensing/brand, marketing
26	Parking	Attendant, control officer
27	Preservation - CUPE Local 1230	Preservation, conservator
28	Professional/Technical Support	Professional/Technical Support
29	Radiation Service Technician (CUPE 3261)	Radiation Services Technician



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30	Reference - CUPE Local 1230	Reference, accessibility service
31	Research & Teaching, Faculty	UG, SGS II, SGS MSc, SGS PhD, PDF, course/writing instructor, sessional, research officer, RAs, ESL instructor
32	Research & Teaching Support	Vet tech, lab animal/surgical/microscopy tech, lab tech, Chief presiding officer, assistant invigilator, peer assistant, music accompanist, recital adjudication, sessional instruction assistant, horticulturalist, research officer, teaching tech, scientific graphic/media artist/specialist
33	Research Administration	Research/policy administration services
34	Resource Sharing	Associates, access services, e-resource specialists,
35	Safety & Security	Building patrol, fire prevention, hazardous materials, occupational hygiene tech, health and safety officer
36	Special Operator	Special operator
37	Stores Technician	Stores technician
38	Student Academic Experience & Services	Grad/undergrad admin, learning support/strategist, disability consultant/accessibility advisor, exam support, student placement coordinator, teaching support, registrarial admin (admissions, academic advisor, financial aid and awards, records and enrollment, student recruitment, scheduling and exams, petitions, appeals, academic standards), ESL instructor
39	Student Life Experience & Services	Student life affairs/services, career advising/counsellor/development officer, student life admin/officer, counsellors (crisis etc.), fitness/sports/aquatic staff, residence staff, international student services and immigration advisor, learning & safety abroad advisor/manager, co-curricular programs
40	Technical/Fabrication	Cartographer, craftsperson, dental tech, draftsperson, engineering tech, scientific glassblower
41	Trades	Carpenter, cement/brick restorer, elevator mechanic, electrician, locksmith, machinist, sheet metal worker, plumber, steamfitter, sprinkler fitter, bldg. mgmt. sys tech, bldg. engineer
42	WalkSmart Casual	WalkSmart casual



Table 2: University wide Divisions reflected in this assessment

Divisions		
Applied Science & Engineering	Information	Pharmacy
Architecture	Innis College	Planning & Budget Office
Arts & Science	Law	Research & Innovation
Communications	Libraries	Rotman
Continuing Studies	Kinesiology	University Advancement
Dalla Lana School of Public Health	Medicine	University College
Dentistry	Music	U of T, Mississauga
Division of People Strategy, Equity & Culture (PSEC)	New College	U of T, Scarborough
Faculty of Social Work (FIFSW)	Nursing	VP & Provost (including VP-Students and Student Life)
Governing Council	OISE	Woodsworth College
Hart House	Operations & Real Estate Partnerships (OREP)	

Assessment #1: General Physical Environment Assessment

Applicable Job Categories

-ALL (1-42)

In addition to the general physical environmental factors listed below, departments/divisions are expected to provide ALL workers with general safety information and procedures for reporting concerns with respect to workplace violence. For example:

-All workers are required to take [EHS002 Basic Health and Safety Awareness Training](#)

- Provision of [workplace violence policies and procedures](#)

- Circulate the following resources widely within your areas as applicable and appropriate: [Working Safely in University Buildings](#), [Security in the Workplace](#), [E-Safety Tips](#), [Commuting Safety Resource Page](#), [Emergency Preparedness \(Emergency Response Handbook, UTAAlerts\)](#).



General physical environment factors	Controls which have been identified as effective risk mitigating measures and have been implemented as applicable and appropriate within the relevant work areas. Please speak to your supervisor for specific controls relevant to your work area. <u>For more information, please refer to the “Additional Resources” section.</u>	Applicable Job categories and relevant Job titles
Outside building and parking lot(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -bolted entries/locks -designated public entry doors -sufficient lighting -communication means in case of emergency 	-41, 26, 7, 13, 11, 42 (ALL)
Entry control & Security System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -security doors -reception areas -mirrors -restricted access (off hours) -communication -cameras 	-7, 41, 35 (ALL)
Public reception & waiting areas & Public counters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -means of emergency communication -signage -barriers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -6 (ticketing, museum) -13 (KPE) -16 (All) -17 (Food Services, cashiers/hostess/servers/porters) -24 (Student (Grad) Library Assistant; customer support associate) -26 (ALL) -35 (Building Patrol) -38, 39 (student life administrator) -front desk operations (various job categories) *units with any of the above job categories/titles also complete the Specific Risk Assessment–



General physical environment factors	Controls which have been identified as effective risk mitigating measures and have been implemented as applicable and appropriate within the relevant work areas. Please speak to your supervisor for specific controls relevant to your work area. <u>For more information, please refer to the “Additional Resources” section.</u>	Applicable Job categories and relevant Job titles
		Direct contact with clients and members of the public (Assessment #2 below)
Working alone or in hidden areas (utility rooms, wash closets, steam plant, hazardous waste storage/processing areas, elevator service areas)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -restricted public access -means of communication -buddy system, check-in/check out -access for emergency services -radios/cellphones -regular testing of security system -security doors -lighting - For more information, please refer to the Working Alone Guidelines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -13 (ALL) -41 (ALL) -35 (ALL) -26 (ALL)
Treatment/counseling rooms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Means of communication -restricted access 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -16 (ALL) -38 (ALL) -39 (ALL) *units with any of the above job categories/titles also complete the Specific Risk Assessment - Direct contact with clients – crisis situations /Volatile populations (Assessment #3 below)
Location of cash/med products/ medicine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Access to reliable means of communication -secured method of storage for goods and access control to these areas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -3 (ancillary admin service) - 6 (Ticketing services rep) -13 (Athletics attendants; shipping receiving; -17 (food services, cashiers, bartender)



General physical environment factors	Controls which have been identified as effective risk mitigating measures and have been implemented as applicable and appropriate within the relevant work areas. Please speak to your supervisor for specific controls relevant to your work area. <u>For more information, please refer to the “Additional Resources” section.</u>	Applicable Job categories and relevant Job titles
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - where applicable, maintain smaller quantities of valuable goods/cash in publically accessible parts of the workplace (e.g. make regular bank deposits to reduce at the cashier) - location to store personal items of value (e.g. purse) away from public view -use of physical barriers where applicable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -16 (RNs, Dental Assistants) -32 (Vet tech, lab vet tech) -37 (Stores Technician)
Working off-campus and/or attending public/other events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -provision of site-specific health and safety information, location of emergency phones/exits, etc. (where applicable, from owner/representative of the 3rd party location or from UofT event planner/facilities representative) -restrict access, testing security access (where applicable for UofT premises) -work with a buddy, check-in/check-out procedure with supervisor, where possible schedule to reduce working alone (For more information, please refer to the Working Alone Guidelines). -means of communication -If applicable, refer to section above “Location of cash/med products/ medicine” 	-ALL



General physical environment factors	Controls which have been identified as effective risk mitigating measures and have been implemented as applicable and appropriate within the relevant work areas. Please speak to your supervisor for specific controls relevant to your work area. <u>For more information, please refer to the “Additional Resources” section.</u>	Applicable Job categories and relevant Job titles
Remote locations or hazardous regions (as identified by Foreign Affairs etc.)	-applicable workers and supervisors who travel to such locations have reviewed information on the EHS Off-Campus Safety webpage and where applicable, have completed the Off-Campus Safety Planning Record (Risk Assessment)	-31
Is there a designated safe area where workers can go during a workplace violence incident?	-clear area to be designated by supervisor/unit lead during an emergency and communicated to staff (e.g. meeting minutes) -accessible by security -access to reliable means of communication	-ALL
Making decisions on academic or employment status	Provision of safety information and procedures for reporting concerns with respect to workplace violence. For example: -all workers are required to take EHS002 Basic Health and Safety Awareness Training . -Provision of workplace violence policies and procedures - Circulate the following resources widely within your areas as applicable and appropriate: Working Safely in University Buildings , Security in the Workplace , and E-Safety Tips	-ALL

Assessment #2: Specific Risk Assessment – Direct contact with clients and members of the public

Clients are defined as individuals who are external to the university e.g. community members, theatre patrons, members of the broader public, etc.

This assessment applies to jobs where work is conducted by a single worker (alone), isolated areas as identified in the General Physical Environment Assessment

Applicable Job categories
-6 (ticketing, museum), 13 (KPE, Capital Projects), 16 (All), 24 (Student (Grad) Library Assistant; customer support associate), 26 (ALL), 38, 39 (student life administrator), front desk support (various job categories)

Physical environment	Controls which have already been implemented as appropriate and applicable within the relevant areas. <u>Please speak to your supervisor for specific controls relevant to your work area. For more information, please refer to the “Additional Resources” section.</u>
Can workers summon immediate assistance in the event of workplace violence?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -cell phone, radios -direct access to supervisor, emergency push buttons (where applicable), VOIP, Safe Operating Procedures (SOPs) -reporting strange incidents
Is public access to the workplace restricted (during operational and non-operational hours etc.)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -controlled entry -clear signage re: authorized entry -sign-in procedures -locking public entry after hours -patrols -FOB access restrictions - location to store personal items of value (e.g., purse) away from public view
Do workers work at times or locations of increased vulnerability e.g. late night/shift, isolated	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -security patrol(s)/accompany upon request by campus safety? -leaving in group(s) arrangement upon request? -cell phones/radios



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -check in-point/times -procedures for workers to follow when dealing with unauthorized persons/aggressive clients and/or public - For more information, please refer to the Working Alone Guidelines
Are there opening/closing procedures before/after shift in order to secure the workplace?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -hand over procedures -reporting strange incidents
Are workers trained in/provided information as applicable re: safety routines related to their work (e.g., when alone, isolated, etc)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -safety briefings -emergency contact procedures -relevant measures and procedures for specific tasks/work

Assessment #3 specific Risk Assessment – Direct contact with clients (crisis situations /volatile populations/patrolling/security and protective services)

This assessment applies to jobs where workers are expected to provide a service to clients and/or are working in fixed locations with the presence of cash/goods/medication and/or where clients have access to staff and/or in the presence of persons with physiological/psychological/psychiatric conditions and/or substance abuse issues and/or persons who are unpredictable due to influences outside the workplace

Applicable Job Categories :
7 (Campus Safety), 16 (ALL), 21, 22, 24, 35 (Building Patrol), 38 (ALL), 39 (ALL), front desk support (various job categories)

Physical Environment	Controls which have already been implemented as appropriate and applicable within the relevant areas. <u>Please speak to your supervisor for specific controls relevant to your work area. For more information, please refer to the “Additional Resources” section.</u>
Do (public/clinical) clients have direct physical access to workers?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -visible reception area -wide counters/barriers -emergency communication procedures (e.g. direct means of summoning assistance) - location to store personal items of value (e.g. purse) away from public view -reporting strange incidents



Is public access to the workplace restricted?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -use of physical attributes to create defined lines -Single entry and exit points for clients -security alarms -clear signage, landscaping, barriers, lighting -card entry -sign-in procedures
Can clients access staff areas?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -storing sharp/harmful items away from client access -using weighted furniture
Does the physical location discourage workplace violence by encouraging calm e.g. clean, uncluttered, welcoming atmosphere?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -architectural design that enhances the chance of being seen -well-maintained -clean/tidy entry area -posting “Welcome” and “no-harassment” policy/info -workers welcome clients
Are there designated waiting areas to meet with clients?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -patient waiting areas -seating in reception areas -visible to reception/admin staff -easy egress -means of emergency communication
Do workers work at times and locations of increased vulnerability e.g. late night/shift, isolated?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -security patrol(s)/accompany upon request by campus safet? -leaving in group(s) arrangement upon request? -cell phones/radios -check in-point/times -procedures for workers to follow when dealing with unauthorized persons/aggressive clients and/or public - For more information, please refer to the Working Alone Guidelines.
Are there opening/closing procedures before/after shift in order to secure the workplace?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -hand over procedures -reporting strange incidents
Are there procedures to identify, evaluate and inform workers about specific high-risk/volatile clients?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -SOPs -emergency response -reporting procedures



Are staff trained to deal with any volatile behaviour in clientele?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-how to de-escalate-how to question unauthorized persons e.g. volatile client/patient without an apt.-action/response plan to deal with difficult client/patient-emergency contact procedures-safe area-training/procedures on responding to security concerns (for those whose role is to respond to security situations)
Are workers trained in/provided information as applicable re: safety routines related to their work (when alone)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-safety briefings-emergency contact procedures-relevant measures and procedures for specific tasks/work

The university will review this institutional risk assessment on an annual basis, which will include a review of any workplace violence incidents, in consultation with the applicable units, to ensure the assessment remains updated. The risk assessment will also be reviewed annually by all CAOs to ensure it remains accurate, refer to: Chair, Director and Manager - https://finance.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/Chair_Director_Manager.pdf