

# Beautiful Eastern Association of Snowmobile Trails



## *Safe Operating Procedures*

### **SOP – 17: WORKPLACE VIOLENCE**

Workplace Violence is defined as any act of aggression that causes physical or emotional harm, including assault (any attempt to inflict physical harm to a worker), threat, verbal abuse, sexual harassment and racial or religious harassment. Forms of violence include:

- Threats of violence
- Verbal/written and emotional abuse
- Harassment based on sex, religion, sexual orientation, disability, race
- Use of or threats to use force
- Inappropriate suggestions, inference, comments or behavior
- Carrying a weapon
- Intimidation or aggressive behavior
- Domestic violence

This policy will help to ensure that employees and volunteers within the BEAST have a work environment that is free of violence of any kind, whether it arises from other employees or members.

If any worker or volunteer engages in workplace violence, which includes threats, the BEAST will investigate and take immediate action. It is important that no one associated with the BEAST should ever feel threatened by any worker or volunteer's actions or conduct.

This policy encourages employees and volunteers who observe workplace violence or are a victim of violence to report the incident immediately.

The BEAST Board of Directors has established the following procedures:

- Take corrective action and monitor the effectiveness of the program
- Ensure risk assessments are undertaken as required
- Inform employees, volunteers and Coordinators / Supervisors of the nature and extent of the risk of violence
- Respond to media presence and/or follow-up questions relating to any incident
- The supervisor/manager responsibilities further include the following:

- Comply with reporting, investigation and documenting procedures
- Facilitate ongoing discussion on workplace violence issues with staff, as required
- Ensure that appropriate training and education in violence prevention procedures and response procedures is provided to staff where required
- Assist in development and updating of the local workplace violence prevention program
  - Instruct staff on procedures for prevention of violence
  - Promote and encourage reporting of violent incidents
  - Advise workers of available medical services including referrals

The employee and volunteer responsibilities include the following:

- Attend education and training sessions when requested
- Follow established procedures for the prevention and reporting of incidents of violence
- Report incidents of violence
- Provide input into incident investigations
- Be aware of critical incident debriefing or trauma counseling services available

## **Procedures for Dealing with Workplace Violence**

### ***Identifying Risk Factors***

Risk factors for workplace violence may include but are not limited to:

- High levels of work stress
- Environments where discrimination or harassment exists
- Working alone
- Interacting with violent customers/coworkers
- Frequent contact with the public
- Handling money
- Crowded, noisy areas
- Understaffed areas

### ***Identifying a Potentially Violent Person***

Signs that a person is potentially violent may include, but are not limited to:

- Their face is turning red or white
- Their expression is angry, sneering, or glaring
- They are pacing, making nervous, repetitive, or violent movements, shaking, clenching jaw or fists, approaching too near, or perspiring heavily
- They are using a loud voice and/or abusive language
- Their breathing is shallow or rapid
- If you notice these signs, TAKE ACTION. Get help from your supervisor immediately!

### ***Communicating with a Potentially Violent Person***

- DO NOT confront the person by glaring or staring
- Remain calm and use a calm manner
- Speak slowly and clearly in a sure tone
- Do NOT attempt complicated explanations during a tense situation
- Ask the person to talk and pay close attention
- DO NOT advise the person to relax or be calm
- Use silence to placate the person
- DO NOT defy, criticize, insult, interrupt or patronize
- DO NOT crowd the person. Allow them about 2 to 4 feet of space
- DO NOT fight with the person. Leave the situation and if necessary, get help from the police

### ***Problem Solving with a Potentially Violent Person***

- Try to see the situation from the person's point of view in order to figure out how to fix the problem
- DO NOT take the situation lightly
- Direct the person's attention to the issue
- Ask the person how to fix the problem
- Be positive about criticism. If you agree with it, admit this. If you disagree, try to discuss the situation
- DO NOT lie or make unreasonable commitments
- Make minor requests, such as taking the discussion to a quiet area
- Divide the problem into smaller chunks and deal with them one at a time
- Be clear about the consequences of violence and provide other options
- If the person is an employee, do not discuss discipline until the situation is more stable
- DO NOT immediately turn down the person's request
- DO NOT try to negotiate with someone who is making threats. End the conversation calmly and if necessary, get assistance