



The mission of the Abenaki Council of Odanak is to ensure the representation of the members of the Abenaki community of Odanak and to promote the preservation of their identity, culture, and quality of life. To achieve this, the Council aims to provide high-quality services to the youth, the elderly, and the entire community, within the resources available to the band.

Workplace Policy on Domestic, Family, or Sexual Violence

Adopted on January 15, 2024
Effective as of January 15, 2024
According to the minutes of the Council's meeting of January
15, 2024

1. Preamble

WHEREAS domestic, family, or sexual violence is deemed unacceptable.

WHEREAS the Canadian Labour Code stipulates that the employer has a general obligation to ensure, in the workplace, the protection of staff members in matters of health and safety, including the prevention of harassment and violence.

WHEREAS, according to the Canadian Labour Code (Sect.122(1)), harassment and violence means “any action, conduct or comment, including of a sexual nature, that can reasonably be expected to cause offence, humiliation or other physical or psychological injury or illness to an employee, including any prescribed action, conduct or comment.” - with domestic violence being indicated as an external factor.

WHEREAS this policy aligns with the Employer's Workplace Harassment and Violence Prevention Policy.

WHEREAS the Act respecting occupational health and safety (AROHS 51(16)) obliges employers to protect staff members exposed to domestic, family, or sexual violence in the workplace. Since October 6, 2021, the AROHS specifies that the residence or home is a workplace when teleworking occurs.

2. Foundation

The Abenaki Council of Odanak (hereinafter also referred to as “the Council”) aims, through this policy, to establish clear guidelines to ensure that every staff member has the right to work in an environment free from violence. Additionally, each staff member is encouraged to seek assistance in relation to a situation of domestic, family, or sexual violence, even if it occurs outside the workplace.

3. Goals

The Council has the duty to protect the health and safety of its staff members and to ensure the security of its operations. In accordance with these obligations, it establishes this policy to maintain a workplace free from violence. The Council also aims to commit to handling and following up on situations with respect, confidentiality, and diligence. The Council seeks to foster a climate of trust conducive to staff members who are victims, to inform the Council and seek assistance.

4. Definitions¹

- **Domestic Violence:** Domestic violence occurs between two individuals involved in a romantic, intimate, or marital relationship. These individuals may have been connected in the past or may be currently involved. Domestic violence can manifest in various forms and involves a dynamic of control.
- **Family Violence:** Family violence occurs when an individual engages in abusive behaviour with the intent to control or harm a family member or someone they associate with. Family violence can take various forms of physical and psychological mistreatment, as well as neglect perpetrated by family members.
- **Sexual Violence:** Sexual violence encompasses any unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature expressed physically, verbally, or non-verbally, or any other behaviour based on gender that violates the dignity of women and men, is unwelcome, unreasonable, and offends the individual.
- **Various Forms of Violence:** Forms of violence can be psychological, physical, verbal, sexual, or economic in nature.

5. COMMITMENT

THEREFORE, the Council is committed to implementing several measures to ensure the health and safety of staff members exposed to domestic, family, or sexual violence.

5.1 Staff Awareness

- Disseminate to all staff members, managers, and human resources personnel a statement expressing our opposition to any act of violence, including domestic, family, or sexual violence.
- Encourage staff members to come forward if they are victims of domestic, family, or sexual violence.
- Display a copy of the workplace policy on domestic, family, or sexual violence in visible and accessible areas for the staff.
- Provide all staff members with information on available services to help them deal with situations related to domestic, family, or sexual violence.

5.2 Reporting Procedure

- Staff members are encouraged to submit reports to the following email: aide@caodanak.com.
- Access to this email is restricted to the Assistant Executive Manager - Human Resources Manager at the Abenaki Council of Odanak and the Domestic Violence Prevention Officer at the Abenaki Police Force.
- At all times, we will respect the right to privacy of the person experiencing domestic violence, an essential element of a work environment that aims to be open to reports.
- To this end, we commit to keeping any report of domestic violence confidential.

¹ Source: <https://www.cnesst.gouv.qc.ca/fr/prevention-securite/identifier-corriger-risques/liste-informations-prevention/violence-conjugale-familiale-caractere-sexuel>

- Specifically, in the case of a report, we are committed to disclosing only the strictly necessary information to any person who needs it to implement an individual safety plan for the victim or to secure the workplace for everyone.

5.3 Workplace Health and Safety

- We will seek to eliminate any possibility of domestic violence in the workplace and its surroundings by analyzing the environment and minimizing, to the extent possible, the physical and organizational features that could expose staff members to violent acts.
- In collaboration with the Occupational Health and Safety Committee, we will assess risks related to domestic violence in the workplace and its surroundings and adopt measures to mitigate these risks.
- In collaboration with the Occupational Health and Safety Committee, we will regularly review the assessment of risks related to domestic violence and the preventive measures adopted to mitigate them in the workplace.
- We will provide reasonable means to support victims of domestic violence and assist them in developing and implementing individual workplace safety plans.
- We will direct staff members who are victims to external specialized resources in domestic violence to develop a safety plan for their personal lives and receive necessary support.
- We will direct staff members who are perpetrators of violence to appropriate resources.
- We will enforce any court orders, particularly orders prohibiting the person committing violence from entering the staff member's workplace.
- We will have an emergency preparedness plan that describes how staff members should proceed to contact the police when they observe anyone engaging in threatening behaviour.
- We will explore options to ensure the safety of the victimized staff member, including but not limited to: relocation of workspace, accompaniment to entering and exiting the building, implementing measures to decrease the impact of harassment through various technological means, etc.

5.4 Non-Discriminatory Support Policies

- We will take reasonable measures to develop policies, practices, and measures that consider absenteeism, productivity, and the safety of staff members, to address the need for support and consultation regarding domestic violence.
- We will ensure that our policies and practices are in no way discriminatory towards staff members who are victims of domestic violence, and we will be attentive to their needs.
- We will not base any staffing decisions on presumed or known issues of domestic violence among staff members.

5.5 Training

- We will regularly provide training to managers, human resources, and security personnel on domestic violence and its effects on the workplace.

- We will offer staff members training on recognizing signs of domestic violence, understanding the impact of domestic violence in the workplace, relevant resources, confidentiality, and individual intervention and safety plans.

5.6 Family Violence

- This policy applies, with necessary adaptations, to situations of family violence.

5.7 Responsibility Regarding the Policy

- We will ensure that managers and human resources personnel implement this policy and distribute copies to all staff members upon its enactment and to new staff members thereafter.
- Staff members with questions or complaints regarding workplace behaviours associated with domestic violence covered by this policy can discuss them with the Assistant Executive Manager - Human Resources Manager at the Abenaki Council of Odanak. We will not be indifferent to your concerns.

We believe we have a responsibility to help prevent domestic violence in the workplace, thereby contributing to building a safer society.