

**JOINT HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE**  
**POLICIES & PROCEDURES**  
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## HEALTH, WELLNESS AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

### TERMS OF REFERENCE

#### Introduction:

The Vernon Women's Transition House Society has a Health and Safety Committee in place. While the organization has achieved important success with its workplace safety record, new issues are emerging related to workplace health and wellness as it relates to the work culture.

To address these issues, the committee has incorporated wellness into their overall mandate as the **Health, Wellness and Safety Committee**. The committee has lead responsibility for identifying, recommending and evaluating workplace health, wellness and safety for the overall organization.

The expanded mandate of the committee supports a strategic goal of the Vernon Women's Transition House Society to create, nurture and sustain a healthy and safe workplace for employees, volunteers and clients.

The intent is to improve the physical, emotional, cultural and social aspects of work that contribute to the health, wellbeing and safety of employees and volunteers. This in turn achieves productivity and performance gains and reduces workforce related costs.

#### Key steps include:

- Revising the mandate of the Health, Wellness and Safety Committee to incorporate workplace wellness including physical, mental, emotional, cultural and spiritual health.
- Improving communications between management and staff as it relates to:
  - The importance of a healthy and safe workplace where the wellness of employees and volunteers is essential to maintain a healthy, satisfying and productive workplace.
  - The need and value for good business processes and practices to ensure financial viability and sustainability of the organization in order to maintain a "people first" approach.
  - Clarity on the role and function of middle managers.
  - The value and recognition of the contribution and role of the VVTHS within the broader community.
  - The need for a sustainable, long-term implementation plan to improve the health and wellness of VVTHS employees and volunteers through the application of workplace health strategies, practices and programs.

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### TERMS OF REFERENCE

#### Membership:

- The Health, Wellness and Safety Committee include representation from program areas, front line workers, the union, and the executive.
- The Chair of the committee (and length of term as Chair) is determined by consensus of the committee.
- Length of term of appointment of individual committee members is set by the committee with an appropriate rotation timeframe to ensure continuity (e.g. staggered terms for appointment).
- An open process of nomination is used for new committee appointments.

#### Committee Members:

Name	Job Title/Position
Debby Hamilton	Executive Director
Marg Simons	Executive Administrative Assistant
Brooke McLardy	Residential Programs Manager
Wynn Hartfelder	Shop Steward (Union)
Colleen Hoople	Program Coord. Specialized Victim Svs. (Union)
Maggie Michaud	Front Line Worker (THouse)

#### Key Functions:

The primary functions of the Health, Wellness and Safety Committee include supporting and advising the VVTHS in areas such as:

- Advising on and coordinating an employee recognition program.
- Advising on communication strategies and approaches.
- Advising on workplace health, wellness, and safety promotion.
- Implementing workplace health, wellness and safety promotion and communication.
- Monitoring, reporting on and evaluating health, wellness and safety communication and promotion activities and initiatives.
- Developing and overseeing employee health, wellness and safety surveys and other relevant research and evaluative techniques.
- Identifying and promoting the engagement of all employees and volunteers in healthy workplace practices.

#### Meetings:

- The committee will meet in accordance with a regular schedule as set out by the committee.

## HEALTH, WELLNESS AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

### TERMS OF REFERENCE

- A meeting schedule will be set in accordance with a timetable to ensure a quorum.
- Committee members are required to attend a minimum of two-thirds of scheduled committee meetings. Failure to attend the required number of meetings can result in replacement of the committee member(s) through a process and timeframe as determined by the committee.
- Acceptance of substitutes at committee meetings shall be determined through consensus of the committee.

#### **Committee Communications:**

- All agendas, minutes and required documents will be provided by email and/or through an intranet or web-based access.
- Recorded communications of the committee (agendas, minutes, publications) shall be deemed to be open to all VVTHS employees unless consensus of the committee requires confidentiality.

#### **Expenses:**

- All travel, mileage and accommodation costs related to scheduled committee business will be provided in accordance with VVTHS expense guidelines and policies. All (any) other expense related items are determined by the committee and within the committee's operating budget.

#### **Reporting and Authority:**

- The Health, Wellness and Safety Committee reports to the VVTHS Executive Director.
- The committee derives its authority through a collaborative and consultative process involving the VVTHS Executive Director.
- The committee may, from time-to-time, strike task or action groups to undertake special projects. These task groups report to the committee-as-a-whole.
- The committee provides an annual accounting and reporting of expenses expenditures and related activities for the preceding year.

#### **Decision Making:**

- The committee uses a consensus decision-making model reflecting the principles of; inclusiveness, participatory involvement, cooperation and egalitarianism.

## HEALTH, WELLNESS & SAFETY COMMITTEE

### TERMS OF REFERENCE

- The committee has the discretion to expend funds allocated to the committee in accordance with the priority objectives and actions as identified and approved by the committee.

#### **Support:**

- Support to the committee is provided for all meetings including preparation and distribution of agendas, minutes and committee related documentation.
- Appropriate meeting space is provided for committee meetings.

Effective Date: October 20, 2009

Revised Date: October 20, 2009 (Re: Standing Committee Members)

<b>VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY</b>  <b>HEALTH, WELLNESS &amp; SAFETY COMMITTEE</b>  <b>POLICIES &amp; PROCEDURES</b>	POLICY TITLE: <b>Occupational Health and Safety Policy</b>	
	EMPLOYEE GROUP:	<b>ALL PERSONNEL</b>
	POLICY DATE: REVISION DATE: April 29, 2009	PAGE: 1 of 1

**POLICY:** The Vernon Women's Transition House Society promotes safe and healthy working conditions for its employees. Ensuring that the employees have a safe and healthy working environment is the responsibility of the employer, the Program Coordinators and the workers.

**PROCEDURE:**

*Management:*

1. Establish a Health & Safety Program
2. Establish a Health & Safety Committee
3. Assign two Administrative Employees to the Health and Safety Committee
4. Review all Accident/Incident reports
5. Establish and maintain an educational program relating to occupational health and safety

*Program Coordinators:*

1. Ensure that a safety inspection of the worksite is performed once a month.
2. Investigate all report accident/incidents, completing all necessary documentation in the way of forms (i.e. Accident/Incident Report Form) and, if injury has been sustained, complete the appropriate WCB Form 7.
3. Promptly investigate all employee concerns regarding unsafe work conditions or practices.

*Workers:*

1. Monitor each worksite for safety hazards.
2. Report any safety or health hazards to the Program Coordinator.
3. Immediately report all accidents/incidents to the Program Coordinator, complete appropriate Accident/Incident Report form and, if injury is sustained, complete a WCB Form 6
4. Elect, from their membership, at least two members to the Joint Health & Safety Committee.

*Safety Committee:*

1. Establish goals and objectives for the Safety Program.
2. Promote standards of safe work practices for employees.
3. Evaluate and make recommendations on systems of reporting recording, investigating and analyzing hazardous acts and conditions which have resulted or may result in injury or illness.
4. Recommend to the Management appropriate steps necessary to correct unsafe work practices or working conditions.
5. Identify and recommend to the Management appropriate education programs necessary to create awareness for a safe workplace.
6. Develop an evaluation process by which the effectiveness of the Health and Safety Program will be assessed.

<b>VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY</b>  <b>HEALTH, WELLNESS &amp; SAFETY COMMITTEE</b>  <b>POLICIES &amp; PROCEDURES</b>	POLICY TITLE: <b>General Safe Work Procedures</b>	
	EMPLOYEE GROUP:	<b>ALL PERSONNEL</b>
	REVISION DATE: April 29, 2009	PAGE: 1 of 1

**POLICY:** The Vernon Women's Transition House Society has a number of workplace safety rules and regulations that apply to all staff.

**PROCEDURE:**

*All Employees:*

1. No employee shall engage in any improper activity or behaviour that may create or constitute a hazard to him/herself or to any other employee. Improper activity or behaviour includes "horseplay", scuffling, fighting, practical jokes, unnecessary running or jumping or similar conduct.

*Alcohol and Drugs:*

1. No employee shall report to work under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
2. Employees shall not purchase alcohol or illegal drugs for clients under any circumstances.

*Smoking:*

1. The Vernon Women's Transition House Society locations are smoke-free environments. Employees smoking outside their worksites will ensure proper safe disposal of smoking materials.

<b>VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY</b>  <b>HEALTH, WELLNESS &amp; SAFETY COMMITTEE</b>  <b>POLICIES &amp; PROCEDURES</b>	POLICY TITLE: <b>Written Safe Work Procedures</b>	
	EMPLOYEE GROUP:	<b>ALL PERSONNEL</b>
	REVISION DATE: April 29, 2009	PAGE: 1 of 1

**POLICY:** The Vernon Women's Transition House Society supports the concept that supplementary instructions in the form of written safe work procedures are essential to the promotion of a safe and occupationally disease free work environment.

**PURPOSE:**

To ensure all work is carried out in a safe and healthy manner and all dangers likely to be encountered by employees in the performance of their duties are eliminated or effectively controlled.

**PROCEDURE:**

*Management:*

1. Establish written safe work procedures.
2. Inform workers of safety rules and procedures that apply to them.

*Program Coordinators:*

1. Ensure safety rules and work procedures are followed.
2. Where noncompliance occurs, document and refer to the Executive Director in charge.

*Workers:*

1. Know and follow all safety rules and safe work procedures.
2. Report to the Program Coordinator any steps within a written procedure he/she has reason to believe may have a potential to cause personal injury.

<b>VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY</b>  <b>HEALTH, WELLNESS &amp; SAFETY COMMITTEE</b>  <b>POLICIES &amp; PROCEDURES</b>	POLICY TITLE: <b>Reporting Unsafe Acts Or Conditions</b>	
	EMPLOYEE GROUP:	<b>ALL PERSONNEL</b>
	POLICY DATE: REVISION DATE: May 19, 2009	PAGE: 1 of 1

**POLICY:** All employees of the Vernon Women's Transition House Society must be aware of and report any unsafe acts or conditions.

**PROCEDURE:**

*All Employees:*

1. Immediately report any unsafe or hazardous act or condition to his/her Program Coordinator.

*Management:*

3. Ensure that immediate steps are taken to correct hazardous situations.

*Program Manager:*

1. Investigates all reported hazardous health and safety conditions.
2. If the hazard is under the control of a client, requests that the client or contact person immediately corrects the hazardous condition.
3. Instructs the employee to avoid the hazardous condition.
4. Follows up to ensure that the condition has been rectified.

*Workers:*

1. Follows all health and safety procedures when carrying out their duties.
2. Immediately identifies any conditions that pose a health or safety hazard to a worker and/or a client and reports to the Person in Charge.

<b>VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY</b>  <b>HEALTH, WELLNESS &amp; SAFETY COMMITTEE</b>  <b>POLICIES &amp; PROCEDURES</b>	<b>POLICY TITLE: Refusal To Work In Unsafe Conditions</b> (OH&S Regulation 3.12)	
	<b>EMPLOYEE GROUP:</b>	<b>ALL PERSONNEL</b>
	<b>POLICY DATE:</b> <b>REVISION DATE: May 19, 2009</b>	<b>PAGE:</b> 1 of 1

**POLICY:** The Vernon Women’s Transition House Society supports the concept of WCB of Occupational Health and Safety Regulation 3.12 that *“a person must not carry out or cause to be carried out any work process or operate or cause to be operated any tool, appliance or equipment if that person has reasonable cause to believe that to do so would create an undue hazard to the health and safety of any person.”*

**PURPOSE:**

To ensure the safety of clients and employees (in compliance with OH&S regulation 3.12).

**PROCEDURE**

*Management:*

1. Participate in investigations where an employee has reported unsafe work conditions.
2. Ensure any unsafe condition is remedied.

*Program Manager:*

1. Reports to Executive Director when an employee has alleged a situation unsafe.
2. Participates in investigations as required.

*Workers:*

1. Report to the Person in Charge when unsafe work is assigned.
2. Report to Joint Health & Safety representative if unsafe work assignment has not been satisfactorily remedied.
3. Both the employee and employee representative will assist in the investigation of this report.

<b>VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY</b>  <b>HEALTH, WELLNESS &amp; SAFETY COMMITTEE</b>  <b>POLICIES &amp; PROCEDURES</b>	POLICY TITLE: <b>Communication</b>	
	EMPLOYEE GROUP:	<b>ALL PERSONNEL</b>
	POLICY DATE: REVISION DATE: May 19, 2009	

**POLICY:** All employees will be able to communicate in such a manner that they can carry out their duties. There is regular communication between the Executive Director and Program Managers and Program Managers and Workers.

**PURPOSE:**

1. To promote effective communication with clients and agency staff.
2. To promote cooperative relationships.
3. To minimize feelings of isolation.

**PROCEDURE:**

*Management:*

1. Employs staff who can communicate effectively.
2. Establishes mechanisms for reporting and documenting information.

*Program Manager:*

1. Communicates with workers regularly and schedules individual consultation as required.
2. Responds to concerns, situations and emergencies reported by workers without undue delay:
  - a) Advise worker and Joint Health & Safety members, where applicable, of appropriate actions.
  - b) Reports situation and seeks assistance from Executive Director.
  - c) Obtains assistance from other agencies, if needed.
3. Documents all information reported by workers and informs Executive Director.

*Workers:*

- a) Informs the Person in Charge of:
  - a) Issues regarding clients
  - b) Unusual occurrences
  - c) Unsafe conditions
  - d) Other noteworthy information
- b) Completes incident reports as necessary, maintains records and attends meetings as directed by the Program Manager.

<b>VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY</b>  <b>HEALTH, WELLNESS &amp; SAFETY COMMITTEE</b>  <b>POLICIES &amp; PROCEDURES</b>	POLICY TITLE: <b>Regular Inspection And Monitoring</b>	
	EMPLOYEE GROUP:	<b>ALL PERSONNEL</b>
	POLICY DATE: _____ REVISION DATE: June 10, 2009	PAGE: 1 of 1

**POLICY:** The Vernon Women's Transition House Society has a program to promote safety and minimize potentially hazardous situations in relation to employee safety.

**PURPOSE:**

To ensure a safe environment for agency staff.

**PROCEDURE:**

*Management:*

1. Ensures policies are introduced and maintained that will provide a safe environment.
2. Communicates with Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) investigations and actions taken regarding employee safety.

*Program Managers:*

1. Identify/document any possible problems regarding a client that could lead to a potentially dangerous situation for staff.
2. Make recommendations to avoid a potentially dangerous situation.
3. Be available for workers to voice any concerns regarding workplace safety.

*Workers:*

1. Reports potentially dangerous conditions to the Program Manager as soon as possible.
2. Reports any possible concerns to the Program Manager.
3. Attempts to minimize dangers, where possible.
4. Reports any uncorrected dangerous situations.

<b>VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY</b>  <b>HEALTH, WELLNESS &amp; SAFETY COMMITTEE</b>  <b>POLICIES &amp; PROCEDURES</b>	POLICY TITLE: <b>Fire In The Workplace</b>		
	EMPLOYEE GROUP:	<b>ALL PERSONNEL</b>	
	POLICY DATE: REVISION DATE: June 10, 2009	PAGE: 1 of 2	

**POLICY:** All employees will immediately exit the facility/office in the event of a fire.

**PROCEDURE:**

Should a fire be discovered, the procedure outlined below should be followed:

***General Guidelines:***

1. **Shout "FIRE"** if you smell smoke or see fire, this will alert the work group.
2. **Call 9-1-1** – Test doors before opening. If they feel hot, do not open. There is likely fire on the other side and you will have to find another way out.
3. **Close all doors and windows.** If confined to one room, make sure door is closed and padded against smoke, (a wet mattress works well). Stay near an open window.
4. **Save lives.** Get all occupants out of the area. Remember, the air is usually better near the floor in a smoke-filled room.
5. **Do not** jump from upper story windows – wait for the fire department.
6. Once out, **do not return to burning building.** Stay with children and clients.
7. For anyone burned or smoke exposed, get medical help at once. (Seemingly minor burns or smoke inhalation can be fatal).

***Apartment Buildings:***

1. Use stairways only – **NO** Elevators.
2. If escape not possible, (due to fire or smoke), keep door closed.
3. Place wet towels/blankets around openings.
4. Go to open window or balcony.
5. Signal for help, (**call 9-1-1 if you can**)

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<b>VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY</b>  <b>HEALTH, WELLNESS &amp; SAFETY COMMITTEE</b>  <b>POLICIES &amp; PROCEDURES</b>	POLICY TITLE: <b>Fire In the Workplace</b>		
	EMPLOYEE GROUP:	<b>ALL PERSONNEL</b>	
	POLICY DATE: REVISION DATE: June 10, 2009	PAGE: 2 of 2	

*Clothing fires:*

1. Don't panic or run, it will make flames burn faster.
2. Smother fire by lying down and wrapping in something like a blanket or coat.
3. Gently beat fire out.

**Preventing Burns:** Burns may be caused by fires/steam/hot liquids, hot objects or chemicals. To decrease the risk of burns, keep the following points in mind:

1. **Keep Kitchen Safe** – use pot holders for hot equipment, release steam in pots (facing away from you). Keep stove elements off when not in use. Always cover hot elements with pans.
2. Check water temperature for baths and showers.
3. Encourage clients to wear hats outdoors and limit time in direct sunlight.
4. Always unplug appliances by the plug, not the cord to prevent electrical shock.

<b>VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY</b>  <b>HEALTH, WELLNESS &amp; SAFETY COMMITTEE</b>  <b>POLICIES &amp; PROCEDURES</b>	POLICY TITLE: <b>Principle Of First Aid</b>	
	EMPLOYEE GROUP:	<b>ALL PERSONNEL</b>
	POLICY DATE: REVISION DATE: June 10, 2009	PAGE: 1 of 1

**POLICY:** All employees will be knowledgeable regarding the appropriate first aid procedures in the event that a client or worker has been exposed to a hazardous product.

### **PROCEDURE:**

It is a requirement that all consumer products indicate on the label what the contents are and the first aid treatment that should be administered.

If a worker has been exposed to a hazardous product, a co-worker is expected to follow these steps:

- ✓ Assure that the **worker is safe** with a quick assessment.
- ✓ **Identify** the product immediately.
- ✓ Try to determine the amount of exposure and follow first aid procedures noted on the label. This may indicate washing the affected area with soap and water or inducing vomiting if ingested. However, **DO NOT ASSUME THIS**, read the label first. You could cause further injury or death if inappropriate treatment is initiated.
- ✓ **GET HELP!** Get the person medical aid, 9-1-1 (*where applicable*), **Poison Control, Hospital or Ambulance** – if the label indicates or the person is reacting to the substance.
- ✓ **Bring the container that held the substance that the person was exposed to.** This will be invaluable to the medical personnel dealing with the problem.
- ✓ If the person becomes unconscious, **do not** try to administer fluids or medication. Place the patient in the recovery position or  $\frac{3}{4}$  prone. **Be alert** to the client's airway, breathing and circulation.
- ✓ **Call an Ambulance** at once and give details as required.
- ✓ **Stay on the line!** Do not hang up until operator tells you to.
- ✓ If you are certified in C.P.R. and First Aid, be prepared to administer C.P.R. and/or First Aid.
- ✓ **Keep chemical products in their original containers.** The label that is provided gives important information on correct use, storage and what to do in case of an accident.
- ✓ If there are specific storage conditions that must be followed, they will be noted on the label, i.e.
  - Store in a cool place
  - Do not store exposed to light
  - Keep out of reach of children
- ✓ You must use common sense when storing products that do not specify storage conditions. The best rule is to place the items in an isolated area away from food and clothing items. It must not be accessible to children.
- ✓ **Always** check to make sure that child-resistant containers are working properly.

<b>VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY</b>  <b>HEALTH, WELLNESS &amp; SAFETY COMMITTEE</b>  <b>POLICIES &amp; PROCEDURES</b>	POLICY TITLE: <b>General Hazard – Emergency Response</b>	
	EMPLOYEE GROUP:	<b>ALL PERSONNEL</b>
	POLICY DATE: REVISION DATE: July 21, 2009	PAGE: 1 of 1

**POLICY:** Vernon Women's Transition House Society will be trained to respond appropriately to general emergencies that occur during delivery of service.

**PURPOSE:**

To provide for worker safety in the event of an emergency and to provide support to staff in such event.

**PROCEDURE:**

*Management:*

1. Develop procedure to be followed in the event of a large scale disaster.
2. Review Emergency Response Policy with all new staff at orientation and on a regular basis.
3. Provide annual in-service training for workers regarding crisis management.

*Program Managers/Team Leaders/Program Coord.:*

1. Provide staff members with regular and after hours telephone numbers to be used in an emergency.
  - a) Maintain an up-to-date list of essential services.
2. Take appropriate action during an emergency:
  - a) Have another staff member assist as necessary; i.e. if on phone with staff, another staff member could help obtain assistance (e.g. police).
  - b) Alert others, debrief staff, seek help.
3. Encourage staff to share information, concerns, suggestions that might better prepare themselves and others to handle crisis situations effectively.
4. Encourage staff to take appropriate precautions themselves in preparing for emergency situations, e.g. knowing the location of an emergency/First Aid Kit.

*Office Staff:*

1. Every effort will be made by programs to check into the Transition House office (during working hours) in the event of natural disaster or emergency situation.

<b>VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY</b>  <b>HEALTH, WELLNESS &amp; SAFETY COMMITTEE</b>  <b>POLICIES &amp; PROCEDURES</b>	POLICY TITLE: <b>Large Scale Disaster - Emergency Response</b>	
	EMPLOYEE GROUP:	<b>ALL PERSONNEL</b>
	POLICY DATE: REVISION DATE: July 21, 2009	

**POLICY:** Vernon Women's Transition House Society will be trained to respond appropriately to large scale disaster emergencies that may occur during delivery of service.

**OBJECTIVE:** To reduce human injury and damage to property in an emergency.

**PROCEDURE:**

***Large Scale Disaster Emergency Response Guidelines:***

1. **Try to stay calm** – The Executive Director will be looked upon for leadership.
2. Take a moment to assess the situation:
  - a) What has occurred?
  - b) How are other staff members?
  - c) What is your priority?
3. **Check for injuries** – provide First Aid.
4. **Seek assistance as appropriate;** be clear in your information and instructions.
5. **Check for safety** – check gas, water, sewer, electrical and structural integrity and know where and how to turn off if necessary.
6. Turn on radio and listen for instructions. *(If power is out, use battery powered radio)*
7. ALWAYS wear protective clothing when cleaning up any dangerous spills.
8. Do not use telephone except for emergency use.
9. Check food and water supplies.
10. **Prepare for evacuation:**
  - a) Collect together an evacuation pack:
    - I. Necessary medication, glasses, aids, etc.
    - II. Portable radio, food, fluids, area map.
    - III. Flashlights, personal items, and other items which may be helpful.
11. Stay where you are and await further instructions from Executive Director or designate.
12. If staff are forced to evacuate or leave the workplace to find a replacement:
  - a) Leave a note stating where you are going.
  - b) Take evacuation pack with them.
13. When in a safe location, staff members will contact the Executive Director or designate and inform them regarding their status.
14. After the disaster, if a staff member's priority is to return home, then they will inform the Executive Director or designate to let them know which route will be taken. However, ***if they are able***, staff members should report to the Transition House so they can be assigned to assist with other possible emergency situations.

## 11-A

<b>VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY</b>  <b>HEALTH, WELLNESS &amp; SAFETY COMMITTEE</b>  <b>POLICIES &amp; PROCEDURES</b>	POLICY TITLE: <b>Large Scale Disaster – Emergency Response</b>	
	EMPLOYEE GROUP:	<b>ALL PERSONNEL</b>
	POLICY DATE: REVISION DATE: July 21, 2009	PAGE: 2 of 2

*Team Leader/Program Manager/Program Coord:*

1. Review the Emergency Response policy, procedure and guidelines with all new staff.
2. Encourage all staff to be up-to-date on Emergency First Aid, and CPR training either on their own or by attending the Agency organized courses; however, this is not compulsory.

*Workers will:*

1. Have a list of Emergency phone numbers at all times; list to include: office/Agency contact, Ambulance, Fire, Police, Poison Control, Crisis Centre, Natural Gas, Municipal Water.
2. Try to prevent any human injury or damage to property by:
  - a) Performing safety check of the environment.
  - b) **Knowing where and how to shut off gas and water** (*if applicable*).
  - c) Familiarizing themselves with escape routes.
3. In the event of natural disaster or emergency the worker will make every effort to assure a safe environment for themselves.

*Executive Director:*

1. After emergency is over, review staff's response and documentation, debrief with workers, Program Managers, Team Leaders and Program Coordinators, and provide support.

<b>VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY</b>  <b>HEALTH, WELLNESS &amp; SAFETY COMMITTEE</b>  <b>POLICIES &amp; PROCEDURES</b>	POLICY TITLE: <b>Monitoring of Workplace Exposures</b>	
	EMPLOYEE GROUP:	<b>ALL PERSONNEL</b>
	POLICY DATE: REVISION DATE: July 21, 2009	PAGE: 1 of 2

**POLICY:** The Vernon Women's Transition House Society will have a program to monitor any workplace exposures.

**PURPOSE:**

To ensure a safe environment for staff.

**PROCEDURE:**

*Management:*

1. Arrange training for workers regarding potential exposures and importance of taking pro-active measures to avoid exposure in the workplace, and the need to notify Executive Director or designate should exposure occur.

*Program Managers/Team Leaders/Program Coord.:*

1. Investigate any worker complaints of actual or potential exposures.
2. Talk to worker and attempt to eliminate the potential exposure.
3. Monitor on any of the following in the workplace:
  - a) Bleach
  - b) Detergent
  - c) Disinfectants and sterilizers
  - d) Drain cleaners
  - e) Solvents
4. Repeated or prolonged skin contact with any of the above may cause dermatitis, if solvent is absorbed through the skin, may cause headaches, dizziness and fatigue and should only be used in ventilated area.
5. Should #4 occur, remove contaminated clothing and wash skin.
6. Eye contact – slight irritation or burning – flush eye with water for 20 minutes while holding eyelids open.
- *Take preventative measures when using any potentially hazardous material. Read the labels, wear non-disposable gloves and handle with care.*

## 12-A

<b>VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY  HEALTH, WELLNESS &amp; SAFETY COMMITTEE  POLICIES &amp; PROCEDURES</b>	POLICY TITLE: <b>Monitoring Of Workplace Exposures</b>	
	EMPLOYEE GROUP:	<b>ALL PERSONNEL</b>
	POLICY DATE: REVISION DATE: July 21, 2009	PAGE: 2 of 2

*Workers:*

1. Monitor on an ongoing basis any potential exposures.
2. Report any concerns to Person In Charge regarding potential exposure at the worksite.

<b>VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY</b>  <b>HEALTH, WELLNESS &amp; SAFETY COMMITTEE</b>  <b>POLICIES &amp; PROCEDURES</b>	POLICY TITLE: <b>Safety Of Cleaning Agents</b>	
	EMPLOYEE GROUP:	<b>ALL PERSONNEL</b>
	POLICY DATE: REVISION DATE: August 25, 2009	PAGE: 1 of 1

**POLICY:** All employees will be familiar with the hazards associated with commonly used cleaning agents.

**PURPOSE:**

To prevent accidents and injuries resulting from improper use of chemicals.

**PROCEDURE:**

*Management*

1. Ensure that Vernon Women's Transition House Society complies with Workplace Hazardous Materials information Systems (WHMIS) requirements to the extent reasonably possible.
2. Ensure that all employees are familiar with the hazards associated with commonly used cleaning agents.

*Team Leader*

1. Ensure that workers are familiar with hazards associated with commonly used household cleaning agents.

*Workers (where applicable)*

1. Check warning labels on all cleaning agents before use.
2. Wear gloves when using cleaning solutions of any kind.
3. Special precautions;
  - a) Never, under any circumstances, mix a product containing bleach with a product containing ammonia. **A mixture of bleach and ammonia will release hazardous chlorine gas.**
  - b) Ensure area is well ventilated when using cleaning solutions.
  - c) If you mix bleach and ammonia together by accident, seek medical help immediately.
4. **Read labels:** All consumer products indicate on the label what the contents are and the First Aid treatment that should be administered. Do not use a container that is unlabeled. Keep chemical products in their original containers. Store them away from children.
5. If you are exposed to a hazardous product, notify the Team Leader immediately.

*Safety Committee*

1. Review incidents as required.

<b>VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY</b>  <b>HEALTH, WELLNESS &amp; SAFETY COMMITTEE</b>  <b>POLICIES &amp; PROCEDURES</b>	POLICY TITLE: <b>Keeping Foods Safe / Personal Hygiene</b>	
	EMPLOYEE GROUP:	<b>ALL PERSONNEL</b>
	POLICY DATE: REVISION DATE: August 25, 2009	PAGE: 1 of 2

**POLICY:** Vernon Women's Transition House will ensure that all food is stored and prepared under the appropriate conditions so as to ensure its safety for consumption.

**PROCEDURE:**

**CLEAN:**

1. Always wash and rub your hands with soap for at least 20 seconds before handling food; after handling raw meat, poultry, seafood or eggs; after using the bathroom and changing diapers.
2. Sanitize countertops, cutting boards and utensils with a diluted bleach solution or hot soapy water before and after preparing food.
3. To avoid the risk of cross-contamination and the spread of bacteria, use paper towels to wipe kitchen surfaces, or change dishcloths daily and wash them often in the hot cycle of the washing machine.
4. Use plastic or non-porous cutting boards. Cutting boards should be run through hot soapy water or dishwasher.

**SEPARATE:**

1. To avoid cross contamination, separate raw meat, poultry, and seafood from other foods in your grocery cart; and store these raw foods in sealed containers or plastic bags on bottom shelves in your refrigerator to keep their juice from dripping onto other foods.
2. Never place cooked food on a plate which formerly held raw meat, poultry or seafood.
3. Have different cutting boards for produce, raw meat, poultry and seafood.
4. Always wash cutting boards, knives, and utensils with hot soapy water after making contact with raw meat, poultry and seafood.

**PERSONAL HYGIENE:**

1. *Hand Washing*
  - a) Before and during food preparation
  - b) After performing any other duties
  - c) Before and after handling raw meat
  - d) After handling dirty dishes
  - e) After smoking

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<b>VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY</b>  <b>HEALTH, WELLNESS &amp; SAFETY COMMITTEE</b>  <b>POLICIES &amp; PROCEDURES</b>	POLICY TITLE: <b>Keeping Foods Safe / Personal Hygiene</b>	
	EMPLOYEE GROUP:	<b>ALL PERSONNEL</b>
	POLICY DATE: REVISION DATE: August 25, 2009	PAGE: 2 of 2

**Personal Hygiene Continued (*Hand washing*):**

- f) After using the toilet
  - g) After touching your head or any other part of your body; coughing, blowing your nose, etc.
2. *Hair*
    - a) Should be clean and tied back if long
  3. *Clothing*
    - a) Should be clean
  4. *Illness*
    - a) Many outbreaks of food poisoning have been traced to food handlers who were ill.
  5. *Boils, infected cuts, etc.*
    - a) Hands should be well washed and gloves worn.

<b>VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY  HEALTH, WELLNESS &amp; SAFETY COMMITTEE POLICIES &amp; PROCEDURES</b>	POLICY TITLE: <b>Fire Drills</b>		
	EMPLOYEE GROUP:	<b>ALL PERSONNEL</b>	
	POLICY DATE: REVISION DATE: August 25, 2009	PAGE: 1 of 1	

**POLICY:** All employees will know the emergency exit routes and participate in planned fire drills.

**PURPOSE:**

To ensure that everyone exits the workplace/facility quickly and safely in the event of a fire.

**PROCEDURE:**

1. One staff member will activate the fire alarm, and call out to others where the fire is.
2. Staff will make sure that everyone exits the workplace/facility promptly using the nearest available exit.
3. Staff will make sure that everyone meets at a **predetermined place** for a roll call.
4. After the drill is over, facilitate a discussion with everyone about the fire drill, i.e. what can we do better the next time? If this doorway was blocked, what would you do?
5. Fire drills will be performed **at least** 2 times a year.

<b>VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY</b>  <b>HEALTH, WELLNESS &amp; SAFETY COMMITTEE</b>  <b>POLICIES &amp; PROCEDURES</b>	POLICY TITLE: <b>Smoke Detectors / Fire Extinguishers - Check</b>	
	EMPLOYEE GROUP:	<b>ALL PERSONNEL</b>
	POLICY DATE: REVISION DATE: September 22, 2009	PAGE: 1 of 1

**POLICY:** All worksite Smoke Detectors and Fire Extinguishers will be checked regularly.

**PURPOSE:**

To ensure the earliest notification in the event of a fire, allowing for ample time to evacuate the workplace.

**PROCEDURE:**

1. The Transition House Maintenance Worker will test smoke detectors at Casimir Court (SYP) and the Transition House on a monthly basis.
2. The commercial fire extinguishers will be checked once a year by the contractor.

<b>VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY</b>  <b>HEALTH, WELLNESS &amp; SAFETY COMMITTEE</b>  <b>POLICIES &amp; PROCEDURES</b>	POLICY TITLE: <b>Violence in the Workplace - General</b>	
	EMPLOYEE GROUP:	<b>ALL PERSONNEL</b>
	POLICY DATE: REVISION DATE: September 22, 2009	PAGE: 1 of 2

**POLICY:** The management of Vernon Women's Transition House Society recognizes the potential for violent acts or threats directed against staff persons by persons other than Vernon Transition House Society employees.

The Vernon Women's Transition House Society believes in the prevention of violence and promotes a violence free environment. Any act of violence against employees is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

Every effort has been made to identify the sources of such action and procedures have been developed to eliminate or minimize the risks to staff.

**PROCEDURE:**

*All Employees:*

1. Practice safe work procedures that minimize the risk of violence in the workplace.
2. Follow the procedures implemented for protection and immediately report all incidents of violence as they occur.
3. Lock doors after regular office hours, and ensure that all necessary alarm systems are activated.
4. Inform new or temporary staff of this policy.

*Management:*

1. Ensure that all staff members are aware of potential hazards and are trained in the appropriate action to take for protection from acts or threats of violence.
2. Establish procedures for reporting, investigating and documenting incidents of violence in accordance with Workers Compensation Board Regulations.
3. Evaluate work environment arrangements.
4. Conduct and document periodic risk assessments.
5. Prepare supplementary instructions when necessary.
6. Determine training requirements.
7. Inform workers of the nature and extent of risk of violence.

## 17-A

<b>VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY  HEALTH, WELLNESS &amp; SAFETY COMMITTEE POLICIES &amp; PROCEDURES</b>	<b>POLICY TITLE: Violence in the Workplace - General</b>		
	<b>EMPLOYEE GROUP:</b>	<b>ALL PERSONNEL</b>	
	<b>POLICY DATE:</b> <b>REVISION DATE: September 22, 2009</b>	<b>PAGE:</b> <b>2 of 2</b>	

8. Ensure that corrective actions are taken in response to incidents of violence.
9. Conduct annual review to evaluate the Workplace Violence Prevention.

*Team Leader:*

1. Implement reporting, investigation and documentation procedures.
2. Request all information regarding potential risks to employees, such as history of aggressive behaviour or any other potentially unsafe circumstance in the workplace and will document and clearly communicate the same to all employees providing service to the client.
3. Instruct workers and maintain training records.
4. When informed of a violent or potentially unsafe circumstance in the workplace, immediately report to Executive Director and initiate an investigation.

*Health, Wellness & Safety Committee:*

1. Assist in the annual review of the Workplace Violence Prevention.
2. Review all incidents of violence or potential violence and assist in investigation as appropriate.

<b>VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY</b>  <b>HEALTH, WELLNESS &amp; SAFETY COMMITTEE</b>  <b>POLICIES &amp; PROCEDURES</b>	POLICY TITLE: <b>Violence in the Workplace - Locations with Only One Exit</b>		
	EMPLOYEE GROUP:	<b>ALL PERSONNEL</b>	
	POLICY DATE: REVISION DATE: September 22, 2009		PAGE: 1 of 1

**RISKS IDENTIFIED:**

Employees may be required to perform work in areas where there is only one exit (*i.e. one door*).

**PROCEDURE:**

1. In case of emergency (*i.e. act of aggression by resident*), employees should not hesitate to get out of the area by whatever means possible and contact 911 immediately to ask for assistance.
2. Any threats toward a worker will be taken seriously and every attempt will be made by the worker to distance themselves from that threat.
3. Any new workers will be orientated on how to properly use the intercom system.
4. A *Critical Incident Report* must be completed as soon as possible following any acts of aggression and/or threats towards an employee.

<b>VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY</b>  <b>HEALTH, WELLNESS &amp; SAFETY COMMITTEE</b>  <b>POLICIES &amp; PROCEDURES</b>	POLICY TITLE: <b>Violence in the Workplace – Office Safety</b>		
	EMPLOYEE GROUP:	<b>ALL PERSONNEL</b>	
	POLICY REVISION DATE: October 20, 2009		PAGE: 1 of 1

### **RISKS IDENTIFIED:**

Employees may be exposed to the threat of violence while working at or visiting the office. Contributing factors are:

- ✓ Threatening individuals
- ✓ Parking at a distance
- ✓ Leaving alone from office
- ✓ Poor lighting

### **PROCEDURE:**

#### *Management:*

1. Will ensure adequate lighting is maintained around office.
2. Provide employees with training concerning their personal safety in and around the office.
3. Provide safety equipment where necessary (i.e. personal alarm).

#### *All Employees Arrival:*

1. Scan the parking area for suspicious persons prior to leaving vehicle. Have a back up plan ready.
2. Ensure vehicle is locked with windows rolled up while it is unattended.
3. Before exiting vehicle, have everything you need on the front seat to enable you to exit vehicle promptly.
4. Have key ready for entry into building.

#### *All Employees Departure:*

1. Prepare to leave office with everything you need, including office and car keys (as appropriate).
2. Have car key ready for immediate entry to vehicle.
3. Set any alarm systems and depart quickly. *(As Appropriate)*
4. Scan area for possible problems while maintaining a back up plan should you need it.
5. Once in vehicle, ensure all doors are locked and windows closed.

<b>VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY</b>  <b>HEALTH, WELLNESS &amp; SAFETY COMMITTEE</b>  <b>POLICIES &amp; PROCEDURES</b>	<b>POLICY TITLE: Violence in the Workplace – Working Alone – Travelling Away From Office</b>	
	<b>EMPLOYEE GROUP:</b>	<b>ALL PERSONNEL</b>
	<b>POLICY REVISION DATE: November 17, 2009</b>	<b>PAGE: 1 of 2</b>

**RISKS IDENTIFIED:** Employees whose work requires them to travel away from the office alone for extended periods of time may be exposed to danger (i.e. Threats of violence, vehicle accident).

### **PROCEDURE:**

When travelling out of the office to meet with a client in a perceived high risk or unknown situation, the employee will notify a main contact person and inform them of the following details:

- Destination
- Estimated time of arrival
- Return time or date
- Contact information
- Mode of travel (public transit, car, plane, etc.) and,
- Alternate plans in the event of bad weather, traffic problems, etc.

#### *Employee will also:*

- Arrange to meet clients in 'safe' environment, ensuring that any possible offender(s) are not present.
- Wear comfortable, professional clothing and practical shoes which will enable them to leave quickly if necessary.
- Always wear or carry identification (i.e. business card). It will show that they are acting in an official capacity and that they are an employee doing their job.
- Carry only what is necessary. Large or numerous bags or cases are cumbersome.
- Always take their cell phone with them and keep it in a place that they can access it quickly, and will check in with designated contact persons according to their call-in schedule.
- Avoid having new work contacts walk them to their car.
- Be alert and make mental notes of their surroundings when they arrive at a new place.
- Maintain a 'reactionary gap' between themselves and the client (*e.g. out of reach of the average person's kicking distance*). Increase the gap by sitting across from each other at a table, if possible.
- If they are referring to written material, bring two copies so that they can sit across from the client, not beside.
- Ask the client to come and meet them at the office if something makes them feel uneasy (*a "gut feeling"*). Tell their Program Manager and/or Supervisor regarding any feelings of discomfort or apprehension about an up-coming meeting.
- Keep records and indicate if the client, or someone close to the client, is known to be aggressive, hostile or potentially violent, noting any incidents that make them feel apprehensive.

## 20A

<b>VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY</b>  <b>HEALTH, WELLNESS &amp; SAFETY COMMITTEE</b>  <b>POLICIES &amp; PROCEDURES</b>	POLICY TITLE: <b>Violence in the Workplace – Working Alone – Travelling Away From Office</b>	
	EMPLOYEE GROUP:	<b>ALL PERSONNEL</b>
	POLICY REVISION DATE: November 17, 2009	PAGE: 2 of 2

*Employee will NOT:*

- Enter any situation or location where they feel threatened or unsafe.
- Carry weapons of any type, including pepper spray. Weapons can easily be used against them.

*Program Manager will:*

- Identify a contact at the office.
- Define under what circumstances the lone employee will check in and how often.
- Stick to the visual check or call-in schedule. There will be a written log of contact.
- Pick out a code word to be used to identify or confirm that help is needed.
- Develop an emergency action plan to be followed if the lone employee does not check in when she is supposed to.

<b>VERNON WOMEN'S TRANSITION HOUSE SOCIETY  HEALTH, WELLNESS &amp; SAFETY COMMITTEE POLICIES &amp; PROCEDURES</b>	POLICY TITLE: <b>Cell Phone Use - Safety</b>		
	EMPLOYEE GROUP:	<b>ALL PERSONNEL</b>	
	POLICY DATE: <b>September 19, 2007</b> REVISION DATE:		PAGE: 1 of 1

**POLICY: Employees must not conduct VWTHS business on a cellular phone while in the operation of a motor vehicle.**

**PROCEDURE:**

An employee who receives a call on their cellular phone while conducting business for VWTHS must:

- ▶ Pull over and stop before answering the call.
- Or
- ▶ Let the call be answered by voice mail and return the call as soon as they have stopped the vehicle.