



Nova Scotia Society for the Prevention of Cruelty

Occupation Health & Safety Manual

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OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

The Nova Scotia SPCA (NS SPCA) is committed to providing a pro-active occupational health and safety program.

The purpose of the program is to prevent injury, illness and property damage and promote the health, safety and well-being of all employees and volunteers. The NS SPCA recognizes the importance of maintaining an environment that protects individual safety and well-being.

Maintaining this commitment requires full participation from all employees and volunteers and the NS SPCA recognizes its responsibility as a community volunteer agency to ensure the health and safety of every employee and volunteer. All employees and volunteers will be expected to carry out their duties in a safe manner.

The Health and Safety Program supports a forum for the cooperative identification, evaluation and control of health and safety hazards in the NS SPCA environment. Health and safety representatives will be established, supported and maintained indefinitely at all worksites. They shall be consulted on matters of health and safety and shall act as the local advocate for safety and injury prevention.

Safety program measures will be incorporated in all NS SPCA operational, instructional and administrative policies and documents. These measures will be created to support the program and provide instruction and guidance to all members.

NS SPCA management and site safety representatives will coordinate the establishment of a health and safety program to be applied at all levels within the NS SPCA community. The health, safety and wellbeing of all employees and volunteers is of utmost importance to sustaining the mission of the NS SPCA.

SAFETY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

General: Management Statement

The management of the NS SPCA is committed to ensure that every worker/volunteer of the NS SPCA is aware of their rights regarding health and safety and that these rights are integral to the task of conducting business at the NS SPCA.

All employees/volunteers of the NS SPCA:

- Are entitled to a safe worksite and harm-free work environment.
- Have the responsibility to take reasonable care in the performance of their job to protect themselves, their coworkers and the public from illness or harm.
- Have the right to be trained for the job they are expected to do, so they do not pose a threat to themselves or others.
- Have the right to the proper materials, tools and equipment to complete their tasks correctly and safely as well as access to all information regarding possible hazards and all safe working procedures and processes.
- Have the **right and the responsibility** to refuse unsafe work, if a worker suspects a (reasonable) hazard exists, to immediately report hazards and unsafe conditions or behavior on the worksite.
- Have the right to provide input in to the decision-making process regarding safety through their safety representative.

Roles and Responsibilities

While the NS SPCA will make every reasonable effort to ensure workplace safety, the decision to work safely or unsafely lies with the individual. Many factors can influence this decision: fatigue, attitude, distraction, urgency, negligence, improper training and inexperience, to name a few. We have a responsibility to ourselves, to our fellow workers, our families and the public to be alert, to act in a manner appropriate to the task we are undertaking, and to recognize, avoid and report hazards. 'Due diligence' is a term widely used to describe the reasonable efforts of an employer to protect workers from injury or illness. The roles and responsibilities at the NS SPCA are defined below:

Management will develop the safety program and communicate it to all employees and volunteers; monitor performance and compliance; implement written rules, both general and specific and have clearly defined safe work procedures and procedures.

Shelter Leads/Coordinators will see that work is planned and carried out in accordance with established safe work procedures; assign tasks and oversee their execution. They are responsible for ensuring that employees/volunteers receive an OH&S orientation, on-the-job training and complete an OH&S Employee and Volunteer Checklist in a timely manner (Appendix "A" and "B"). Shelter Leads/Coordinators must correct unsafe conditions, actions and behavior.

Employees/volunteers are responsible to work in a safe manner; to protect and respect themselves, their colleagues, property and the environment; to identify and report potentially hazardous conditions and acts, and refuse to carry out unsafe work

Volunteers and Students fulfilling various employment related requirements are considered workers under the act and will be afforded the same rights and be required to assume the same responsibilities as employees at the NS SPCA.

Contractors must comply with Nova Scotia OH&S regulations in the protection of their own workers and worksite, and work collaboratively with the NS SPCA to ensure that the project poses no threat to the environment or to the general public.

Joint OH&S Committee/Representatives are responsible for the stewardship of the formal Health and Safety Program, the annual review of the program and provide necessary advice and consultation to the NS SPCA on behalf of the workers. All members of the Health & Safety Committees/Representatives will endeavor to always lead by example and use best practices while performing the tasks necessary in their respective positions.

Commitment to Safety

Management of the NS SPCA is committed to providing a safe and healthy work environment for our employees/volunteers. To this end, the NS SPCA has developed safety policies, standards and procedures to guide the activities and behavior of employees and associates who are conducting business for, or with, the NS SPCA.

The Occupational Health & Safety Program manual will be accessible at every Shelter and workplace and all employees/volunteers must familiarize themselves with its content. No unsafe act will be encouraged or accepted by the NS SPCA, whose commitment to excellence is reflected in its quality people and service.

The information found in the Occupational Health & Safety Program will be current and appropriate to the NS SPCA's operations. While management is committed to providing a safe work environment, all employees/volunteers are expected to assume responsibility for his or her actions while representing the NS SPCA, and to be informed of the safety expectations in the workplace.

The NS SPCA is committed to operating practices that protect the well-being of personnel, equipment, facilities, property and the general public, and which comply with the general and environmental legislation by which the institution is bound.

Damage caused by the conduct of the NS SPCA business will be corrected quickly and efficiently. The NS SPCA does not condone the theft or destruction of property by an employee or agent. Employees and associates are encouraged to proactively seek ways to improve business practices and operating procedures, and to further minimize the risk of loss.

A safety program is good business practice. Accidents are wasted financial and human resources. Recognizing the need for efficient and productive business operations, the NS SPCA will communicate and enforce the policies it has adopted. The avoidance of loss, damage, illness and injury improves employee morale and client confidence.

The NS SPCA's Health & Safety Representatives will assume stewardship of the manual, make recommendations regarding policy change, and conduct an annual review of the program.

Periodic Review of the Occupational Health & Safety Program

The Occupational Health and Safety Program of the NS SPCA will be reviewed on an annual basis. The evaluation will be undertaken to ensure the program is being utilized and is effective. The review will involve input from the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Chief Provincial Investigator (CPI), Provincial Animal Care Director, Shelter Leads/Coordinators, and OH&S Representatives. The results of the review will be made available to all shelter employees and volunteers. A record of the review will be kept.

Joint Health and Safety Committee/Representatives

The committee is composed of senior management and a representative selection of employees from each shelter across the province. Generally, the Committee and Employee Representatives, through regular work site inspections make recommendations in regard to work site safety and to generally lead the process of continuous improvement in the field of health and safety. JOHSC meetings should occur each month with NS SPCA Provincial Office Senior Staff, Shelter Leads/Coordinators and Shelter safety representatives in attendance.

Role of the Shelter lead/Coordinators is to:

- Identify situations that may be unhealthy or unsafe for employees/volunteers and advise on effective systems for responding to those situations;
- To consider, and expeditiously deal with, complaints related to the health and safety of all workers;
- To consult with staff on issues related to the occupational health and safety and the occupational environment of staff/volunteers;

- To make recommendations for the improvement of the occupational health and safety and occupational environment of staff/volunteers;
- To advise senior management, and/or the appropriate supervisor on programs and policies under the regulations for the workplace and to monitor their effectiveness;
- To ensure that accident investigations and regular inspections are carried out as required by Provincial Health and Safety Regulations.

Role of the Employee Safety Representative is to:

- Participate in safety inspections, accident investigations and safety inquiries;
- Make determinations that structures, equipment, machinery, tools, methods of operation and work practices are in accordance with Occupational Health and Safety Regulations;
- Consider recommendations from the work force with respect to occupational health and safety matters and recommend implementation where warranted;
- Publish results of inspections;
- Maintain current accident/injury/exposure reports, their causes and means of prevention;
- Recommend and follow up on remedial action taken or required as determined by accident investigations and/or safety inspections.
- Hold quarterly Shelter Health and Safety Meetings and record them in the “Shelter Health and Safety Meeting” form (Appendix H)

SAFETY COMMUNICATIONS

General:

Making sure that everyone is informed of hazards that can affect them is important to preventing illness and injury. All members are encouraged to inform their Shelter Lead/Coordinator and Safety Representative of any hazards they become aware of. As well when new or improved methods may improve health and safety you should ensure management and representatives are informed.

Employee:

- Be sure to tell your Shelter Lead/Coordinator or Safety Representative of any hazards or accidents you become aware of.
- If you are aware of a better or safer procedure or method, please share that with your fellow employees.
- Cooperate with all safety and accident prevention activities and make use of forms and checklists as required to record and report events, hazards and inspection findings.

Shelter Lead/Coordinator:

- Establish an open and transparent communications protocol for all employees.
- Encourage prompt reporting of hazards and accidents or injuries.
- Communicate with other Shelter Leads/Coordinators and the Provincial Office on health and safety matters that may affect other shelters, offices or the NS SPCA in general.

Safety Representative:

- Be sure to communicate to team members and others your belief in and dedication to health and safety and set a good example.

New Worker / Volunteer Worker Orientation

General

The NS SPCA is aware that commencing a new job or returning to a job after a lengthy absence can be overwhelming at times. The NS SPCA recognizes the need for job and task specific instruction prior to commencing work at a new job.

**Note* If an employee has been absent from work for a period of time and operations, procedures, processes or the environment has changed the employee will also be considered a "new employee" under the regulation definition.*

Orientation

Processes

The responsibility of orienting a new employee, previously absent employee or a volunteer worker will fall upon the local Shelter Lead/Coordinator, Safety Representative or appropriately trained senior staff member. All orientation processes shall include but not be restricted to the following content:

- The name and contact information for the new employee or volunteer's supervisor.
- Safety contacts including the local Safety Representative.
- The NS SPCA's and New Employee's or Volunteers' Rights and Responsibilities under the *Occupational Health & Safety Act* and this program including the reporting of unsafe conditions and the right to refuse to perform unsafe work.
- Site specific hazards to which the new employee or volunteer may be exposed, including risks from job hazards, dog bites, chemical burns or confrontation. The supervisor or designate will advise the employee/volunteer of all appropriate means and procedures for the avoidance of violence.
- The location of the MSDS and all WHMIS procedures applicable to the employee's/volunteers job and duties. It will be the Shelter Lead/Coordinator's or Safety Representative's duty to enroll the employee/volunteer in a WHMIS, workshop if necessary.
- The new employee/volunteer will be advised of all written safe work procedures for performing the job specific tasks and the employee's appropriate standard operating procedures for his or her job.
- The procedures to follow when working alone or in isolation.
- The location of first aid facilities, how to summon first aid, how to report and the appropriate documentation.
- All emergency procedures including but not restricted to fire procedures, exits, muster areas and notification procedures.
- The items outlined above, and the process used needs to be documented and copies of all documentation kept in the employees/volunteers designated Health & Safety file.
- Employee and Volunteer Checklists for new employee and volunteer worker orientations are attached as an Appendix "A" and "B" at the end of this document. The appropriate worker and volunteer checklists must be completed at the time of the orientation and held on file. Role specific training in regard to animal handling, restraint and aggressive dogs may need to be scheduled separately.

Incident Investigations Responsibilities and Process

Workplace Incidents

The following actions are to be taken at the onset of a “minor” incident:

- The employee or volunteer should seek immediate medical first aid and if required go to a local walk in clinic or hospital for further treatment.
- All workplace incidents will require the employee or volunteer to fill out a “Incident Report Form” (Appendix “C”) as well as a Task Analysis form (Appendix “D”) if the employee and safety representative believe that a work specific task needs to be modified to ensure continued staff safety. The employee must provide full and accurate details of the accident.
- The incident should be reported as soon as possible to the Shelter Lead/Coordinator, member of the shelter’s Health and Safety Committee/Safety Representative and/or another senior staff member.
- A copy of the incident report should be faxed or emailed within 24 hours to the NS SPCA Chief Provincial Investigator (CPI).
- If an injury requires medical attention and/or time loss at work, employee’s must complete a WCB Injury Report form (Appendix “E”). The WCB Injury Report Form MUST be completed within 5 business days of the incident.

The following actions are to be taken at the onset of a “significant or severe” incident:

In the case of a severe injury, the employee should seek immediately medical treatment or contact 911 if necessary. The employee (or someone on their behalf if they are unable to do so themselves) should then immediately contact the Shelter Lead/Coordinator to notify them of the injury.

The Shelter Lead/Coordinator will notify the CPI and the Provincial Animal Care Director that a severe injury has occurred. The shelter Lead/Coordinator or other senior staff should ensure that the no other employees works on that item, handles an animal or works in the area where the injury occurred until a safe environment is ascertained. If there is any doubt or a refusal to work exists, no other employees may perform that job until an all clear has been given or the problem resolved.

If the injury is deemed “severe” the CPI will be responsible for conducting an accident investigation with assistance from:

- Provincial Animal Care Director
- The Shelter Lead/Coordinator where the investigation is at a shelter.
- The local Safety Representative.
- The employee involved in the accident.

The CPI will seek witnesses and interview them gaining all appropriate facts relevant to the incident. The Team will review work procedures including animal assessments for consistency ensuring whether appropriate procedures were followed. The CPI will determine if the incident is one which is reportable to the Occupational Health and Safety Division of the Nova Scotia Department of Labour and Workforce Development.

Any fire or accident that causes severe bodily injury to an employee is required to be reported to the Department of Labour within 24 hours. In the event of injury, a report must also be made to the Workers Compensation Board, pursuant to the Workers’ Compensation Act as well.

A copy of this report to the Department of Labour is deemed as a sufficient notice of an injurious occurrence report.

The Investigator will conclude the investigation with the completion of a written report submitted to the CEO of the NS SPCA. Equipment or procedures will be corrected as the investigation findings may determine. All investigations must be concluded within 24 hours if possible.

Follow Up

Corrective & preventative actions determined by the CPI must be implemented in a timely manner. Timeliness is important to prevent a reoccurrence of the incident. Senior Management will follow up with those responsible to ensure corrective actions have been implemented and are effective. In all cases the Shelter Leads/Coordinators will respond to the CPI within 72 hours of the receipt of the Accident Investigation Report as to timeliness of completion of any procedural or equipment changes.

Worker's initial actions and responsibilities

- Report unsafe work conditions.
- Immediately notify the proper senior staff of any work injuries.
- If required, provide WCB with full, accurate and timely information.
- Actively participate in Return to Work (RTW) programs recommended by medical professionals.
- Notify WCB immediately of any changes that may affect a claim or return to work.
- Stay in regular and frequent contact with employer.

Employer's initial actions and responsibilities

- Ensure proper first aid.
- Ensure that WCB form is sent in if required.
- Should maintain regular contact with the injured worker if they experience time loss from work.
- If the employee is receiving treatment, the employer should be communicating with the return to work (RTW) point person.
- The employee should be offered transitional duties or other suitable tasks that are meaningful and productive.

Reporting

- Investigations for minor Incidents / injuries / near miss incidents will be documented in an Incident Report Form and kept on file. A copy must also be sent to the CPI to be kept on file at the Provincial Office. There is no requirement for these reports to be posted however they will be made available for review upon request.
- A copy of the investigation for severe incidents/injuries will be conducted by the CPI within 24 hours of the injury and will be sent to the Occupational Health and Safety Division of the Nova Scotia Department of Labour and Workforce Development only after review by the CEO of the NS SPCA.
- In the case of a fatality, the CPI will report this incident to the Department of Labour immediately.

Regular Worksite Inspections – Policy/Procedure

Policy

Workplace inspections are to take place once every 3 months. Inspections will be completed by the following:

- Provincial Office – Safety Representative and CPI
- Shelters – Safety Representative

Procedure

- Workplace inspections will be conducted on a quarterly basis by the applicable personnel using the “Building Health & Safety Assessment” inspection checklist. (Appendix “F”).
- A tentative schedule for workplace inspections should be developed by the CPI and Shelter Lead/Coordinators and posted by the Safety Representative at the beginning of each calendar year.
- Workplace inspections will be done by the Shelters Safety Representative.
- The Shelter Lead/Coordinators shall review and record recommendations and assign responsibility for corrective actions.
- Copies of the Workplace Inspections will be sent to the CPI, Provincial Animal Care Director and CEO.
- If deficiencies are noted, within one week of the report, the Shelter Lead/Coordinator will report to the CPI, Provincial Animal Care Director and Safety Representative the following information:
 - The action taken or planned to be taken.
 - The approximate completion dates.
 - The person responsible for implementing the action.
- Subsequent workplace inspections will review the items from previous inspections to ensure the remedial actions resolved the concern.

Working Alone or in Isolation

General

Since our business may require employees to work alone and/or travel to isolated areas, a Working Alone or in Isolation policy is necessary. Working alone or in isolation has the same potential hazard. The hazard is the absence of reasonable and timely assistance in the event of a personally hazardous situation or accident.

- Working alone is defined as working in isolation and without an ability to access assistance in the event of an emergency.
- Working alone can also include two employees working at the same time but in different locations of the shelter resulting in an inability to communicate with each other in the event of a personal issue by one of them. Personal issues can include medical emergencies, animal attacks, human attacks or personal injury.
- The civilian public is deemed to be capable of assistance. Therefore, those working within the confines of a populated center are not considered to be working alone.

Operations – Working Alone or in Isolation

Working in the Shelter: Any period greater than 1 hour in isolation is considered contrary to this. Every effort will be made to avoid scheduling employees that results in an employee working alone or in isolation of other employees.

- Within a shelter environment, Employees working within a shelter environment will require that two employee’s working in isolation are required to make contact with each other at least hourly to ensure each other’s safety.

Outside the Shelter: The Safety of our Provincial Special Constables (PSC) is paramount. No PSC should feel obligated to attend to a cruelty complaint or perform any aspect of their position if they feel that their personal safety would be jeopardized.

In order to ensure the safety of our investigators working alone we request that the following procedures be adhered to: Investigative staff are required to attend to investigations in the course of duty. Some investigations can be in very remote areas. Remote is considered as outside of cell phone coverage range or where the distance from civilian population deters the ability of acquiring assistance. Travel in pairs is strongly preferred when reasonably possible.

In addition to the following, all employees are requested to assess their surroundings when working in isolation. Awareness of potential aggressors is important to maintaining a nonviolent workplace or work site. It is impossible to list all signs of potential violence but without understating the importance, if it appears that violence may come to pass

– call the RCMP Dispatch Centre (1-800-272-9670) or 911 without hesitation. It is imperative that no employee knowingly allow themselves to be put in harm's way. This policy ensures that no employee will be disciplined or admonished for reasonable acts that ensure their safety including calling the RCMP.

Any employee initiating travel to a remote area as defined above, shall:

- Review the Complaint Records to determine if the Society has had any previous complaints lodged against this subject or the address where the PSC will be attending. If the subject is flagged as being potentially violent, the PSC must contact the RCMP to advise they will be attending the address and if necessary request their attendance before attending the complaint.
- Ensure their cell phone is charged.
- Carry a cell phone charger with them.
- Advise NS SPCA Provincial Office prior to their trip of the addresses they will be attending in remote areas. The employee will advise the Provincial Office of the anticipated duration of the trip in the remote area. Where the trip exceeds the anticipated duration, the employee must advise every 1 hour until the conclusion of the trip.
- In all cases. Employees will immediately remove themselves from a situation deemed to be potentially hazardous to their personal health. A call to the RCMP is also required if this action is taken.
- Warrants: Prior to executing warrants PSC's must advise the RCMP or local Police Department of the search and determine if there is any information in police records that may be relevant to the investigation. If possible, have a Police Officer attend during the search to keep the peace.
- In all cases, the employee will advise the office after the trip to advise of their safety.

Bringing Animals into the Shelter After Hours

If a PSC or shelter employee is bringing in an animal after hours, they **MUST use the Answer 365 help line**. This is to ensure that while an employee is bringing in an animal that they leave safely and there are no issues.

- When an employee arrives at the shelter, they call the help line at **902-407-0738**
- The employee needs to advise them of the address at the shelter and approximately how long they will be.
- If an employee takes longer than expected, they need to call the help line and let them know.
- When the employee leaves the shelter safely, then need to call the help line again and advise that they have exited the property.
- Employees must remember to call Answer 365 help line back. If not, they will assume something has happened (i.e. dog attack, injury, etc.) and will send help.

Violence in the Workplace

What is workplace violence?

Most people think of violence as a physical assault. However, workplace violence can include abuse, threats, intimidation or assault. Great care must be taken to differentiate between workplace violence and conversations that become heated, horseplay gone wrong and harassment. All may be problematic in their own right but the following will serve as a guide to identifying workplace violence. Workplace violence can occur between employees, volunteers or may involve a customer or visitor to our shelters or other work sites.

- **Threatening behavior** - such as shaking fists, destroying property or throwing objects.
- **Verbal or written threats** - any expression of intent to inflict harm.
- **Harassment** - any behavior that demeans, embarrasses, humiliates, annoys, alarms or verbally abuses a person and that is known or would be expected to be unwelcome. This includes words, gestures, intimidation, bullying, or other inappropriate activities.
- **Verbal abuse** – swearing with the intent of intimidation, insults or condescending language.
- **Physical attacks** - hitting, shoving, pushing or kicking.

Workplace violence is not limited to incidents that occur within a traditional workplace. Work-related violence can occur at off-site business-related functions, at social events related to work, in clients' homes or away from work but resulting from work (a threatening telephone call to your office or home from a client). Workplace violence can also involve attempts to coerce an individual in to an action or conduct that the employee might not otherwise undertake.

Purpose

Our purpose is to prevent the occurrence of violence in the workplace.

- To ensure an understanding by all employees that behaviors that intimidate, threaten, harass, abuse, injure or otherwise victimize employees will not be tolerated.
- To recognize that incidents of workplace violence may occur between fellow employees, between employees and volunteers or members of the public, or between employees and supervisors.

Policy

The Senior Management of the NS SPCA recognizes the potential for workplace violence and other aggressive behavior. All employees will be made aware of the risk of violence and ongoing management support for a workplace environment that is free from violence. Appropriate steps will be taken to protect all employees from the risks associated with workplace violence and a commitment will be made to provide our employees with protection from the risks associated with workplace violence. Any act of violence committed by or against any employee will not be tolerated. Employees cannot be penalized, reprimanded or in any way criticized when acting in good faith while following the procedures set forth for addressing situations of workplace violence.

Management will:

- Ensure that every incident of workplace violence is reported, investigated, and documented and that the document is retained for two years.
- Ensure that employees receive training in recognizing and responding to situations involving workplace violence.
- The "Workplace Hazards Violence Risk Assessment Form" (Appendix "E") should be reviewed annually at every shelter by a JOHSC member to ensure that conditions in the workplace have not changed. This assessment should be reviewed by the JOHSC and any problems or gaps should be resolved in a timely manner.
- An employer must consult with the JOHSC committee established at the workplace when conducting a violence risk assessment and must provide the committee with a copy of the written report of the assessment

Employees will:

- Become familiar with and follow the procedures that are in place to protect them from workplace violence.
- Report all known or observed incidents of workplace violence immediately to their supervisor and the Human Resources Department.
- The NS SPCA will ensure that employees are instructed on:
 - How to recognize workplace violence.
 - Appropriate responses to work site violence such as how to obtain assistance including counseling or a health professional of their choice.
 - Procedures for reporting, investigating, and documenting work site violence.
- Will complete an online workplace violence prevention training program called “Awareness on Violence in the Workplace” as part of their employee orientation. This course is offered by the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety and will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. It can be found at: http://www.ccohs.ca/products/courses/prevent_violence/
 - Topics Include: What is workplace violence?
 - Behaviors associated with workplace violence
 - Sources of violent behavior in the workplace
 - Workplace violence prevention legislation

Customer Based Workplace Violence

Customer based violence may be inadvertently initiated through our own actions that serve to cause frustration to the customer. Customer violence may be initiated through the customer’s own unprovoked actions.

Emotions can be inherent in our business due to our affinity for our companion animals. It is therefore important to remember that emotions play a role in influencing how we address others when dealing with animals. In other words, we could cause the problem.

What NS SPCA Employees Can Do to Prevent Customer Based Violence

- Commit to people. Demonstrations of friendliness and empathy go a long way to undermining anger. Smile.
- Recognition – acknowledge customer’s presence as they approach you. Signs of indifference have the potential to cause frustration that left unresolved, could lead to anger.
- Listen to the client – repeat back what the client is saying to ensure a common understanding
- Review resources – know your options. Review them with your Branch Manager to determine the viability of each.
- Be mindful of the ‘message you send’. More than 90% of the message you send is nonverbal. Body language and tone make up 93% of your total message.
- Ask your Branch Manager for assistance as may be required. Responding with “I don’t know’ or ‘that’s our policy’ can serve to frustrate and initiate anger. Advise the client you will attempt to get an answer to their concern.
- Blame or assigning fault – empathize with customers but assigning fault or blaming without full facts can serve to frustrate and initiate anger.
- Moving to a private office can serve to defuse anger. It has the potential to focus an employee’s attention on the customer thereby giving the customer added feelings of wellness.
- Ask for a break if the tensions build and tempers flare. A break to see your manager may serve to lessen anger.

What to Do If the Customer is Unreasonable or May Become Violent

In spite of our best efforts to defuse the situation, customers may not respond to any of our efforts to assist, accommodate or explain. Extreme anger and/or violence may result. Assessment of the situation is a personal responsibility. All employees are urged to use their powers of observation in assessing the situation.

How to tell if extreme anger that could result in violence. It is important to understand, that any of the following can be a leading indicator. More than one sign are a signal that violence may be imminent:

- Changes in facial expression including turning red
- Direct threats including verbal threats
- Sudden physical movements towards you
- Previous history of threats from this person.
- Suspected intoxication or 'under the influence'.
- Extreme yelling or gestures where the customer has appeared to have lost self-control. Can include extreme arm waving, pounding their fist on the counter top or screaming.
- Absolute refusals to listen
- Racist or other discriminatory comments

How to Respond to Potential Acts of Violence

Even before concluding that violence is imminent, if it appears no resolution is forthcoming with the customer, call the Shelter Lead/Coordinator or other senior NS SPCA staff immediately for assistance.

If the Shelter Lead/Coordinator or another employee who can assist is unavailable, calmly excuse yourself and call 911 for emergency assistance. Please be clear on the telephone: 'This is an emergency. There is a person in my lobby who I feel is about to become violent'. Give your name, address and state you are with the NS SPCA. Emergency help will be dispatched quickly.

At all shelters, there is a panic button located at the front desk reception area. If an employee feels threatened by a member of the public, they should push the button. This is a direct line to the Regional Police who will come immediately to assist.

Under no circumstances should you place yourself in any danger or attempt to remove a customer from our premises.

Further, if a customer is potentially violent and demonstrates an intention to steal money, take an animal or destroy furniture or equipment – allow them to proceed. Your personal safety is more important. Call the Police!

If the violence is directed at you, attempt to move to a safe area and lock the door. Direct that someone call the Police immediately.

Getting Descriptions for the Police

Every effort should be undertaken to get as many descriptors of the individual as possible. However, further anger can be generated if you appear to be gathering evidence. To gather evidence on the individual, please do so calmly without direct eye contact. Direct eye contact may serve to bring on further anger. Descriptors that would be helpful include:

- Approximate Height and weight
- Gender
- Color of Skin
- Color of Hair and Eyes
- Clothing worn including hats, jackets, identifiable features on the clothing such as name of a sport team, musical band, etc.
- Scars or other identifiable traits including speech patterns, gestures or teeth (example: missing front teeth)
- Vehicle color, make, model, license number if you can get it

Under no circumstances will an employee attempt to follow or chase a vehicle.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS AND SUBSTANCES

General

It is the policy of the NS SPCA to promote and sustain the efficient application of a Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) program. This ensures that all employees and volunteers who handle products that could be harmful to their health receive comprehensive knowledge of and protection for the usage of these products.

Shelter Leads/Coordinators, Shelter Safety Representatives and senior staff will ensure that all employees and volunteers working with or in close proximity to controlled substances and/or hazardous substances in the workplace receive WHMIS training. Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) will be available for all hazardous materials used or stored in the workplace. It is also imperative that WHMIS within the workplace be reviewed annually by the Shelter's Safety Representative to ensure the training given is still relevant and that all MSDS

WHMIS 2015 for Workers free certificate course: http://www.ccohs.ca/catalog/courses_list_nova.php

Handling & Disposing of Needles

Never place loose needles and other sharps in public trash cans or recycling bins, and never flush them down the toilet!

This puts trash and sewage workers, janitors, housekeepers, and the public at risk of being harmed.

When handling needles/sharps always be sure to use caution to prevent injury to yourself and others. Needles should never be bent, broken, cut, sheared or otherwise manipulated before recapping and placing it directly in the sharps container.

Needles and any other biohazard material (animal blood and/or waste) is to be disposed of in the appropriate Stericycle sharps containers after one-time use. Syringes may be disconnected from the needle and disposed of in regular trash as long as they were not used for any biohazard materials.

The “one-handed scoop” method is best to use for recapping and has proven to lessen the chance of injury.

Place the cap on the counter top and “scoop” it up with the needle, keeping your free hand out of the way. With your forefinger and thumb (on the same hand) secure the cap and pull it firmly back onto the needle.



OFFICE AND EMPLOYEE SECURITY

PRIVACY POLICIES

NS SPCA Shelters

NS SPCA Shelters across our province are frequented by thousands of people annually for the purposes of animal surrender, adoptions, visiting or for other personal reasons.

From time to time, visitors to our shelters without our best interests at heart may enter our facilities. This policy is intended to cover those situations. In all cases the safety and wellbeing of staff, volunteers and animals under our care is paramount.

INFORMATION SECURITY

In addition, information security is important. Our ability to manage confidential information in our possession in a safe and confidential manner is necessary not only because of legislative compliance but also because of the potential embarrassment to staff and the NS SPCA in general.

PHYSICAL SECURITY

The following policy will outline the physical security requirements of the NS SPCA Shelters.

VISITOR & CUSTOMER ACCESS TO OUR SITES

All visitors and customers with business at our shelters must enter and exit the building from the main access door located at the front of the building. They must then proceed directly to the main front desk to receive instructions before entering any other area of the building.

- For visitors and customers entering cat adoption rooms, signage will be posted on all cat adoption room doors that indicate that they are entering the room at their own risk and that they must read all signage on a cat kennel before handling the animal.
- For those members of the public who are interested in taking an adoptive dog out for a walk, they must sign and initial the Policy for Dog Walkers, located at the front desk reception. A staff member or trained volunteer will then retrieve the dog from the dog kennel room and bring out to the reception area to be walked by a member of the public.
- Any special conditions or rules associated with dog walking will be conveyed to the member of the public at that time by either a shelter staff member or a trained volunteer.
- Members of the public that are a parent or guardian to a child must ensure the safety of the child at all times and it is their responsibility to ensure that the child is following the instructions on all posted signage in the room and on the kennel doors.
- Visitors and customers are restricted and can only access the front desk reception area, any “meet and greet” rooms (if they exist at a shelter) and all cat adoption rooms unless given specific permission from shelter staff.
- Visitors to the shelter can only access other restricted areas of the shelter if they are invited to do so by a shelter employee and then only under the supervision of shelter staff.

- Customers are not required to obtain a visitor's badge but must enter the premises through the main door only. Those entering by any other door must be confronted immediately and redirected to the main door.
- Customers in any 'out of bounds' restricted areas including animal rooms, staff and admin areas, intake rooms any other critical animal care areas and other areas where either confidential information or cash is kept are to be asked to proceed to the Front Desk immediately and advised of the nature of the violation in a calm, diplomatic manner.

VOLUNTEER IDENTIFICATION BADGES

Volunteers must sign in at the beginning and end of their volunteer shift. For dog and cat care attendants and adoption councilors, their sign in sheet should be kept by the front desk area.

VENDORS OR TRADES-PEOPLE

Vendors or Trades-people entering a shelter must enter and exit the building from the main access door located at the front of the building. They must then proceed directly to the main front desk and identify themselves to shelter staff before entering any restricted areas of the building. All vendors and trades-people must be accompanied by a staff member to access restricted areas of the shelter.

USE OF OFFICES

OFFICES ASSIGNED

Offices are generally assigned to staff in order to protect sensitive data and documents.

- While an office occupant is absent use of that office by other staff or volunteers may be used, but removal of any documents from the workstation area or computers is a breach of security. Intentional or unintentional viewing of sensitive documents in hard copy or electronic formats by unauthorized staff or volunteers is strictly prohibited and can result in volunteer dismissal or staff termination.
- To prevent loss or theft of sensitive data the following procedures must be followed.

ABSENCE OF REGULAR OCCUPANT

The use of an office in the absence of the regular occupant is generally acceptable if the following procedure is followed:

- The usual occupant gives explicit verbal or written permission to either staff or volunteers to use the workspace area and computer
- In no case can someone using an office on a temporary basis access any files not specifically authorized nor can this individual download any software through the internet or upload any software/hardware on to the computer without permission.

ACCESS TO STAFF OFFICES

The staff offices and lunchroom are restricted to staff only or approved volunteers whose volunteer role is administration related. Visitors or customers are not permitted in the staff lunchroom or administration areas unless given permission by shelter staff.

UNAUTHORIZED PERSONS

The presence of unauthorized persons on the premises of any of the NS SPCA Shelters must be reported to Front Desk Reception or Shelter Staff immediately.

- Staff members are asked not to place themselves in any danger or feelings of danger in asking someone to leave a restricted area alone. Where safety concerns exist, ask a fellow staff member to accompany you to ask an unauthorized person to leave the area. If they refuse, contact 911 or push the panic button at the front desk. If this occurs, notify Shelter Lead/Coordinator or other senior NS SPCA staff immediately.

HANDLING OF AGGRESSIVE ANIMALS

Shelters within the NS SPCA may also deal with animals that have a history of behavioral issues from abuse or lack of socialization, including aggression.

For all safe animal handling procedures, please see the NS SPCA's "Behavior" policy and procedure manual.

OH&S APPENDIX

Appendix A – OH&S Employee Training Checklist

Appendix B – OH&S Volunteer Training Checklist

Appendix C – Incident Report Form

Appendix D – Task Analysis Form

Appendix E – Go to [https://www.wcb.ns.ca/Portals/wcb/Injury_Report_July_2011_editable1%20\(1\).pdf](https://www.wcb.ns.ca/Portals/wcb/Injury_Report_July_2011_editable1%20(1).pdf)

Appendix F – Building Health & Safety Assessment

Appendix G – Workplace Violence Risk Assessment Form

Appendix H - Shelter Health and Safety Meeting Record



OH&S Employee Training Checklist

Employee Name: _____ Shelter: _____

Have you been shown or received training on the following?	Yes	No	Date	Trainer's Name (If Applicable) Please Print	Employee Initial
Read the NS SPCA OH&S Manual					
Do you have a current WHMIS certificate?					
Do you have a Current First Aid Certificate?					
Have you completed the online Awareness on Violence in the Workplace course?					
Location of Emergency Exits					
Location of Fire Extinguishers					
Location of First Aid Kit and First Aid Attendant (List of people trained in First Aid in the building)					
Met or told who the shelter's Safety Representative is.					
Location of WCB, Incident report and Task Analysis forms if an injury occurs					
Location of Safety Committee Minutes and OH&S Board					
Introduction to all Chemicals, Safe Handling Procedures and Eye Wash station, including MSDA binder					
Knowledge of right to refuse work reasonably felt to be unsafe					
Location & Requirement to wear PPE (Personal Protection Equipment) as may be required for the job.					
Location of all shelter workplace procedures (shelter policy & procedure manuals).					
Right to participate in accident investigation when you are involved.					
Right to provide input to Safety Committee meetings including reporting unsafe work or action.					
Obligation to Report a Personal Work-Related Accident.					



OH&S Volunteer Training Checklist

Employee Name: _____ Shelter: _____

Have you been shown or received training on the following?	Yes	No	Date	Trainer's Name (If Applicable) Please Print	Employee Initial
Read the NS SPCA OH&S Manual					
Do you have a current WHMIS certificate?					
Current First Aid Certificate?					
Have you completed the online "Awareness on Violence in the Workplace" course?					
Location of Emergency Exits					
Location of Fire Extinguishers					
Location of First Aid Kit and First Aid Attendant (List of people trained in First Aid in the building)					
Met or told who the shelter's Safety Representative is.					
Location of Incident report form if an injury occurs					
Location of Safety Committee Minutes and OH&S Board					
Introduction to all Chemicals, Safe Handling Procedures and Eye Wash station, including MSDA binder					
Location & Requirement to wear PPE (Personal Protection Equipment) as may be required.					
Location of all shelter workplace procedures (shelter policy & procedure manuals).					

INCIDENT REPORT

For Internal Use

This form must be completed within 24 hours of the Supervisor learning of the incident

☐ Injury: ☐ First Aid ☐ Medical Aid		☐ No Injury		☐ Hazardous Situation	
THIS SECTION TO BE COMPLETED BY THE EMPLOYEE					
Who was hurt? ☐ Employee ☐ Visitor ☐ Volunteer ☐ Other	Last name:		First Name:		Phone or Extension:
	Job Title:		Department:		Supervisor:
	Date & Time of Incident:		Date Reported:		Type of Incident: ☐ Slip*, trip or fall ☐ Struck by / against object ☐ Handling an animal ☐ Repetitive strain ☐ Electrical contact ☐ Exposure to hazardous material ☐ Other (describe)
Description of Incident:					
*If this was a SLIP, describe footwear:					
Witnesses to the incident: (names and phone numbers)					
What was the injury (indicate what part of the body):					
Did you see a medical professional? ☐ Yes ☐ No If YES, please provide name, address and phone number:			Treatment of Injury: ☐ First Aid ☐ Walk-in Clinic ☐ Family Doctor ☐ Emergency Room ☐ Other (describe) _____		
THIS SECTION TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SUPERVISOR					
Contributing Factors: What conditions contributed to the incident? ☐ Unsafe equipment ☐ Inadequate illumination ☐ Not or improperly guarded ☐ Hazardous environment ☐ Insufficient training ☐ Improper position/posture ☐ Insufficient care ☐ Infraction or unsafe practice ☐ Failure to use PPE ☐ Operating without authority ☐ Insufficient kennel signage ☐ Other (Explain)					
Explanation of contributing factors:					
Details of property damage (if any):					
To your knowledge, has the employee had a previous similar injury or has this similar hazard been reported before? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A					
Corrective Measures: Actions taken to prevent a reoccurrence (more than one item may apply): ☐ Request job safety analysis ☐ On-the-job training ☐ Perform housekeeping ☐ Review PPE ☐ Improve work procedure ☐ Check with manufacturer ☐ Re-training of person(s) ☐ Constructive Discipline ☐ Repair or replace equipment ☐ Install safety guard/device ☐ Reassignment of person ☐ Other (Explain)					
Explanation of corrective measures:					
Signature of Employee Reporting Incident:		Date:	Signature of Supervisor:		Date:



Task Analysis Worksheet

Job / Task to be Analyzed:

Date:

Location / Site:

Completed by:

Basic Job Steps	Potential Significant Hazards	Hazard Control Methods
List the five to ten steps required to complete the job. Make sure you identify the steps in the sequence they are performed.	List the potential SIGNIFICANT hazards beside each step. Focus on what can cause harm and what could go wrong.	List the control methods required to eliminate, isolate or minimize the risk of injury arising from the identified hazard.

To help identify hazards for each step, ask:

- Can any body part get caught in or between objects?
- Can I be struck by or against anything?
- Can I slip, trip or fall?
- Can I strain or sprain a muscle from lifting/pulling/pushing?
- Is there possible exposure to extreme heat or cold?
- Is excessive noise or vibration a problem?
- Is there a danger from falling objects?
- Is lighting a problem?
- Can weather conditions affect safety?
- Can I come in contact with an energy source?
- Can I come in contact with a hazardous substance?
- Are their fumes in the air?



BUILDING HEALTH & SAFETY ASSESSMENT

Inspection date: _____ **Location:** _____ **Inspected by:** _____

Front Desk & General Areas:	Yes	No	Comments/Notes:	Urgent¹ Y/N	Resolved²
Any notable floor hazards?					
Lighting (protective covers on, bulbs working, etc.) working properly?					
Doors/Locks working properly?					
Are walkways free of obstructions?					
Are exits clearly marked?					

Building Emergency Equipment	Yes	No	Comments/Notes:	Urgent Y/N	Resolved
First Aid Kits stocked?					
Emergency Lighting					
Fire Extinguishers up to date?					
Smoke Detectors working?					
Flashlights working?					

Storage Areas	Yes	No	Comments/Notes:	Urgent Y/N	Resolved
Shelves Secure?					
Storage areas are uncluttered & orderly?					

Protection Equipment (is it available for use?)	Yes	No	Comments/Notes:	Urgent Y/N	Resolved
Ear protection					
Respiratory masks					
Eye protection					
Eye wash station					
Protective cat gloves					
Catch pole					
Are chemicals properly labelled and stored?					

Washrooms	Yes	No	Comments/Notes:	Urgent Y/N	Resolved
Free from hazards?					

¹ Ask Yourself: Is it in need of immediate resolution? Is it a safety hazard to staff?

² Column is for use of Provincial Office Staff

Staff Lunch Room	Yes	No	Comments/Notes:	Urgent Y/N	Resolved
Free from hazards?					

Building Maintenance	Yes	No	Comments/Notes:	Urgent Y/N	Resolved
Well Water Quality tested yearly?					
HVAC System Maintenance completed annually?					
Electrical safety concerns?					
Cords are CSA approved? Surge protection for computers in good order?					
Utility/Furnace room free of clutter?					
Are ladders in good working condition? CSA approved?					

Garages/Sheds	Yes	No	Comments/Notes:	Urgent Y/N	Resolved
Garage/Shed doors clear of obstructions?					
Items stored in a safe manner, in proper containers?					
Shelves safe and secure?					

Exterior Building	Yes	No	Comments/Notes:	Urgent Y/N	Resolved
Grounds/walkways clear of obstructions?					
Parking lot/driveway clear?					
Exterior lighting working properly?					
Snow and ice control being used?					

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS/NOTES:

Inspector's Signature

Date



Workplace Violence/Hazard Work Assessment Form

Date: _____ Location: _____

Safety Representative: _____

Parking Lot & Outside Perimeter of the building (Please check box)	Yes	No
Are the entrances and exits well marked?		
Is there enough lighting?		
Are company vehicles parked on-site after hours?		
Have vehicles been stolen from the parking lot?		
Have vehicles been broken into?		
Are you isolated from other buildings?		
Is your building located in a high crime area or near any businesses that are at risk from violent crime (bars, bank, etc)?		
Do violent, criminal, drunk or drugged persons ever come into your building?		
Is the buildings entrance well lit?		
Is there an alarm system for your building that would alert if an intruder has entered?		
Are office designed so that public and private spaces are clearly identified?		

Security System (Please check box)	Yes	No
Do you have a security system at your location?		
Is the security system adequate?		
Are signs posted indicating that there is a security system in use?		
If yes , is the system tested on a regular basis (e.g., at least every 3 months)?		

Reception Area (Please check box)	Yes	No
Is your front desk/reception area easily seen and easy to get to?		
Are front desk/offices designed so that public and private spaces are clearly identified?		
Can the receptionist/sales clerk clearly see incoming visitors/customers?		
Is your reception area staffed at all times when open to the public?		
Is furniture arranged for a quick exit or to maintain a distance between employees and members of the public if necessary? (approximately 6 feet)		
Is there an emergency call/panic button at the reception area?		
Do you periodically check that the alarms and panic buttons are functioning?		
Are there objects/tools/equipment in this area that someone could use as a weapon?		
Are visitor areas and private areas clearly marked?		
Are there exit signs?		
Are the hours of operation clearly posted?		
Can outsiders enter the building when there is no receptionist present?		

Building Exits and Lights	Yes	No
Are there areas where lighting is a concern?		
Are all lights in good working order?		
Is there more than one exit route from the building?		
Are there small areas where someone can hide (unlocked storage areas, etc.)		
At the time of inspection, did any areas feel isolated?		
In these areas, how far away is the nearest person who could hear calls for help? _____		
Is it easy to predict when people will be around?		
Are certain employees at higher risk from workplace violence because of the building layout?		

Emergency Assistance	Yes	No
Has emergency contact information been established for daytime use?		
Has emergency contact information been established for nighttime use?		
Are emergency numbers posted on or besides all phones?		



Nova Scotia SPCA
Shelter Health and Safety Meeting Record
(Use this form to record what has been discussed at your regular health and safety meetings)

Date: _____ **Shelter:** _____

Staff Present: -

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Safety Topics Discussed:

Type of Hazard	Recommended Corrective Action	Person Responsible	Date Remedied

Other Concerns or Safety Topics discussed:

Date of Next Scheduled Meeting: _____