

## Taking the Work Out of Bill 168

### Key Tasks to Complete Before June 15th

At first glance, implementing Bill 168 in the workplace may seem like an overwhelming task. When you break down the duties, however, you will see there is a very commonsense approach for employers to protect their workers from all forms of workplace violence. Below we have outlined the key steps to follow:

#### 1. Conduct a risk assessment:

The legislation requires employers carry out a risk assessment of the workplace. Work with your Joint Health and Safety Committee, managers, employees and other key stakeholders to assess the risks in your workplace and any offsite locations. Simply put, consider what you do, and how you do it, and ask if this can expose any of your employees to the threat of violence.

#### 2. Prepare Your Program:

Following the assessment, the legislation requires that you create a Workplace Violence Prevention Program that addresses both workplace violence and harassment. The program should address:

- How you will control the risks identified during the assessment
- Emergency contact information

- How employees will be able to report incidents or threats in the workplace to an employer or supervisor
- How claims will be investigated
- Details of your training program for employees

#### 3. Post Policies and Conduct

**Training:** Bill 168 requires that written policies for both workplace violence and workplace harassment be posted in the workplace. You are also required to have contact numbers in place for immediate assistance if someone feels they are in a situation of threatened violence. (Please note: If your workplace consists of five or fewer employees, the policies do not have to be posted. This is found in Section 32.01(3) of the legislation).

- #### 4. Training:
- Proper training is essential. A policy and procedure is only as good as the training behind it. Be sure to include an emergency contact list in employee training. Employers should also identify how often instruction or training will take place – For all new hires? On a regular basis? When the policies and procedures change? When new risks become apparent? These are just some of the questions to consider.

- #### 5. Reassess and Monitor:
- In addition to the initial assessment, Bill 168 requires ongoing monitoring and assessment of the risks of violence and harassment. We recommend you establish a protocol for reassessment, perhaps annually.

We can help you through these steps, and are happy to answer any questions you might have. Please contact us for more information.

### Addressing Domestic Violence

Domestic violence is specifically mentioned in Bill 168 as a risk to workplace safety. “Domestic violence may put the targeted worker at risk, and may also pose a threat to co-workers,” says the website for the Ontario Ministry of Labour.

The legislation requires that employers take “reasonable precautions” to protect workers from domestic violence in the workplace. They must also be prepared to investigate any reports by concerned employees who feel that the domestic violence may enter the workplace.