



Date: May 31, 2010

**City Council
Committee Report**

To: Mayor & Council

Fr: Sharen McDowall, Human Resources Manager

Re: City of Kenora Violence in the Workplace Policy

Recommendation:

THAT Council hereby gives three readings to a by-law authorizing the new City of Kenora Health and Safety Violence in the Workplace Policy Statement and the City of Kenora Workplace Harassment Policy Statement.

Background:

Bill 168, which requires employers to develop policies to address workplace violence and harassment and to assess the risk of violence in its workplace, received Royal Assent on December 15, 2009. The amendments to the Occupational Health and Safety Act will therefore come into force on June 15, 2010.

Bill 168 amends the Occupational Health and Safety Act (the "Act") to define "workplace violence" as:

- (a) An attempt to exercise physical force against a worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker,
- (b) A statement or behavior that it is reasonable for a worker to interpret as a threat to exercise physical force against the worker, in a workplace, that could cause physical injury to the worker

Bill 168 also required that an employer have a policy posted in the workplace to assess workplace harassment. The definition of "workplace harassment" is quite broad and includes conduct in the workplace that is known to be unwelcome by the worker.

Bill 168 requires employers to prepare a written policy with respect to workplace violence and workplace harassment. The policies must be posted in a conspicuous place in the workplace. Bill 168 also requires an employer to assess the risks of workplace violence that may arise from the nature of the workplace, the type of work or the conditions of work. The employer is further required to reassess the risks of violence as often as necessary to protect the workers.

The City of Kenora is required to develop and maintain a program to implement the workplace violence policy and workplace harassment policy statements. The two policy statements are required to be reviewed and signed annually.

Communication Plan/Notice By-law Requirements:

Policy statements will be posted on all workplace Health & Safety Bulletin Boards and circulated to all staff. Information session will be held with all employees of the City of Kenora.