TCSA **Policies & Procedures**

Section 4: Programs & Services/ Integrated Services Reference: 4.110

Policy Title: **A Positive Work Environment & Staff Interactions with Abusive Community Members**

Policy Statement:
The TCSA recognizes that staff must be able to perform their responsibilities in a positive work environment free from threats of verbal or physical abuse, bullying, and /or harassment from members of the community.

Purpose:
On occasion, TCSA staff must be protected from threats of verbal or physical abuse, bullying and/ or harassment from members of the community. These negative behaviours are always counterproductive to the best interests of our communities, causing undue stress in TCSA staff, potentially making the community an undesirable place to live and work, and consequently endangering our programs and services. This policy recognizes the valuable contributions to our communities provided by our staff through the delivery of essential health, social and education programs and services in a positive work environment.

Procedures:
1. Staff who are faced with a person(s) causing a workplace disturbance using verbal or threats of physical abuse, bullying and/or harassment will inform the individual(s) that they must continue the conversation in a calm, reasonable, and positive manner or the staff member will refuse any further contact with the individual at that time. If the technology is immediately available, staff must inform the person causing the disturbance that their threats and verbal abuse are being recorded;

2. If the staff member continues to feel threatened during the encounter they are to refuse any further contact with the individual at that time, and call their manager for support and assistance;

3. Staff are required to report all threats by individuals to cause physical harm or other damage or abuse to the RCMP as these threats may be considered assault under the Criminal Code of Canada;

4. Managers will report all incidents of verbal or physical abuse, bullying and/ or harassment from members of the community in writing to the CEO, who will ensure that Board members are informed of incidents through regular management briefings at Board meetings;

5. Reports of multiple (2) incidents of verbal or physical abuse, bullying and/or harassment by a single individual will be reviewed by a special committee made up of Agency management, Board members and others as appropriate, to determine further action and/or possible intervention by the Agency;

6. Managers, with the approval of their Director and/or CEO, may install either video surveillance cameras, or audio recording devices in public common areas or to record after-hours emergency telephone conversations where a reasonable level of client privacy does not exist, for the purpose of enhancing staff safety;

7. Individuals who feel they have legitimate complaints with the provision of any programs and services under the authority of the TCSA may file a complaint to the CEO and or Chairperson and this complaint shall be investigated and reviewed in a timely manner. (*See TCSA Policy "Complaints about Program and Services & Appeal of Decisions"*)

Authorities: TCSA Act 13; Education Act, 117; Hospital Insurance & Health and Social Services Administration Act, 13(1)

Approval Dates: May 20th, 2009.