



Conseil scolaire
de district catholique
Centre-Sud



Conseil scolaire Viamonde

Conseil scolaire district catholique Centre-Sud

Conseil scolaire Viamonde

York Catholic District School Board

York Region District School Board

York Regional Police

POLICE and SCHOOL BOARDS PROTOCOL

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This protocol is revised annually as needed.

POLICE and SCHOOL BOARDS PROTOCOL

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1. COMMON UNDERSTANDING

The purpose of this document is to establish a protocol between Conseil scolaire district catholique Centre-Sud and Conseil scolaire Viamonde, the York Catholic District School Board, the York Region District School Board and York Regional Police.

This will confirm and define the working relationship and appropriate responses to incidents where police involvement or intervention is requested or required.

The Protocol is designed to encourage, enable and maintain a positive relationship between York Regional Police officers in their work with school administrators, staff, students, parents, and members of the school community. It establishes guidelines for these various relationships.

This protocol is developed with the understanding that cooperative involvement, prevention and intervention will facilitate compliance with the law. The development of positive attitudes and acceptable student behaviour will support a learning environment that is safe, nurturing, positive and respectful. This applies to all partners in the process, with the end goal to support caring and safe schools.

2. INTRODUCTION

All members of a school community have the right to a safe environment. The school boards and the police work together to build and maintain this environment and to assist in the greater safety and protection of students, staff and volunteers. All parties will engage in a constructive, ongoing and responsive partnership. Ultimately, this Protocol helps to ensure an equitable and consistent approach across York Region.

The parties to this protocol facilitate appropriate sharing and disclosure of information and ensure that the obligations and requirements of the education and police systems are met. As a result, this document represents the clarification of respective roles and responsibilities, and reinforces the need to maintain open lines of communication. Moreover, it ensures a consistent, coordinated and multi-faceted approach across York Region in the way police and schools respond to school-related occurrences. It encourages an ongoing and effective partnership between police and school communities.

3. STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

The police and the school boards coordinate efforts to ensure that the legal rights of **all** students and staff are respected at all times. These efforts include:

- understanding of police and school responsibilities;
- promoting respect and civility in the school environment;
- providing a balance between rights and responsibilities; and

- respecting fundamental rights under the Ontario Human Rights Code.

4. ROLE AND MANDATE OF THE POLICE

In cases of exigent circumstances, police will assume primary responsibility as may be necessary to ensure school safety.

The mandate of the police is set out in the [Police Services Act](#). With respect to young people and the school community, the role of the police includes:

- engaging and working proactively in partnership with school officials to ensure the effectiveness of this protocol;
- conducting investigations pursuant to the [Criminal Code](#), the [Youth Criminal Justice Act](#), the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act* and other federal, provincial and municipal legislation and regulations, laying charges as appropriate;
- upholding the duties legislated under s.42 of the *Police Services Act*;
- assisting victims; and
- protecting public safety and preventing crime by:
 - conducting police and criminal investigations;
 - providing information on community safety issues;
 - diverting young people away from crime and antisocial behaviour;
 - promoting and fostering a prevention and reduction in crime, both against and committed by young people;
 - assisting in the development of young people's understanding of good citizenship; and
 - working in partnership with other government and community-based organizations to support positive youth development.

5. ROLE AND MANDATE OF SCHOOL BOARDS

In cases of exigent circumstances, the police will assume primary responsibility as may be necessary to ensure school safety. In these cases, the principal will continue to have a role consistent with his or her statutory responsibility for the health and welfare of students and to maintain discipline in the school.

The role and mandate of school boards is set out in the [Education Act](#) and accompanying regulations.

Administrators and school staff members will:

- explain the Board and school codes of conduct to students and their families, including details such as the definition of the term "weapon," and the potential reach of school discipline with respect to behaviours taking place outside of school that a negative impact on school climate;
- engage and work proactively in partnership with school officials to ensure the effectiveness of this protocol;
- ensure that all staff members, including occasional, part-time, or itinerant teachers, have the means, training and resources to implement the provisions of this protocol that apply to them, including the ability to lock their classroom doors during a lockdown;

- comply with the requirements related to the duties of principals and teachers under the *Education Act* and regulations;
- comply with the requirements legislated under the [Child and Family Services Act](#) (e.g., the “Duty to Report”);
- respect the Board’s code of conduct as required by the *Education Act*;
- develop and implement a Board Code of Student Conduct, and School Codes of Student Conduct as required under the *Education Act*;
- ensure that resources (e.g., substance abuse awareness, bullying prevention) are accessible to assist school staff in promoting a positive school climate with students and parents;
- develop protocols on how to respond to crises, including a communications plan;
- ensure that prevention and intervention strategies are provided;
- provide staff with opportunities to acquire the skills necessary to promote caring, safe, equitable and inclusive school climates; and
- develop an effective consultation mechanism to solicit input from staff, students, parents, school councils (e.g., board advisory committees, other groups) in the development of the local protocol.

Principals are responsible for conducting investigations of incidents for which suspension or expulsion must be considered under the *Education Act*. This will include taking mitigating and other factors into account as set out in the *Education Act*.

6. OCCURRENCES REQUIRING POLICE RESPONSE

The incidents listed below include those that happen at school, during school related activities, in or outside school, or in other circumstances if the incident has a negative impact on school climate.

Mandatory Notification of Police*

The following incidents **must** be reported forthwith to the police, **regardless of the age of the young person:**

- criminal harassment;
- deaths on school property;
- extortion;
- gang-related incidents;
- hate and/or bias-motivated incidents;
- possession or trafficking of drugs or weapons;
- use of weapons;
- physical assaults causing bodily harm requiring medical attention;
- robbery;
- sexual offences;
- non-consensual sharing of intimate images;
- bomb threats;
- threatened or actual violence occurring within an intimate relationship (relationship-based violence); and
- threats of serious physical injury, including in bullying and cyber-related incidents (e.g., social networking, instant messaging, text messaging, e-mail).

* See **Section 14: Investigations Involving Students with Special Needs** and **Section 15: Occurrences Involving Children Under Age 12.**

a) Discretionary Notification of Police

The following incidents **may** be reported to the police:

- being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs;
- giving alcohol to a minor;
- suicide threats;
- trespassing;
- threats of violence;
- worrisome behaviour;
- vandalism;
- serious incidents of bullying, without threats of serious physical injury; and
- other instances requiring police involvement.

Administrators have a duty to determine whether an offence has been committed and what the nature of that offence might be prior to notifying police. Nothing in this protocol is intended to change that duty. Once the police are called, the administrative investigation is undertaken in consultation with the police so as to avoid any interference with the police investigation. School and police investigations may run parallel to each other in these cases until such time as a decision is made by the police that such will cease (**see Section 11**).

Principals must consider mitigating and other factors when deciding whether to call the police in discretionary situations. It is expected that all other school-related occurrences will be dealt with by the principal on a case-by-case basis. Administrators should always seek clarification and guidance from the appropriate supervisory officer.

For students with special education needs, administrators should identify circumstances where a police response is not necessary or appropriate. **Please refer to Section 14.**

It is important for police and school staff to work cooperatively and understand each other's roles when a matter involves both a police investigation and a mandated investigation under the *Education Act* relating to suspension/expulsion. Working cooperatively and sharing good communication reduces the risk of jeopardizing an investigation and the subsequent judicial proceedings, while ensuring school administrators are able to meet their legislated responsibilities under the *Act* and/or school board policies and procedures. Most importantly, it enables administrators to maintain positive school and community relations.

Police must understand an administrator's legislated responsibility to conduct an investigation under the *Education Act*, and only in exceptional circumstances should police advise school administrators against exercising their legislative responsibility to speak with students, regardless of whether they are an accused, a victim or a witness. In all cases where an administrator is asked to cease an investigation it is essential that the administrator contact the supervisory officer.

There is recognition that police and school board timelines are different and bound by legislation.

It is important to note that the *Education Act* determines the timelines for investigations, specifically with regard to suspensions possibly leading to expulsions and for appeals. Administrators must refer to the *Act* and school board policies and procedure to ensure that these timelines are met.

7. INFORMATION SHARING AND DISCLOSURE

Schools and Police are permitted to share information under certain circumstances and in specific situations. Legislative authority is found in the *Education Act*, the [Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#), the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*, and the *Child and Family Services Act*. The legislative authority is in place to ensure safety of staff and students, to ensure the effective investigation of criminal allegations and to protect individual rights and privacy.

The accompanying chart summarizes the relevant sections of the legislation as it relates to sharing of information between schools and the police. For complete accuracy, refer to the specific legislation.

Principal	Police
<u>Education Act</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Principal is responsible for collecting information for inclusion in a student's record. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ontario Student Record (OSR). The OSR contains information such as transcripts, report cards and photographs. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The OSR includes a Violent Incident Form, where applicable. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A Violent Incident Form contains the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ a description of the incident; ➤ a copy of the board letter(s) to the student and/or parent(s)/ guardian(s) regarding the suspension or expulsion for violent behaviour. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A Violent Incident Form could also contain the following, where applicable: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ a reference of the call to the police; ➤ a reference to the school/board disciplinary response to the incident. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Information in the OSR is privileged for the information and use of supervisory officers, principals and teachers of a school. Disclosure of its contents to the police may be made in the following circumstances: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ with the written permission of a parent/ guardian of the student or, where the 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Police will receive the OSR under the following circumstances: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ with the written permission of a parent/ guardian of the student or, where the student is an adult, with the written permission of the student; ➤ through a search warrant requiring the surrender of an OSR to the police;

Principal	Police
<p>student is an adult, with the written permission of the student;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ through a search warrant requiring the surrender of an OSR to the police; ➤ through a subpoena or appropriate court order. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ through a subpoena or appropriate court order; ➤ in exigent circumstances police may access a student's OSR without a warrant, under section 487.11 of the <i>Criminal Code</i>.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Consult with Privacy Manager. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ If a principal is served with a search warrant requesting an OSR or other records, the principal is obliged to comply with the warrant and will provide a copy of the contents of the OSR and other records as specified. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ If a principal is served with a subpoena requiring his/her testimony in a criminal case, he/she is obliged to comply with the subpoena, attend court, and produce the original OSR and other records if required, to the court, but should request that a copy be entered into evidence. A principal should produce three copies for the court. ➤ In all cases in which a Principal is served with a subpoena the Principal shall contact the Superintendent. 	

Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The <i>Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act</i> expressly permits a school board to disclose confidential information to the police to aid in an investigation undertaken with a view to a law enforcement proceeding or from which a law enforcement proceeding is likely to result. Administrators are encouraged to consult the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner's <i>Guide to Ontario Legislation to the Release of Student's Personal Information.</i> Consult with Privacy Manager. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Where the matter is not urgent, the initial dialogue with police will NOT include identifying information of any private individual (i.e., non-employee) such as name, address and telephone number. ➤ Should police consider it essential, a written statement will be provided clarifying what personal information is required from the school board to pursue the investigation.
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Youth Criminal Justice Act

Principal	Police
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The <i>Youth Criminal Justice Act (YCJA)</i> protects the privacy and identity of young persons. The provisions of the act prohibit persons, including police, youth courts and school board officials, from publishing or making public, any information that would identify a young person as being dealt with under the <i>Act</i>, or as being a victim or witness in a YCJA proceeding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The <i>Youth Criminal Justice Act</i> prohibits all persons, including police, youth courts and school board officials, from publishing the name of a young person, or any other information related to a young person, if that information would identify the individual as a young person dealt with under the <i>Act</i>. The <i>Act</i> establishes a similar prohibition on the publication of the name and information relating to a victim or a witness who is a child or a young person. Records, including police records, of an offence committed or alleged to have been committed by a young person are not to be disclosed except as authorized under the <i>Act</i>.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 'Report' should be interpreted broadly to include virtually all information or publication that might disclose the identity of a young person. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The <i>Act</i> does not prevent the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ disclosure to ensure safety of staff, student or other persons, or pursuant to a court order; ➤ principals from suspending students for reasons set out in the <i>Education Act</i>; ➤ boards from hearing the appeal of the parent/guardian or an adult student. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The <i>Act</i> does not prevent the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - disclosure to ensure safety of staff, student or other persons; - disclosure pursuant to a court order; - disclosure to facilitate the rehabilitation of the young person; - disclosure when a young person is released on a 'reintegration leave' from custody to attend school; - disclosure relating to information of a young person who has received an adult sentence;
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The <i>Act</i> does not prohibit school boards from expelling a student. In each of these cases, evidence of the events may be presented despite the existence of <i>Youth Criminal Justice Act</i> proceedings. 	

Child and Family Services Act

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Any person, including a person who performs professional duties with respect to children, has a duty to report any suspicion held on reasonable grounds to the Children's Aid Society that a child may be in need of protection, as defined in s. 72 of the <i>Child and Family Services Act</i>. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Section 72 of the <i>Act</i> imposes a duty on all persons to report forthwith to the Children's Aid Society any belief held on reasonable grounds that a child may be in need of protection.
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Sharing Information

Principal	Police
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Whenever charges are laid against a student, that may impact on the school and/or school community, the police officers involved in the case should consult with school administrators, where practical and possible, before recommending release and/or probation conditions.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Police officers will endeavour to alert the school and seek to assist in its efforts to accommodate the bail or probation order while at the same time continuing to exercise its powers and fulfill its obligations under the <i>Education Act</i>.

8. SCHOOL PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING TO POLICE

EMERGENCY	CALL	911
URGENT SITUATION	CALL	905-895-1221 or 905-773-1221 Ask for Police Communications Centre (Dispatch)
CONSULTATION	CALL	Staff Sergeant in charge of School Officers: 905-895-1221, Ext. 6708

9. INITIAL POLICE CONTACT

A police officer responding to a school-related incident should consider alternatives that limit the disruption to the school day. Should a visit to the school be necessary, the police officer shall (subject to the exceptions inherent in exigent and emergent circumstances):

- report to the Main Office upon arrival at the school;
- produce proper identification;
- explain the purpose of the visit and plan with the school principal on how to proceed;
- consider alternatives that limit disruption to the school day;
- obtain information from the administration about the student profile before making contact with the student (e.g., barriers to communication, accommodation needs);
- establish whether the officer or the administrator will contact parent(s)/guardian(s) of students, under the age of 18, **prior** to speaking with them in accordance with the provisions of this guideline;
- provide an explanation if they instruct administrators not to contact parents/guardians;
- conduct an investigation in accordance with current procedures and training of the police, including full documentation; and
- designate an alternative reporting process in situations where the principal is under investigation in accordance with the provisions of this guideline.

Parent/Guardian Contact

In accordance with the *Education Act* and accompanying regulations, an administrator is

responsible for reporting to a student's parent(s)/guardian(s). The administrator shall contact the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) regarding the alleged inappropriate behaviour requiring police involvement unless the student is 18 years or older and requests that his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) not be contacted, or is 16 or 17 years of age and has withdrawn from parental control.

Reference should also be made to **Protocol Section 10** (Contacting Parent(s)/Guardian(s)); **Section 12** (Police Interviews of Students); **Section 13** (Reporting of Children suspected to be in Need of Protection); **Section 14** (Investigations Involving Students with Special Needs); and **Section 15** (Occurrences Involving Children Under Age 12).

Exceptions

The responding officer may modify the above procedures in the following circumstances:

- the incident is the result of an allegation of misconduct or criminal activity committed by a principal or designate, in which case, absent exigent circumstances, the officer will make initial contact with the appropriate supervisory officer;
- the incident is the result of an allegation of misconduct, neglect or criminal activity committed by the parent(s)/guardian(s) of a student;
- the involved student(s), or any of them, is/are known to either the school or the police to have special needs; or
- exigent circumstances exist which, in the judgement of the responding officer, make compliance with the procedures impractical.

Refer to Section 10 (Contacting Parent(s)/Guardian(s) and **Section 11 (School and Police Investigations of Incidents)**).

10. CONTACTING PARENT(S)/GUARDIAN(S)

The best interests and rights of the student must always be informed by the Human Rights Code.

Police shall ensure that the requirements of the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* have been satisfied, particularly with respect to contacting parent(s)/guardian(s) or another responsible adult. The young person has the right to consult with a parent/guardian, lawyer, or other adult and to have these persons present at the interview.

The principal must make every effort to contact the parent(s)/guardian(s) as soon as possible before a student is interviewed on school premises.

Exceptions to contacting parent(s)/guardian(s) may include:

- exigent circumstances;
- an investigation under s.72 of the *Child and Family Services Act*;
- situations where the police direct the administrator otherwise;
- students who are 18 years of age or older; and
- students who are 16 or 17 years of age and have withdrawn from parental control.

If the Children's Aid Society is involved administrators and police will consult with Children's Aid officials and work together to determine the procedure for notifying the parent(s)/guardian(s).

It is **always** preferable that police interviews of young persons are conducted with an adult present. A young person has the right to waive the presence of an adult. School

administrators must inform police of the special education or communication needs (i.e., behavioural, cognitive, physical or learning disability, ability to communicate in English) of the young person to determine the ability of the young person in order to make this decision. In cases where the needs of the young person mitigate against the waiver, the administrator will exercise the duty of care as per the *Education Act*.

When a young person does not waive that right, every effort must be made to contact parents or legal guardians or another adult chosen by the young person to attend. An administrator will attend in extraordinary circumstances when parent(s)/ guardian(s) or another adult cannot be contacted.

Where a student has a special education identification, or an Individual Education Plan, the school shall work with police to ensure that appropriate resources are available for the interview to accommodate the needs of the student. These may include, but are not limited to, an interpreter, a social worker, child and youth worker, probation officer being present.

11. SCHOOL AND POLICE INVESTIGATIONS OF INCIDENTS

All investigations of school-related incidents will be conducted in accordance with the current procedures and training of the police and in compliance with the requirements of all relevant legislation and regulation, including, but not limited to, the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*, the [Criminal Code](#), the [Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms](#), the [Provincial Offences Act](#) (specifically Part VI Young Offenders), the [Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#), and the [Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#).

It is important for police and school staff to work cooperatively and understand each other's roles when a matter involves both a police investigation and a mandated investigation under the *Education Act* relating to suspension/expulsion. Working cooperatively and maintaining good communication reduces the risk of jeopardizing an investigation and subsequent judicial proceedings while ensuring school administrators are able to meet their legislated responsibilities under the *Education Act*. It enables administrators to maintain positive school and community relations.

Police must understand a principal's legislated responsibility to conduct an investigation under the *Education Act*, which requires the expulsion process to be conducted within 20 days (except for exigent circumstances, police must not ask school administrators to delay or cease exercising their legislated responsibility to speak with students, regardless of whether they are an accused victim or witness).

Once the decision is made by a board employee to involve police regarding a school-related incident, the board employee shall only assist the police in any investigation if, and to the extent, requested by the police, and except as set out in **Section 6** of this Protocol.

When police conduct an investigation, they should provide a verbal account to the principal. Where legislation allows or specific protocols are in place for the sharing of information (e.g., [Threat Assessment and Intervention Protocol](#)), police may provide copies of statements and other pertinent documents to the principal. Police may disclose the findings and outcome of the investigation to the administration. Administrators may make notes for the purpose of addressing their obligations under the *Education Act*.

If an administrator decides a student must be re-interviewed as part of an ongoing school investigation, the principal is advised to consult police before proceeding to minimize the possibility that the police investigation or subsequent prosecution is jeopardized.

In cases of sexual assault or intimate partner violence, principals should be aware of the potential for re-victimization and discuss the need to re-interview victims with police. Administrators should be aware that obtaining multiple statements may subject a witness to a more difficult cross-examination in a criminal prosecution.

An administrator should note that any contact they have with students after a police investigation has begun may result in their becoming a witness in a criminal proceeding. All documentation, both written and electronic, will be subpoenaed in these instances.

The administrator will inform police of any school logistics (e.g., hours of the school day, class rotations) that may be relevant. Police will endeavour to work within these and to minimize school disruption. Police should not use the school as a place of convenience to interview or arrest students for non-school related matters.

1. Legal Rights

All investigations into school-related incidents will be conducted so as to respect the legal rights and dignity of all persons, whether victim, witness or suspect, child, young person or adult. The following procedures should be given particular attention under the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* (sections indicated):

- parental notification upon arrest (s.26);
- right to counsel (s.25);
- right not to make a statement (s. 146); and
- protection of privacy (s.110).

2. Search and Seizure

a) Search of Person or Personal Belongings of a Person

No board employee shall conduct a search of a person or the personal belongings of a person (e.g., purse, knapsack, personal communication devices, personal computers and accessories) except:

- where there would otherwise be an imminent risk of death or serious bodily harm (this might include a situation where there is reasonable suspicion that a student carries a weapon); or
- where the parent(s)/guardian(s), or student if over 18, has given prior consent to the search.

Consent constitutes the student or parent(s)/guardian(s) allowing the administrator to search personal belongings, or the student or parent(s)/guardian(s) voluntarily emptying pockets, turning them inside-out and removing shoes and socks or removing an outside jacket.

In cases of searches conducted by school staff members, administrators must never touch a student in order to conduct a search, and there must always be an adult witness present (not a police officer).

b) Search of School Property

At the commencement of **each** school term or semester, administrators shall ensure that all members of the school community are made aware of the right of administrators to search school property, such as lockers and desks, without notice to, or permission of, any person.

Police shall not conduct a search on school property without first notifying an administrator unless exigent circumstances make it impractical. Police shall attempt to conduct searches so as to minimize the disruption to school activities.

When conducting a search of school property, persons, or personal property, the police shall conform to all legal requirements with respect to such searches, including the obtaining of a warrant to search in appropriate circumstances. With respect to all searches conducted with consent, such consent shall be documented in writing, and must be signed by the person giving consent. Police should be vigilant when obtaining consent from all persons that such consent is fully informed and freely given and, when the consent is offered by a young person, that the age and maturity of that young person, as well as the requirements of the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*, have been taken into account.

Regardless of police presence on school premises, students remain the responsibility of the principal at all times, until and unless they are arrested, when the student becomes the responsibility of police.

3. Detention and Arrest

Board employees shall only detain individuals for or at the request of the police to prevent imminent risk of death or serious bodily harm to anyone, or to prevent the commission of an indictable offence.

Board employees must be aware that in detaining a person for, or at the request of, the police, they are acting as an agent of the state and are therefore subject to the same limitations and bear the same responsibilities as the police. This includes the requirement to promptly notify the person detained of the reason for the detention, offering the person an opportunity of retaining and instructing counsel and facilitating that contact by providing privacy and, in the case of the detention of a student, giving notice to the parent(s)/guardian(s).

When detaining or arresting any person with respect to a school-related incident, police shall do so in accordance with their current procedures and training, and in compliance with all relevant legal requirements, including the requirements of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* and the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*.

It is always preferable that police conduct detention and arrest at sites other than school property.

When detention and arrest must occur on school property police shall attempt to do so in a manner that minimizes disruption and ensures the safety and dignity of those involved.

4. Demand for Entry

In certain circumstances, the police may demand entry to a school. These circumstances include when the police are in pursuit of a suspect, when they believe entry is necessary to preserve life, when they have reason to believe a person to be arrested for an indictable offence is on the premises, and/or with a search warrant.

5. Victim Support

It is required that police officers remain at the scene until satisfied that there is no imminent threat to the victim and that issues related to the victim's safety have been addressed. Both police and school administrators will inform victims of available support services and assist them in accessing these services when required.

Under the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*, victims are entitled to request information from the police about how an offence was dealt with where extrajudicial measures have been ordered.

In circumstances where a victim (age 16 and over) does not wish to lodge a complaint, a board employee may, on the student's behalf, consult the police for victim assistance.

The following services are among those available in York Region:

- **[Victim Services of York Region \(VSY\)](#)** – a non-profit agency supported by the Ministry of the Solicitor General, VSY responds to the needs of victims by providing on-site crisis intervention. VSY only responds on-scene at the request of the police. Specially-trained Victim Response Teams provide short-term emotional and practical assistance to victims of crime, tragic circumstance and disaster 24-hours-a-day, 7-days-a-week. Non-emergency assistance and information is available from professional full-time staff at the VSY office, Monday to Friday, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- **York Regional Police Victim Liaison Officer** – works with the community to facilitate victim access to services in York Region. The Victim Liaison Officer monitors police response to victims. The Victim Liaison Officer works closely with VSY to ensure that victims are offered the services of VSY during the incident. For referral and assistance, the Victim Liaison Officer may be contacted Monday to Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Administrators are obligated to inform the parent(s)/guardian(s) of victims who have been harmed unless, in the opinion of the administrator, doing so would put the victim at risk of harm from the parents.

12. POLICE INTERVIEWS OF STUDENTS

Statements Made to Board Employees/Utterances

Except in exigent circumstances, school and police investigations may run parallel to each other (see Section 11).

Board employees must not offer any inducement or make any promise or threat related to school discipline or otherwise. It is essential that board employees not attempt by word, gesture, or demeanour, to elicit any comment or statement from the student. If the student to be interviewed by police makes any unprompted utterance or statement, the board employee must make a note of it. The board employee must make and retain notes of all contact with students being interviewed. School administrator notes and student statements may be requested by police.

Police Interviews at School

Interviews of witnesses and victims (e.g., students, employees) **may** be conducted at school for school-related incidents. Before conducting interviews, police shall request permission of the principal, unless the principal is the subject of the investigation.

The person granting permission for interviews will provide an appropriate setting for the interviews and shall assist police to determine appropriate timing.

Interviews shall be scheduled taking into account the urgency of the investigation, the resources of the police and school and, as much as possible, the needs and wishes of the person to be interviewed. Interviews will be scheduled in such a way so as to minimize interference with school activity and employment, and take into consideration the availability of a support person, such as a child and youth worker, for the person being interviewed (see **Section 10**).

Children's Aid Society (CAS) Involvement

If the investigation involves a child suspected of being in need of protection, the CAS shall be contacted prior to interviewing the child, and a joint interview will be conducted by the police and CAS, as set out in the *Child Abuse and Assault Protocol of York Region* (see **Section 10**).

Notification of Parents

Refer to **Section 10 (Contacting Parent(s)/Guardian(s))**

Given the role of the principal in school administration, it is preferable that the principal not act as an adult presence on behalf of a student suspected of a criminal activity. However, it may become necessary, in extraordinary circumstances and on the request of the student.

13. REPORTING OF CHILDREN SUSPECTED TO BE IN NEED OF PROTECTION

Duty to Report (*Child and Family Services Act*)

Despite the provisions of any other Act, any person, including a person who performs professional or official duties with respect to children, and has reasonable grounds to suspect child protection concerns, that person shall forthwith report the suspicion and the information on which it is based to the Children's Aid Society (CAS).

For additional information refer to the child protection protocols/policies for each district school board.

14. INVESTIGATIONS INVOLVING STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS

A principal must examine mitigating factors when considering whether to hold a student responsible for a violation of the Board Code of Conduct. This includes whether the student has the ability to control his or her behaviour and whether the student has the ability to understand the foreseeable consequences of that behaviour. Notwithstanding, the principal must still follow **Section 6 (Occurrence Requiring Police Response)**.

If an investigation involves a student with special education needs the principal making the initial contact shall make those needs known to the police (i.e., behaviour, communication, intellectual, physical or multiple). The police shall take those special education needs into account during their investigation including, but not limited to, the conducting of interviews, and the determination of whether to lay charges. Administrators and police shall ensure that necessary accommodations are in place for any interview. Parents must be contacted as soon as possible except in exigent circumstances.

15. OCCURRENCES INVOLVING CHILDREN UNDER 12 YEARS OF AGE

No person under 12 years of age can be charged with an offence under the *Criminal Code*, *Youth Criminal Justice Act*, the *Provincial Offences Act* or other legislation.

Regardless of the age of the child, administrators are expected to report all incidents requiring mandatory notification to police (see Section 6). Early intervention for children involved in such incidents is essential and involving police and parents as early as possible may facilitate the provision of appropriate support.

In any investigation involving a child, the parent or legal guardian of the child shall be notified immediately, except in circumstances where the allegations relate to that person, in which case the CAS shall be notified and the investigation shall proceed in accordance with the child protection protocols/policies for each district school board .

Police should not interview a child without a parent, legal guardian or other adult being present and consenting to the interview. Any questioning of a child shall take place in a non-threatening environment and should be conducted by officers trained to interview children. Although formal charges cannot be laid against a child, police should conduct an investigation of the allegations and, in concert with school officials, the child (where appropriate) and the child's parent(s)/guardian(s), determine appropriate remedial or corrective measures to be taken. Consideration should be given to the proactive involvement of police resources, such as the school officer. It is required to provide accommodations and/or modifications for students with special education needs as outlined in their Individual Education Plans.

16. SCHOOL BOARD COMMUNICATION STRATEGY

In an effort to promote knowledge and understanding of the contents of this protocol, it will be shared with relevant stakeholders in each school board.

17. PROTOCOL REVIEW PROCESS

This protocol is revised annually as needed.

18. COMMUNICATION OF THREATS

All communications concerning perceived threats related to a school shall be conveyed only with the joint agreement of police and school board communications (public relations) staff. Approved communications will be shared with affected school communities.

19. SCHOOL/POLICE ROLE IN VIOLENCE PREVENTION

Administrators, in co-operation with students, staff, parent(s)/guardian(s) and school councils, will develop a school code of conduct based on the board code of conduct. Annually, in September, this school code of conduct will be shared with students and parent(s)/guardian(s).

Board staff, police and students and parents shall work in cooperation to promote learning environments that are caring, safe, orderly, nurturing, positive, respectful and equitable. Such learning environments are to be peaceful and welcoming. Administrators will encourage staff to be highly visible in the school and to engage in positive interactions with students, parent(s)/guardian(s) and other members of the school community. York Regional Police will continue to pursue proactive crime prevention.

It is understood that violence prevention is a community activity that involves community partners in a proactive manner to establish caring, safe school environments, address behaviour that arises, and recognize risk factors ahead of time. It recognizes that crime prevention involves preventing and reducing crime by identifying and addressing the risk factors associated with crime and victimization. It is the proactive strategies that are put in place in schools that begin the process. This protocol is one component of a broader partnership between schools and other essential community partners, including mental health providers, health care professionals and children's aid societies dedicated to violence prevention in schools.

20. PHYSICAL SAFETY ISSUES

An administrator may request consultation with police about possible alterations to the physical space of the school to support safety. In all cases, the final decision about alterations rests with boards.

The facilities departments of each school board shall provide to the police up-to-date site and floor plans of all school buildings.

21. VIOLENCE THREAT RISK ASSESSMENT SERVICES

Boards proactively engage a wide variety of services to identify and address concerns before they escalate (e.g., Psychological Services, multi-disciplinary teams). Assessment and intervention strategies in place for at-risk students should reduce the need for disciplinary actions and police intervention, and work to ensure the success of each student.

When a more serious threat is identified, school boards and the police shall refer to their respective threat assessment protocols as needed.

22. EMERGENCY PLANNING AND THREATS TO SCHOOL SAFETY

Each school board will maintain an emergency/crisis planning guide (see Appendix B and Appendix C). These shall be reviewed and revised, as necessary, on a regular basis. Current copies will be available to the police and copies of any revisions will be provided as issued. A copy of each board's protocol will be provided to police and fire services.

23. SAFE ARRIVAL

All elementary schools provide safe-arrival programs. Parent(s)/guardian(s) are responsible for communicating student absences or lateness in a timely manner as well as providing the school with complete and current emergency information.

If an elementary school-aged child is reported missing and all contact and emergency numbers have been tried, the administrator **shall** contact the police.

24. TRAINING

Annual training will be provided to police and school administrators jointly by police and school board staff.

25. SIGNATURES

DATED at _____ this _____ day of _____, 2016.

Frank Scarpitti, Chair
York Regional Police Services Board

Eric Jolliffe, Chief
York Regional Police

Carol Cotton, Chair
York Catholic District School Board

Patricia Preston, Director of Education
York Catholic District School Board

Anna DeBartolo, Chair
York Region District School Board

J. Parappally, Director of Education
York Region District School Board

Mélinda Chartrand, Chair
Conseil scolaire district catholique Centre-Sud

André Blais, Director of Education
Conseil scolaire district catholique Centre-Sud

Jean-François L'Heureux, Chair
Conseil scolaire Viamonde

Martin Bertrand, Director of Education,
Conseil scolaire Viamonde

26. APPENDIX A: GLOSSARY

(For detailed definitions, please consult appropriate legislation.)

Arrest – the taking of physical control or custody of a person with the intent to detain by a peace officer as empowered by statute or common law.

Assault – the intentional application of force, directly or indirectly, to another person without that person’s consent. A person is not considered to have given consent just because the person suffers bodily harm, or if consent is obtained by fraud or the exercise of authority.

Barricade – further creating a barrier to a location that obstructs entry should the locked door be compromised. This may occur during lockdown when an object is used to further prevent entry. It may also occur when a person(s) barricades themselves in any location.

Board Employee – any person employed by a board of education on a temporary, part time or full time basis.

Bullying – is a form of abuse which involves repeated acts over time attempting to create or enforce one person’s (or group’s) power over another person (or group). Bullying consists of three basic types of abuse – emotional, verbal and physical.

Child – a person who is, or appears to be in the absence of evidence to the contrary, less than 12 years of age, except with reference to the *Child and Family Services Act*, wherein child is defined as any person under the age of sixteen.

Child Abuse – improper treatment, whether physical, mental or emotional of a person under the age of sixteen, and includes but is not limited to words, actions, neglect and the contribution to an abusive environment.

Criminal Harassment – criminal harassment occurs when: (1) a person repeatedly follows an individual from place to place or repeatedly communicates, directly or indirectly, by any means (including electronic means), with an individual, or watches the home, school or place of work of an individual, or engages in threatening conduct directed at a person or a member of that person’s family; and (2) the victim of the criminal harassment is caused to reasonably, in the circumstances, fear for his or her safety.

Criminal Offence – any act committed that may result in charges under the *Criminal Code of Canada* and/or the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* and/or the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act*.

Cyberbullying – is when a person is bullying using digital technologies.

Exigent Circumstances – urgent, pressing, or emergency circumstances. Exigent

circumstances usually exist when immediate action is required for the safety of the police or others.

Expulsion – the removal of a student from his or her school or from all schools of the board. Activities for which expulsion must be considered are identified in the *Education Act* and board policies.

Extortion – the use of threats, intimidation, or violence towards a person to obtain something of value from that person or someone else, or to cause that person or someone else to do something.

Extra-Judicial Measures – measures used by police to hold a young person accountable for his or her alleged criminal behaviour, in a timely manner, outside the formal youth justice system.

Gang and Gang-related Occurrences – incidents involving a group that consists of three or more persons, however organized, and has as one of its main purpose the commission or facilitation of a criminal offence in which any or all of the members engage.

Hate- and/or Bias-Motivated Incidents – any incident motivated by hatred or bias towards an identifiable group (e.g., distinguished by colour, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation or ethnic origin), that are publicly communicated and are willfully intended to incite bias or hatred against such a group.

Hold and Secure – used when it is desirable to secure the school due to an ongoing situation outside and not usually related to the school, whereby the school continues to function normally with the exterior doors locked. During a Hold and Secure no one enters or leaves the building, including during scheduled breaks (e.g., recess, lunch, spares, etc.).

Intimate Image - a visual recording such as a photograph, film, or video recording of a person in which the person is nude and/or engaged in explicit sexual activity and which was created in circumstances that gave rise to a reasonable expectation of privacy.

Lockdown – used *only* when there is a major incident or threat of school violence within the school, or in relation to the school, whereby all occupants remain covered and concealed from view with all doors locked. See Appendix B for details.

Mitigating and Other Factors – circumstances that must be considered by the board and school administrators in situations involving suspension and/or expulsion of a student.

Negative Impact on School Climate – inappropriate activities or behaviours, whether those activities/behaviours occur inside or outside the school, may have a negative impact on school climate and may result in consequences up to and including suspension and/or expulsion.

Non-consensual Sharing of Intimate Images – knowingly publishing, distributing,

transmitting, selling, making available, or advertising an intimate image of another person while knowing that the person depicted in the image did not consent to the creation and/or sharing of the image.

Persons in Authority – a peace officer and any other person with the authority to detain or arrest, and may include school board employees.

Police Involvement – the course of action determined to be appropriate by the police for the investigation of an incident to which they have been called, including any follow up and proactive measures.

Police Response – the reaction of the police to an incident to which they are called, including, depending on the circumstances, attendance at a school and conducting interviews and investigations.

Possession of Drugs – having a controlled substance as defined in the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act* in one's personal possession or possessing it jointly with others, including knowingly possessing an illegal drug elsewhere.

Principal Designate – school board employees in York Region to whom authority and responsibility for a particular school have been delegated by a school principal under the *Education Act* and in writing.

Relationship-based Violence – any behaviour or action that is used to scare, harm, threaten, control, intimidate, or injure another person within an intimate relationship. The behaviour or action can be physical, sexual, or emotional, and it may comprise a single act of violence, regardless of the level of physical injury, or a number of acts forming a pattern of abuse through the use of assaultive and controlling behaviour.

Robbery – the use of violence or threats of violence to steal money or other property from a victim.

School Community – consists of students, parents/guardians, teaching and support staff, administration, volunteers and in the case of Catholic boards, parishes.

Sexual Assault – Any type of unwanted sexual act done by one person to another that violates the sexual integrity of the victim. The term refers to a range of behaviours that involve the use of force or control over the victim. In some cases, no overt physical force is used – instead, the victim may be threatened with words or pressured into doing something he or she doesn't want to do.

Special Needs – a student who has behavioural, intellectual, communications or physical exceptionalities and is involved with a board's Special Education programs and/or services.

Subpoena – (also called summons) – is a document signed by a court or other official requiring a person to attend before a court or tribunal at a certain date, time and place to

give evidence. The subpoena may also require the person to bring certain records, objects or documents. Failure to attend the court or tribunal as required by the subpoena may be considered contempt of court.

Suspension – the removal of a student from school and all school-related activities for a minimum of one school day to a maximum of twenty school days.

Threats – any statement, act or communication by any means, including electronic, of an intent to cause harm, whether physical or emotional, to any person or thing, in circumstances where the person threatened believes or has grounds to believe the threat may be carried out.

Trafficking Drugs or Weapons – the selling, administering, giving, transferring, transporting, sending or delivering of any drug or substance (as set out in the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act*) or weapons, or authorization to obtain any drug, substance or weapons, whether or not for compensation, or the offering to do any of the foregoing.

Trespass – the attending at a place without invitation or beyond the scope of the invitation, or the remaining at a place after the invitation is revoked by any means of communication.

Vandalism – the defacing, damaging or destruction of property, or the rendering of property dangerous, useless, inoperative or ineffective, or the lessening of the value of any property, and includes the drawing of graffiti by any means.

Weapons – anything used, designed to be used, or intended for use in causing death or injury to any person or to threaten or intimidate any person, and includes all firearms, replica firearms and imitation firearms.

Young Person – means a person who is, or appears to be in the absence of evidence to the contrary, at least 12 years of age but less than 18 years of age.

27. APPENDIX B: LOCKDOWN PROCEDURES FOR ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS

This procedure outlines the responsibilities and required actions of staff and others with respect to Lockdown. A Lockdown is similar to other emergency procedures, such as Hold and Secure and Shelter in Place, and respective procedures must be consulted for all three situations.

While people in schools have the right to learn and work in a safe place, the possibility of a major incident of violence is a reality that cannot be ignored. The purpose of this procedure is to outline the responsibilities for those in schools to protect themselves and students in the event of a major incident or threat of school violence.

Given the dynamic, complex, and fluid nature of violent incidents, it is essential that continuous communication, assessment, and coordination by first responders and school administrators occur.

Each school and work site must develop an Emergency and Crisis Response Plan using the template available.

Definitions

Lockdown

A school emergency response to the presence or suspected presence of an armed intruder or other similar violent threat within the school. When in Lockdown all students and staff members are behind locked doors, quiet, and out of sight as much as possible. Electronic devices may not be used. Exterior entry doors remain open to allow access for emergency response personnel.

Hold and Secure

A school response to a possibly violent situation outside of the school and not related to it. During a Hold and Secure outside doors are locked, and staff members and students function normally inside the building. No one may enter or leave the building during a Hold and Secure at any time, including recess, lunch or dismissal

Shelter in Place

A school response to an environmental incident outside of the school, including but not limited to a weather related incident, blackout, chemical spill, etc. During a Shelter in Place students should be gathered in interior hallways or small rooms wherever possible, and lie face down in other locations. Doors remain unlocked. No one may leave the building during this event. Large central rooms, such as gymnasiums or libraries, may not be used during a Shelter in Place.

School Staff

All Board employees assigned to work in a school building.

Others

Others include, but are not limited to the following:

- visitors;
- external service providers/contractors/trade persons/bus drivers;
- daycare staff;
- parents;
- lease holders;
- inspectors, officers (Police, Ministry of Labour, Fire Department, Municipal);
- Board staff; and
- shared use/multi-use groups.

Responsibilities

The Director of Education shall:

- allocate staff and resources to support the *Lockdown, School Sites* procedure.

Superintendents shall:

- ensure all school administrators have developed a site-specific Lockdown Plan;
- ensure Public Affairs and Communications and Student Transportation Services staff are made aware of the Hold-and-Secure; and
- remain available by phone to school staff during a Lockdown.

Principals shall:

- establish and maintain an Emergency Response Team;
- lead the Emergency Response Team to develop a site specific Emergency and Crisis Response Plan, using the template provided;
- engage daycare staff and other daytime school user groups and shared/multi-use groups in the development of the Lockdown plan and related training;
- working with Plant Services and the Superintendent of Schools, designate command posts as follows:
 - primary site in the main office,
 - a secondary site in the building, and
 - a third off-site location;
- conduct a minimum of two Lockdown drills per year, ensuring that these occur at different times of the day, including but not limited to lunch, recess or dismissal;
- ensure that police, fire and emergency medical services are aware of, and invited to participate in, the school planning process and all drills;
- ensure that the following wording is clearly displayed in a visible location near each phone in the main office(s):
 - “Attention! Attention! We are now in Lockdown!” **(Repeat twice.)**
- ensure the Lockdown Plan includes procedures for students and staff participating in activities outside the school building, such as, but not limited to trips and sporting events;
- ensure students and all staff members are trained in Lockdown procedures;
- during an actual incident, cooperate fully with, and follow the instructions of, the police who will manage the threat and subsequent criminal investigation;
- provide master keys to emergency responders as required during an incident;
- ensure that the locking mechanism on the front door is disabled when a Lockdown or Shelter in Place is called;
- ensure students are trained to remain quiet and out of sight as much as possible during a Lockdown;
- ensure that the Lockdown Plan includes family reunification locations and procedures;
- ensure all staff, including temporary staff, receive instruction on the Lockdown procedure;
- notify parents of any specific Lockdown incident; and
- communicate information concerning the school Lockdown plan to parents through school newsletters, School Council and school website.

During the Lockdown Principals, Vice-Principals and/or Administrative Designates/Teachers-in-Charge shall:

- call 911;
- announce the Lockdown using the Public Address (PA) system by reading the scripted Lockdown message;
- notify daytime user groups/tenants and childcare operators of Lockdown;
- notify Superintendent and Manager, Corporate Communications;
- advise staff members supervising off-site activities of the Lockdown by phone;
- follow direction of police upon their arrival;
- announce the lifting of the Lockdown when advised by police; and

- following the Lockdown event, complete and retain a Lockdown report for each Lockdown or Lockdown drill held in the school.

Corporate Communications Services shall:

- liaise with York Regional Police during a Lockdown;
- contact security monitoring company and advise of Lockdown;
- advise Superintendent and school Principal, Vice-Principal or Administrative Designate/Teacher-in-Charge concerning the status of the emergency, as reported by police;
- provide communications support during and after the Lockdown;
- ensure Student Transportation Services staff are made aware of the Lockdown; and
- notify Administrative Services.

Plant Services shall:

- working with the Principal and Superintendent of Schools, designate command posts as follows:
 - primary site in the main office,
 - a secondary site in the building, and
 - a third off-site location;
- ensure that colour-coded floor plans are provided to each school and work site as follows:
 - red to indicate danger areas in the school that cannot be locked down safely or used during a Shelter in Place,
 - green to indicate safe areas where staff members and students are to proceed during a Lockdown or Shelter in Place, and
 - blue to indicate command post locations, normally the main office as the primary site with a second location designated in the school;
- ensure that floor plans are posted throughout the school, at least in every classroom and at every entry door;
- provide hard copies and electronic copies of floor plans to York Regional Police;
- ensure that each building on a school site is designate with a different number that is clearly visible;
- ensure that every exterior entry is clearly identified with a letter;
- ensure that doors, locks and Public Address (PA) systems are maintained in good repair;
- ensure the development and provision of school site drawings to Administrative Services that include the location of portables;
- inform current security monitoring company of their duties during a Lockdown;
- inform the Manager, Corporate Communications of current provider of alarm monitoring services; and
- ensure Lockdown Instructions are posted in each room.

School Staff members shall:

- train students in proper Lockdown procedures, as directed by the Principal;
- follow directions given by the person in charge during Lockdown;
- follow the site-specific Emergency and Crisis Response Plan;
- participate in Lockdown drills as required, referring to Lockdown instructions posted in each room;
- minimize visibility into the secure areas, **if it is safe to do so**;
- take all reasonable steps to maximize the safety of students, such as, but not limited to using furniture in a portable to create physical barriers between walls and occupants;

- immediately provide any information received from another adult or student regarding the violent incident to the person in charge, **if it is safe to do so**;
- call **911** should a medical emergency occur while in Lockdown, **if it is safe to do so**;
- cooperate fully with police, fire and other emergency response personnel; and
- assist with family reunification following the Lockdown.

Students shall:

- report any knowledge of a potential violent incident, or knowledge during a violent incident, to a staff member or emergency responder;
- participate in Lockdown drills;
- remain in or go to the nearest secure area when Lockdown is announced;
- follow the instructions of the person in charge;
- remain in a secure area until instructed to leave; and
- remain quiet and turn off electronic devices, including but not limited to cell phones, during any Lockdown.

Police shall:

- respond to and investigate violent incidents;
- assume command and control of the response and investigation during a violent incident; and
- liaise and work closely with the principal, vice-principal or administrative designate/teacher-in-charge and emergency responders throughout the response process.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) shall:

- understand the Emergency and Crisis Response Plan;
- reinforce with their children the responsibilities students have with respect to following directions during a crisis and disclosing any information they may have prior to or during a crisis situation;
- know the reunification site in the event of an evacuation; and
- report any knowledge of a potential violent incident to the Principal.

Others shall:

- remain in or go to the nearest secure area when Lockdown is announced;
- follow the instructions of the person in charge; and
- remain quiet and turn off cell phones and other personal electronic equipment.

Department

Education and Community Services

History

Approved June 2010

Revised July 2016

28. APPENDIX C: BOMB THREAT PROCEDURE

1. Introduction

Staff, students and visitors in Ontario schools have the right to learn, work and be present in a safe and secure environment. Therefore, it is important that schools have plans for responding to bomb threats. This work includes planning and preparation in the event that a bomb threat is received, an explosive device is discovered or an explosives incident takes place. Given the dynamic, complex, and fluid nature of such incidents continuous communication, assessment and coordination by first responders and school administrators are of paramount importance in ensuring an effective response.

2. Purpose

This bomb threat protocol is designed to help school staff members and emergency services personnel work together to deal with bomb threats quickly and cautiously.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Principals shall:

In the event of an emergency, call 911

- develop a school-specific plan and review with police, fire and emergency medical services (EMS);
- be completely familiar with the plan, the responsibilities and authority of all stakeholders, and the particular roles of the principals;
- train all staff and students, including with the use of drills;
- be the person responsible for initial assessment and related decisions, including visual scans and evacuations;
- notify police of all bomb threat or explosives incidents;
- cooperate fully with police and work to ensure all staff and students do the same;
- call 911 in the event of fire, explosion, and/or related incidents causing injuries;
- continue to exercise the duties of a principal, to the extent possible even if relocated to an alternate location, in support of emergency responders; and
- work closely with Board communications departments to ensure timely and ongoing communication with parents/guardians.

All staff members shall:

In the event of an emergency, call 911

- immediately report any bomb threat, suspicious package/device, or explosives incident to the principal;
- know and follow all evacuation procedures;
- participate in all safety drills and training; and
- conduct visual scans as outlined in the bomb threat protocol.

Teachers shall:

- be responsible for the supervision and safety of students;
- inform students of their roles and responsibilities; and
- reinforce school procedures for safe evacuation.

Office staff members shall:

- follow all instructions and record all information on the *Bomb Threat Telephone Procedure and Checklist*; and
- immediately report bomb threats to the principal or designate.

Custodians shall:

- support the principal and/or emergency responders in providing access to the school as requested.

Educational Assistants and other support staff members shall:

- support students assigned to their care as per school evacuation procedures or as directed by the principal and/or emergency responders.

Students shall:

- be familiar with the emergency plan and respond to staff direction; and
- promptly disclose information on, or knowledge of, any potential bomb threat, the placement of a suspicious package/device, or an explosive incident.

Parents/Guardians shall:

- reinforce student responsibilities about following directions during a bomb threat and the need to disclose any information they may have related to an incident.

Police shall:

- where possible, participate in the development and review of the Emergency and Crisis Response Plan;
- respond to and investigate bomb threats and explosives incidents;
- assume command of the response and investigation; and
- work with the Principal and other emergency responders, as required.

EMS shall:

- provide urgent medical care in the event of an explosives incident.

Fire Services shall:

- provide fire suppression and rescue operations in explosives incidents.

4. Floor Plans

Floor plans must be posted throughout the school including, but not limited to, in all classrooms and at all entry points. Floor Plans must clearly identify entrances, exits and routes that staff members and students will take during an evacuation.

Command post and off-site evacuation locations may **not** be identified on floor plans.

Floor plans (in paper and/or electronic form) must be made available to emergency service responders upon arrival. This information must be updated regularly.

5. Identification of Rooms/Buildings/Service and Mechanical Areas and Facilitation of Access

Buildings, rooms, entrances, service and mechanical areas as well as all rooms in buildings, must be identified. Master keys must be up-to-date at all times to facilitate emergency personnel access during a crisis.

Buildings, portables and exterior doors must be clearly identified. Interior rooms must have room numbers. These must appear on the site plan for the location, and be included on the fire safety plan.

Elementary administrators must develop a plan to provide keys to emergency responders.

6. Command Post

Each school must designate command post locations as follows.

1. Primary command post: **Main Office**
2. Secondary command post: **Different location in the school**
3. Off-site command post location:
For use when 1) and 2) are unavailable or when requested by emergency service responders.
4. Secondary off-site command post:
For use when all of the above are unavailable or as requested by emergency service responders.

***Do not publicly share command post locations.**

Facility Assessment and Physical Security

Local police services are a valuable resource when developing and implementing sound security measures to reduce bomb threat and explosive incidents potential.

A school bomb threat plan will:

- identify possible locations in and around the school where suspicious packages/devices might be placed;
- provide for controlled access to critical areas of all facilities (e.g., Main Office, electrical rooms, mechanical rooms);
- consider the use of electronic surveillance and post signage regarding its use;
- ensure emergency exits are kept clear;
- include the inspection of first aid and firefighting equipment on a regular basis;
- outline a schedule for the regular review of procedures to safeguard documents;
- ensure interior, exterior and auxiliary lighting is adequate;
- outline a procedure for assessing suspicious incoming packages and (add Package Scanning Directions as an addendum); and
- consider other potential threats.

7. Bomb Threat Intake Procedures

Most bomb threats are made over the phone. Others are received by mail, electronically, etc. Each case should be taken seriously. All staff members, in particular those that are accessible by phone (e.g., secretarial staff members, administrators, guidance staff members, etc.) should be identified in school plans and receive training.

The person receiving a bomb threat by telephone should:

- keep the caller on the line as long as possible if it is safe to do so and/or does not prevent them from initiating response procedures; and
- record precise details of the call (exact wording of the threat).

A checklist of sample *Bomb Threat Telephone Procedures* must be available to all staff designated to take calls on behalf of the school.

While on the phone, staff should make notes to include the following information:

- exact wording of the threat;
- time and date of the call;
- phone number or line on which the call was received;
- caller number, if shown on call display;
- gender and approximate age of the caller;
- location of the explosive device and time of detonation, if revealed by the caller;
- type of explosive device and what it looks like (e.g., pipe bomb, truck bomb, etc.), if revealed by the caller;
- any unique speech characteristics;
- background noises (e.g., traffic, music, laughter, etc.);
- condition or emotional state of the caller (e.g., whether the caller seems to be intoxicated, excited, angry, etc.);
- caller name, if revealed;
- whether the call taker recognizes the voice of the caller; and
- time when the caller hangs up.

If the phone system records conversations, the call taker should begin recording. If the system captures incoming phone numbers, lock in the number immediately.

If a bomb threat is received electronically (e.g., email, twitter, text message, etc.) every effort must be made to isolate and preserve it to provide to an administrator.

Any staff member receiving a bomb threat by any means must report it **IMMEDIATELY** to the principal **at any time**, including on weekends and holidays.

Upon receiving notification of a bomb threat, the principal will ensure that a call is immediately placed to 911.

8. Initial Assessment

The safety of students and staff members is paramount during a bomb threat and therefore every threat must be assessed individually, based on known information. The decision to conduct a visual scan and/or an evacuation is made after a thorough assessment of known information which is then continually re-evaluated during the bomb threat incident.

The initial assessment is made by the principal and will include:

- information recorded on the bomb threat checklist;
- any other notes taken by the call taker;

- activities taking place in the school or on school grounds at the time of the threat (e.g., examinations, etc.);
- whether a specific location for a bomb was stated or if the entire school was threatened;
- whether the threat was specific to the current time and date or for the future;
- any recent negative incidents involving a student, staff member, or anyone else connected with the school;
- whether there have been any other recent bomb threats;
- likelihood of anyone having the opportunity to place a bomb in the stated location; and
- whether a specific device/package has been located.

Notify **the School Superintendent and/or Board Communications personnel**. If unavailable, ensure contact is made with other designated board staff members.

Notifying York Regional Police

As the initial assessment is taking place and a decision is being made regarding a visual scan and/or an evacuation, the principal must ensure that York Regional Police are notified **by calling 911. This must not be delayed.** Police must be contacted in **every** incident of a bomb threat, regardless of the decision to evacuate the building or not.

Information to share with police includes:

- information recorded on the bomb threat checklist;
- activities taking place in the school or on the grounds at the time of the threat;
- status of any evacuation that may be underway;
- status of any visual scan that may be underway; and
- name of the in-school contact person.

Notifying Fire Services

In consultation with police, the fire department may be notified. Use the pre-designated phone number unless there is a fire or an explosion in which case, call **911**.

Procedures for Ongoing Assessment

Activate the school emergency response team and notify the principal **immediately** when:

- a suspicious package/device is located;
- there is interference in any evacuation underway;
- an explosives incident occurs; and
- There is other pertinent information to share.

9. Visual Scans

When a threat has been made, a visual scan may provide critical information to support decision making during initial assessment. A visual scan can be undertaken by every staff member or by specific staff members as identified in the school plan. Those conducting visual scans know what does and does not belong within the school and therefore are best suited to recognize suspicious packages and/or devices. These individuals will receive basic information about conducting safe visual scans. Visual scans will be conducted in a timely, thorough and systematic manner. **Only those who have volunteered will conduct visual scans in bomb threat situations.**

A staff member conducting a visual scan may, under no circumstances, touch or move a suspicious package or device. When something suspicious is found, the area must be immediately evacuated of all students and staff members and the principal informed immediately.

The following areas are to be visually inspected:

- the building exterior and parking lots;
- entrances;
- large gathering areas (e.g., cafeteria, auditoriums, gymnasiums, etc.);
- hallways, stairways and elevators;
- washrooms;
- classrooms, Main Office, staffroom(s);
- service and mechanical areas; and
- additional areas as determined by the principal (e.g., empty classrooms, etc.).

10. Procedures Following the Location of a Suspicious Device/Package

When a suspicious package/device is located, appropriate procedures include:

- isolation/containment of the device/package, ensuring it is not touched or moved;
- immediate communication to the principal who will notify police;
- consultation with police to determine if the fire department should be notified;
- immediate re-evaluation of the need to evacuate if staff and/or students are still in the building.

The school principal will work with all emergency services personnel to evaluate the situation and the need to re-locate evacuees and/or command posts.

11. Evacuation Procedures

The Principal will review details of any bomb threat and initiate a full or partial evacuation as required. Occupants of the evacuated area(s) are to assemble at the predetermined evacuation location(s) as designated in the Fire Safety Plan or, if required, at the predetermined secondary evacuation location. Those who are outside the school when an evacuation is ordered will not, under any circumstances, attempt to enter the school but will instead immediately proceed to the evacuation location(s). Staff will confirm student attendance, report any missing persons to the command post, and remain in that location until further direction from Police or administration.

Consider these things during an evacuation:

1. if at all possible, evacuation route(s) should be cleared prior to ordering the evacuation;
2. suspicious objects **must** be immediately reported to the command post; and
3. occupants are never to walk past or near a suspicious object.

Should an area inside a building be deemed unsafe for students, staff and/or visitors, the Principal will take all necessary steps to ensure occupant safety by:

- deciding when the controlled evacuation of a school or area of the school is a viable option and directing the evacuation by the safest and most expedient route;
- ensuring evacuation of those requiring assistance follows Fire Safety Plan procedures;
- directing those evacuating to alternate exits should an area be determined to be unsafe for any reason using clear language (no codes) and specific directions, e.g., "Attention. Everyone must leave the building immediately and assemble at the primary evacuation site". This may include the direction: "Take your personal belongings if you have them with you. Do not go to your locker.";
- reminding staff to:

- complete a visual scan surroundings as well as routes to the evacuation site, noting details (e.g., location, size, shape, colour, etc.),
- **report any suspicious packages or unusual behaviour as soon as possible;**
- not assume there is only one suspicious package;
- **not to touch the suspicious package or anything attached to it;** and
- keep a record of actions and decisions during any evacuation with timelines.

Actions following an evacuation and/or relocation:

- ensure students, staff or visitors with medical or other needs are supported;
- communicate information to parents;
- Hold a meeting to debrief, focusing on areas for improvement.

12. Re-entry Procedures

The decision to end an evacuation shall be made by the school Principal, in consultation with police. The Principal will determine, in consultation with emergency services, whether to re-enter the building, relocate to another site, or dismiss students. When re-entering the building, occupants will follow the same re-entry procedures used for fire alarms.

13. Procedures Following an Explosives Incident

Explosives incidents may occur within a school building or in a school yard, without warning or after a bomb threat has been received. Explosives incidents do not always require a full evacuation; a partial evacuation of the building may be appropriate in certain circumstances (i.e., when there is no fire or risk to personal safety).

When an explosives incident occurs, 911 must be called immediately and the Principal notified. Personnel designated in the school plan should report to the command post location in order to carry out their duties.

Evacuation Considerations

The area around the sight of the explosion must be evacuated immediately, and evacuees directed to the designated evacuation location. Emergency first aid must be provided as needed. Information regarding injuries must be communicated to the command post, attendance taken and a list of missing students or staff members communicated.

As students and staff members are evacuating, they should follow proper evacuation procedures.

Once the area has been evacuated, students and staff members may not re-enter the sight of the explosion.

Communication

Plans for both internal communication with students and staff members, and external communication with emergency service personnel, parents and others must be in place. In most cases, intercoms and telephones will be used as the primary communication system. Radio and walkie-talkies are **not** recommended as radio signals may detonate explosives. Runners, megaphone, or other methods should be used for secondary communications systems.

14. Childcare and Other Facility Occupants

The principal will make every effort to ensure that the appropriate staff members from organizations that share school facilities are included in the development and implementation of procedures. During planning, consideration should be given to before-and-after care programs, night school, sports programs, etc.

15. Outside of School Building

Staff and students who are outside school buildings may not re-enter unless directed to do so. Notification of those outside the school buildings is important but should be made in a discrete manner to avoid panic or bring unnecessary attention. The use of runners is recommended to identify the off-site evacuation location to those outside. Students and staff members are to remain there until advised by the police or the Principal, and attendance must be taken.

17. Training

Bomb Threat Plans will address initial and ongoing training of current and newly hired staff members, students and volunteers. These plans will ensure, where possible, communication to potential school visitors at least once a year as early as possible in the school year. When visitors are in the school for an extended period of time they must be informed of all safety procedures.

Principals are encouraged to invite police, fire and EMS personnel to assist with the training of students and staff members.

18. Drills

It is important to conduct fire drills and bomb threat evacuation drills to maintain order in the event of an incident.

The principal is responsible for setting the date(s) and overseeing each drill. Schools should consider inviting police, fire and EMS personnel to be present during drills. Advise students, staff members or any other visitors in the school of impending drills. It is important to conduct a short debriefing following drills to identify areas for improvement.

19. Media

Cooperation is essential and all partners need to work closely with each other on media issues. Police are responsible for addressing media with respect to any criminal incident. Board personnel are responsible for addressing media with respect to issues pertaining to staff members and student safety. Media personnel from police, school boards, fire departments and EMS should share press releases with each other prior to media release.

20. Communication with Parents/Guardians and the Community

Communication with parents/guardians and the community is important to ensure an understanding of bomb threat and explosive incident procedures, without instilling fear. As early as possible in the school year, information about bomb threat and explosive incident procedures should be communicated through newsletters and websites, with parents/guardians being encouraged to reinforce the importance of understanding the procedures and following staff direction with their children. Parents/guardians need to be informed of where they should proceed in the event of an actual incident, what to do should

they arrive at school during a drill, or what to do if they are in the school when an evacuation is called.

In all incidents resulting in an evacuation, it is recommended that the school communicate with parents as soon as possible after any incident resulting in an evacuation.

21. School Recovery Following an Incident

The nature of recovery procedures is predicated on the type of incident. A debriefing must occur following a bomb threat, location of a suspicious package and after an explosives incident. Participants may vary depending on the nature of the incident. In serious situations following the location of a suspicious package or an explosives incident, the crisis management team, as designated by each school board, will be involved.

22. Plan Review

Each school plan as well as the board plan shall be thoroughly reviewed annually. This review must be documented. Documentation will include the following additional information as determined at the site or by the nature of the incident:

- When it occurred
- Who was involved
- Signature(s)

Bomb Threat Telephone Procedure and Checklist

NOTE: When a bomb threat is received via telephone:

1. Listen carefully
2. Be calm and courteous
3. Do not interrupt the caller
4. Record the incoming number if displayed on the phone
5. Signal or notify Principal or designate to call police
6. Obtain as much information as possible (SEE QUESTIONS BELOW)
7. Initiate call trace action **after the call is complete** by pressing *57
 - The number of the traced caller will be released to the police by Bell with a warrant

Checklist

- Telephone number displayed _____
- Telephone call received on (date) _____
(time) _____
- Length of Call _____
- Exact wording of the Threat _____

Questions to ask Caller

- What time will the bomb explode? _____
- Where is the bomb? _____
- What does it look like? _____
- What was the bomb made of? _____
- What will cause it to explode? _____
- Why was the bomb put there? _____
- When was the bomb put there? _____
- What is your name? _____
- Where are you calling from? _____

Identifying Characteristics of Caller

- VOICE male female not sure
 familiar not familiar (specify) _____
- ESTIMATED AGE _____ youth adult
- ACCENT English French other (specify) _____
- MANNER calm angry excited soft loud
 emotional laughter vulgar high pitched deep breathing
 nasal stutter lisp rambling intoxicated
 well-spoken irrational taped other (specify) _____
- BACKGROUND NOISES quiet party voices street traffic
 music office factory static long distance
 planes trains other (specify) _____
- CALLER FAMILIAR WITH THE AREA AND PROPERTY (specify) _____

Name of Principal _____ School _____ Date _____

2.6.2.3 Alerte à la bombe et colis suspect

Un risque d'attentat à la bombe peut survenir à la réception d'une lettre (par écrit), un appel téléphonique ou la découverte d'un colis suspect.		
	ALERTE À LA BOMBE par téléphone:	COLIS SUSPECT
Dans tous les cas :	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aviser la direction d'école ou la personne responsable du bureau administratif. • Appeler le 911. • Faire une annonce par interphone (voir message en annexe A). 	
ÉTAPES À SUIVRE	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. RESTER CALME et courtois. 2. Recueillir le plus de renseignements, si possible en remplissant le formulaire Alerte à la bombe (voir Annexe B). 3. Retracer l'appel, si possible, en composant *57 ou *69 immédiatement après que la personne ait raccroché en utilisant la même ligne (l'opérateur ne transmettra la source de l'appel qu'à la police). <p>Réception de lettre, de carte :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conserver toutes notes de menaces ou pièces matérielles. • Faire une annonce par interphone pour une inspection visuelle de l'environnement immédiat pour identifier tout objet inhabituel et suspect (voir message en annexe A). 	<p>Évitez de :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toucher ou déplacer le colis. • Vous servir d'un cellulaire ou émetteur de radio portatif (risque de déclencher l'explosion). <p>Assurez-vous de</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Évacuer les lieux. • Bloquer l'accès à cet endroit. • Aviser la direction. <p>En cas d'explosion :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suivre la procédure d'évacuation.
RESPONSABILITÉS SUPPLÉMENTAIRES		
PERSONNEL DE SECRÉTARIAT	En cas d'évacuation, suivre la procédure en cas d'évacuation.	
PERSONNEL DE CONCIERGERIE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dégager les aires d'évacuation pour une évacuation en toute sécurité. • Rester sur place, de façon sécuritaire, pour assister les services d'urgence. • Au retour à la normale, faire une inspection complète de l'intérieur puis de l'extérieur de l'édifice. 	
DIRECTION D'ÉCOLE (PERSONNE DÉSIGNÉE) OU LA PERSONNE RESPONSABLE DE L'ÉDIFICE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appeler le 911. • Aviser de vive voix la surintendance, ou une des surintendances ou en dernier recours la direction de l'Éducation, de manière sécuritaire si possible. • Évacuer l'édifice selon la procédure d'évacuation, s'il y a lieu. • Remplir la feuille de route Alerte à la bombe (voir Annexe B). 	
SURINTENDANCE de l'éducation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aviser la direction de l'éducation de vive voix et celle-ci communiquera avec la surintendance des affaires selon la situation. • Aviser la direction des communications et du SIEP de vive voix. • Aviser les membres du CE par courriel. • Si nécessaire, aviser les responsables du lieu d'évacuation de l'arrivée éventuelle des élèves et du personnel. 	

2.6.2.3 Alerte à la bombe et colis suspect

ANNEXE A

Message pour interphone :

Votre attention s'il vous plaît!
Un danger potentiel est présent à l'école.
Merci de faire une inspection visuelle de votre environnement immédiat.
Pour tout objet inhabituel ou suspect, communiquer immédiatement avec le bureau.

Je répète.
Un danger potentiel est présent à l'école.
Merci de faire une inspection visuelle de votre environnement immédiat.
Pour tout objet inhabituel ou suspect, communiquer immédiatement avec le bureau.
Merci.

2.6.2.3 Alerte à la bombe et colis suspect



ANNEXE B

ALERTE À LA BOMBE – Feuille de route

Restez calme et poli
Évitez d'interrompre la personne qui appelle
Avertissez discrètement la direction

Votre nom : _____
Heure : _____ **Date :** _____

Quand la bombe va-t-elle exploser? Heure? Combien reste-t-il de temps?
De quelle sorte de bombe s'agit-il? Où êtes-vous en ce moment?
Comment vous appelez vous?

Cochez les cases appropriées ci-dessous.

Personne qui appelle :

Homme Femme Adulte Jeune Autre : _____

Origine de l'appel :

Local Longue distance Identificateur d'appelant De l'école Inconnue

Caractéristiques de la voix :

Forte Grave Aigüe Persistante Enrouée
 Douce Autre : _____

Caractéristiques ou modèle d'élocution:

Rapide Saccadé Clair Parle du nez Bégaiement
 Autre : _____

Niveau de grammaire:

Excellent Faible Moyen Grossier Bon
 Autre

Accent :

Local Étranger Impossible à déterminer

Comportement :

Irrationnel Coléreux Calme Incohérent Rationnel
 Émotif Cohérent Rieur Posé Autre : _____

Bruits de fond

D'usine Mélange Musique Avion Circulation
 Animal Équipement de bureau Autre : _____

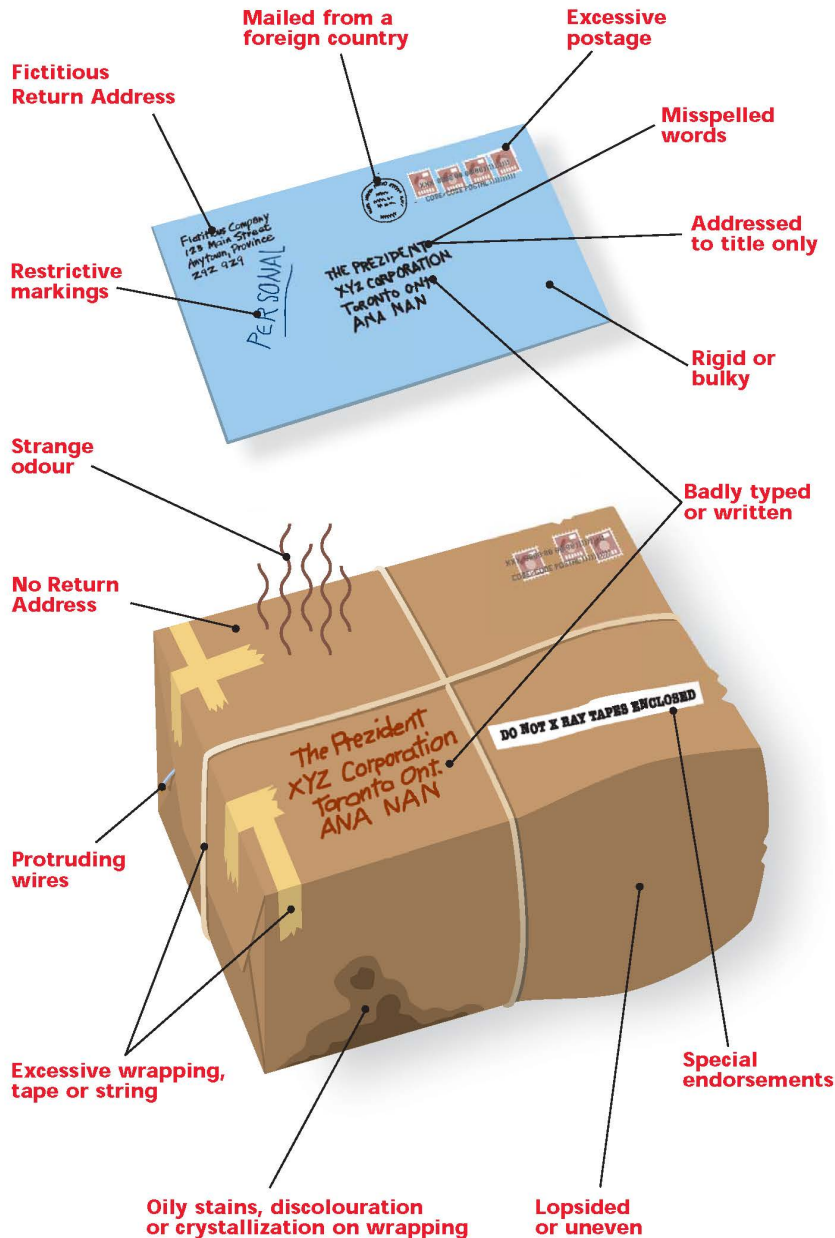
Suspicious Mail Alert



From anywhere... to anyone

If you receive a suspicious letter or parcel

(A COMBINATION of the following may constitute a suspicious mail item)



1 Immediately advise local emergency services of the situation.

2 Do not handle, shake, smell, or taste the suspicious article.

3 Isolate the article, and evacuate the immediate vicinity.

4 Anyone who has handled the article should immediately wash their hands with soap and water.

If a letter or parcel is open and/or a threat is identified

For a Bomb:

- Evacuate area immediately
- Call local emergency services

For Biological or Chemical:

- Isolate – do not handle
- Evacuate area immediately
- Wash your hands with soap and warm water
- Call local emergency services

For Radiological:

- Limit exposure – do not handle
- Evacuate area immediately
- Shield yourself from object
- Call local emergency services

Corporate Security

www.canadapost.ca

LIST OF HYPERLINKS

- [Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms,](#)
- [Child and Family Services Act](#)
- [Controlled Drugs and Substances Act](#)
- [Criminal Code](#)
- [Education Act](#)
- [Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.](#)
- [Guide to Ontario Legislation to the Release of Student's Personal Information.](#)
- [Lockdown and Hold and Secure Procedure](#)
- [Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#)
- [Police Services Act](#)
- [Provincial Offences Act](#)
- [Threat Assessment Protocol](#)
- [Youth Criminal Justice Act](#)