

West Neighbourhood House	
Policy Title:	Risk Management Policy
Approved by:	West Neighbourhood House Board of Directors
Approval date:	2005
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Policy Statement

West Neighbourhood House is responsible for proactive identification, mitigation, and management of internal and external risks. Risk mitigation planning and sound risk management procedures are implemented through a risk management framework and risk assessment processes. West Neighbourhood House is committed to educating all staff and volunteers with the knowledge skills and resources to carry out their risk management duties.

Applicability

- All Staff
- General Public
- Program Participants, Clients, Members
- Volunteers
- Students
- Community groups who utilize West Neighbourhood House space for events
- Contractors

Definitions

What is Risk Management?

Risk management is a discipline for dealing with the possibility that some future event will cause harm. It provides strategies, techniques, and an approach to recognizing and confronting any threat faced by an organization (program) in fulfilling its mission. Risk management may be as simple as asking and answering the following three questions:

- What can go wrong?
- What will we do to reduce the chances of something going wrong?
- What will we do if (despite our efforts) something does go wrong?

Risk Management Framework

The risk management framework consists of following:

1. Identification of the sources of risks for the six Key Risk Categories.
2. Assessment of risk by combining likelihood and consequences in the context of existing control measures as required.
3. Management of risk by establishing controls through policies and procedures that avoid, reduce, or transfer risk.

- Monitoring and evaluation of policies and procedures with defined review cycles to ensure mitigation effectiveness against risk factors.

Types of Risk

Risk may be divided into two main types.

- External** - risks originating outside the organization which West Neighbourhood House cannot directly control (though it may be able to mitigate)
- Internal** - risks originating inside the organization which West Neighbourhood House has control over through its structure, systems, policies and practices.

Key Risk Categories which impact West Neighbourhood House:

Risks	Resulting from:
1. Strategic	Economic, technological, competitive, regulatory, and other environmental changes.
2. Compliance	Non-compliance with laws, rules, regulations, prescribed practices, internal policies, and procedures, or ethical standards.
3. Operational	People, process, information, technology, and systems factors that impact the staff and participants of West Neighbourhood House (their physical and mental wellbeing) as well as day to day activities, such as program delivery.
4. Governance/ Organizational	Factors that impact West Neighbourhood House's organizational structure and its Board functioning and accountabilities.
5. Financial	Factors that impact obtaining, committing, and using economic resources including financial management of a balanced budget.
6. Reputational	Decisions, actions, communications, and relationships that impact West Neighbourhood House's reputation.

General Principles

Who is responsible for risk management at West Neighbourhood House?

- The Board is responsible for ensuring that there is a risk management policy (the "Policy").
Management is responsible for implementing the Policy within the risk management framework and all staff and volunteers are responsible for adhering to the Policy and the standards, practices and guidelines outlines below.

A. Organization Wide Policies

The risk management framework includes the following policies ([link to policies](#)):

- Acceptance of Gifts Policy
- Accessibility Policy
- Advocacy Policy
- Board Political Activity Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Complaints Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Customer Service Policy
- Donations Policy
- Equity Policy
- Emergency Response Policy
- Financial Stewardship and Investment Policy
- Governance Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Human Resources Policy and Procedures Manual
- Privacy Policy
- Procurement
- Respectful Workplace
- Serious Occurrence Policy
- Use of Information Technology Policy
- Workplace Harassment
- Workplace Violence

B. Standing Practices

West Neighbourhood House's standard practices and guidelines to mitigate risk include:

- Annual planning cycle including an environmental scan
- Regular Board self-evaluation
- Annually updated Board orientation and training materials
- Ongoing training and development for staff and volunteers (including Board members)
- Media response guidelines
- Sound employment and volunteer management practices, including:
 - Appropriate staff supervision (see the Human Resources Policy and Procedure on When to Seek Supervision)
 - Adherence to relevant labour and employment legislation
 - Adherence to the Health & Safety Policy & Procedures Manual
 - Job descriptions include risk management perspective by including the skills and experience required for each job
 - Screening of volunteers
- Maintain insurance, including:

- Directors' liability insurance
- Employee, accident and property insurance
- Adherence to Fundraising Code of Ethics

C. Guidelines and Committees

All Board and staff committees adhere to the framework outlined within this policy to mitigate risk.

D. Individual Program Policies

At West Neighbourhood House, **individual programs** use the following Risk Assessment Process:

- Be proactive by imagining worst case scenarios and planning for preventing them and containing damage to participants, staff, volunteers and the organization
- Share ideas with other programs in West Neighbourhood House and in our networks
- Be conscious of balancing between:
 - Security versus accessibility (serving the most marginalized)
 - Consistent practices versus allowing judgment to respond to specific circumstances
- Give special consideration to vulnerable people, including children, seniors and people with disabilities and/or language and communication barriers
- Regularly review serious occurrence reports and their existing risk management policies and practices.

Areas of potential program risk may include:

- Physical and social harm (staff and participants)
- Food (preparation, storage, handling, serving, cleaning)
- Cleaning and maintenance (building and equipment, bodily fluids)
- Mental health crises
- Physical health crises (allergic reactions, overdoses, medication problems, strokes and heart attacks, diabetic and epileptic crises, animal bites, contagious diseases)
- any form, expression or actions relating to discrimination and oppression
- Missing participants
- Low staff to participant ratio
- Physical activities e.g. swimming, sports
- Conflict and altercation
- Improper relationships (sexual, dependency, financial)
- Signs of neglect or abuse
- Breach of confidentiality
- Theft of West Neighbourhood House property or personal property

The staff of West Neighbourhood House are aware of their obligation to address problems or issues that could cause serious risks for West Neighbourhood House. If a staff member is uncertain as to whether a problem or issue might result in a serious risk, they will advise their supervisor or designate. If the severity of the issue or problem warrants escalation, it will be escalated in accordance with the following path: frontline staff to Team Leader or Coordinator, to Unit Director/Manager, to Executive Director. Where appropriate, problems or issues are reported to the Board of Directors by the Executive Director.

D. Reporting

The Executive Director will provide the following reports:

- An Annual report summarizing the risk management activities for the year
- Monthly updates in the Executive Director report to the Board
- As needed reports to the Chair and/or Executive Committee of the Board

Acknowledgement of Policy

I acknowledge that I have received and read the Risk Management Policy and have had it explained to me or have had the opportunity to ask questions.

I understand that it is my responsibility to abide by this policy and related policies of West Neighbourhood House as a condition of my employment and participation in West Neighbourhood House.

Date: _____

Name of Employee/Volunteer: _____

Signature: _____