

In Response to the Tumbler Ridge Tragedy



Like so many Canadians, we are shaken by the tragic shooting in Tumbler Ridge. In a small community where people know each other by name, where neighbours are friends and coworkers are often family, violence like this hits differently. It feels personal. It feels close. And it leaves behind grief that extends far beyond the immediate victims.

First and foremost, this is a time to acknowledge the victims and the community. Families are grieving. First responders are carrying what they witnessed. Coworkers and residents are trying to make sense of something that does not fit with who they believe they are as a town. **The Canadian response in moments like this has always been steady and human: we show up, we support, we donate, we check in, we give space, and we refuse to let isolation compound tragedy.** That matters right now.

At the same time, we would be naïve to ignore the broader context. Violence in Canada has been rising. Statistics Canada reports that the Violent Crime Severity Index has increased in recent years, and the national homicide rate reached levels not seen in decades. While Canada remains far safer than many countries, police-reported violent crime has climbed significantly since 2019. In the workplace specifically, violence remains one of the leading causes of traumatic injury and death, particularly in sectors such as retail, healthcare, public service, and resource-based industries.

Mass shooting incidents in Canada remain statistically rare. Compared to other jurisdictions, the number of large-scale firearm attacks is low. That rarity matters. We should not normalize these events. But rare does not mean impossible, and recent years have shown that even small and remote communities are not immune. **One incident is enough to permanently change lives.**

Layered into this is a mental health crisis that continues to deepen. Roughly one in five Canadians experiences a mental health challenge in any given year. Self-reported anxiety and depression have increased since the pandemic, and many Canadians report worsening overall mental well-being. Social fragmentation, economic strain, substance use challenges, and untreated mental illness are not excuses for violence; but they are risk indicators that responsible organizations and leaders cannot ignore.

So this moment calls for two parallel responses.

The first is compassion. Honour the victims. Support the families. Support the community of Tumbler Ridge. Support employees who may be retraumatized by the news.

Offer flexibility. Provide access to counselling resources. Encourage leaders to check in, not just once, but consistently. Remind people they are not alone. That is the Canadian way.

The second is responsibility.

Organizations have a legal and moral duty to assess and mitigate workplace violence risks. That means reviewing active shooter response plans. It means ensuring workplace violence and harassment policies are current, communicated, and practiced. It means training supervisors on early warning signs of escalating behaviour. It means conducting credible risk assessments rather than assuming “it could never happen here.” It means auditing physical security controls, reporting procedures, and emergency communications.

Planning does not create fear. Avoidance does.

An active threat response plan, clear reporting channels, de-escalation training, and periodic drills can save lives. So can psychological safety programs that encourage early intervention and support before someone reaches a crisis point. The goal is not to militarize the workplace. It is to build preparedness layered with humanity.

This is not about reacting in panic. It is about responding in maturity.

We can hold both truths at once: that Canada remains a relatively safe country, and that risks are changing. That mass shootings are rare, and that complacency is dangerous. That mental health struggles are widespread, and that violence is never acceptable.

Today is about the people of Tumbler Ridge. About grieving with them. About standing with them.

Tomorrow must also be about learning.

Support each other. Reach out. Check in. And then, when the immediate shock fades, take the disciplined steps required to protect your people. That is not alarmism. That is leadership.

In moments like this, Canada shows its character. Compassion first. Responsibility next. Both matter.

In support of these efforts, we are making all of our workplace violence and harassment policies, game plans, tools, and more available for free for the entire month of February to support all Canadian businesses. In addition, we will make all Active Shooter training and elearning free for all Canadian employees.

To access these resources, go to:

- **Action Point:** [Active Shooter Awareness Training – Helping Prevent Tragedy](#)
- **Action Point:** Find out how to implement a legally sound and effective [Workplace Violence Prevention Game Plan](#) at your site.
- **Action Point:** Use the HR Insider [template](#) to create your own workplace harassment and violence policy.
- **Action Point:** Find out how to implement a legally sound and effective [Workplace Harassment Prevention and Compliance Game Plan](#) at your workplace.
- **Action Point:** Find out how to implement a legally sound [workplace violence and harassment investigations policy](#) at your workplace.
- **Action Point:** Find out about the 10 things you must do to [prevent workplace](#)

[violence.](#)

- **Action Point:** Find out how to implement a legally sound and effective [Workplace Violence Prevention Game Plan](#) at your site.
- **Action Point:** Find out how to implement an effective [Workplace Violence and Harassment Compliance Game Plan](#) at your site.
- **Action Point:** Are you doing enough to prevent violence at your workplace? Find out how to perform a [Workplace Violence Compliance Audit](#) to find out.
- **Action Point:** [Download a workplace violence assessment form.](#)
- **Action Point:** Find out how to implement [“active shooter” response guidelines](#) for your workers.
- **Action Point:** [Best practices for handling the aftermath of a workplace violence incident.](#)
- **Action Point:** [Active Shooter training video](#)
- **Action Point:** [Active Shooter Awareness Video](#)
- **Action Point:** Training Toolbox Talks
 - <https://ilt.safetynow.com/active-shooter-awareness-prevent-tragedy/>
 - <https://ilt.safetynow.com/active-shooter-preparedness-meeting-kit/>
 - <https://ilt.safetynow.com/workplace-violence-meeting-kit/>
 - <https://ilt.safetynow.com/workplace-violence-recognizing-preventing-and-responding-meeting-kit/>
 - <https://ilt.safetynow.com/workplace-violence-recognizing-threat-cues-meeting-kit/>
 - <https://ilt.safetynow.com/workplace-violence-at-schools-if-you-see-something-say-something-meeting-kit/>
 - <https://ilt.safetynow.com/workplace-violence-at-schools-post-incident-dealing-with-the-aftermath-meeting-kit/>
 - <https://ilt.safetynow.com/workplace-violence-at-schools-clear-communication-to-prevent-escalation-meeting-kit/>
 - <https://ilt.safetynow.com/workplace-violence-at-schools-maintaining-safe-interactions-setting-boundaries-meeting-kit/>
 - <https://ilt.safetynow.com/workplace-violence-at-schools-struck-by-incidents-when-students-strike-teachers-meeting-kit/>