

Recording of AHS Workers

RESOURCE GUIDE



How to use this resource guide

When to use this guide

This guide can help you navigate situations where you are concerned that a recording is being used in a way that is harassing.



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Finding what you need

This guide uses icons to help you find what you need.



Recordings by AHS Workers



Recordings by patients, designated support persons or visitors



Recordings by external parties



Information for leaders



Related content from this resource guide



Print your topic

The content in this resource guide is organized by topic. Each topic starts on a new page, with its own heading, so it is easy for you to print and share with others.

Look at the Table of Contents to find the page ranges for the topics most relevant for you.



Recording of AHS workers: Resource guide introduction

This guide aims to answer common questions about recordings and safety.

Many of us are uncomfortable being recorded. This can be especially true when the recording happens while you are working. At work, you have less control over who makes recordings, how they are made, and how they are used later. You may be unsure if the recording is okay or not. You may worry about your rights or safety.



Key messages

- Recordings can be audio (e.g. a voice memo), visual (i.e. a photograph) or both (e.g. a video).
- People often use mobile devices to record events and experiences. Recordings are also made using computers or other devices.
- Most recordings are okay and useful. There are many valid reasons why an AHS worker, patient, designated family or support person, visitor, or external party may make a recording at AHS.
- Sometimes, recordings are made without permission or are used in way that is unwanted. When this happens, you may worry about your rights or safety.
- Recordings can be used to harass another person – for example, if the recording is used to offend, humiliate or otherwise cause harm. See the [definition](#) of harassment to learn more.
- Recording people in an AHS environment is not against the law, even when it is done without permission. AHS does not have the legal authority to prevent or stop recordings, or require that a recording be deleted.
- You have a right to ask those who may want to record you while you are working to only record or use the recording with your permission.
- If a recording of you working is being used to harass you, it is important that you report it and take other steps to keep yourself safe.



Find out more

This resource guide is a companion to the [Respectful Workplaces and the Prevention of Harassment and Violence Policy suite](#).

You can find the terms used in this resource guide on the [Definitions](#) page.



What isn't in this guide?

This guide does not apply to recordings or social media posts of patients or AHS workers that are for valid reasons.

To learn when recordings or posts are okay, see:

- [Audio/visual recordings](#)
- [Social media posts](#)
- the [My Care Conversations](#) app



Recordings: When is it harassment?

The act of recording may be workplace harassment when it is coupled with additional conduct, comment, bullying, or action that is harassing, that implies the recording will later be used to harass, or the recording is later used to harass.

The harassment can relate to what was recorded, how the recording was made, and/or how it is used. See the [definition](#) of harassment to learn more.



What was recorded?

A recording may be workplace harassment if it includes words or actions against you that relate to your role with AHS. Examples include swearing, shouting, insults, or intimidation.

Sometimes recordings show an AHS worker acting in a way that is inappropriate or harmful.

When an AHS worker feels embarrassed because their own behavior is made public, it is not likely the recording will be seen as workplace harassment. The person who made the recording has a right to share the truth of their experiences within our health system.



How was it made?

Sometimes we know about a recording – and sometimes we do not.

If you know a recording is being made, it is an “overt” recording. If you did not know about the recording, it is “covert.”

While it may not feel good to be recorded without permission or awareness, many covert recordings are made for valid reasons. Covert recordings are not necessarily harassment.

If you learn someone is recording you, you can ask them to stop.

If they refuse, depending on the situation, it may be harassment.



How is the recording being used?

Recordings can be used to harass AHS workers through social media posts, creating and/or distributing photographs, images, or videos, or other online communication.

Sometimes recordings that are neutral or positive are posted on social media, or shared in other ways but still pose safety or privacy concerns for the AHS worker featured in the recording.

In those instances, it may be harassment if the post is later used to offend, humiliate or otherwise cause harm, and/or if the worker asks for the post to be removed and the person who posted it refuses.

It is also important to know how to respect privacy when making social media posts. See [Social Media Privacy Considerations – Think Before You Post](#) to learn more.



Recordings: Your rights and responsibilities

Safety is a shared responsibility

AHS cannot eliminate harassment and we cannot refuse care. However, accepting harassment is never part of the job. Your safety is always a priority.



AHS workers

You have a right to a safe workplace. You are also responsible for following AHS' policies.

- Ask permission and [document consent](#) before recording other workers or patients.
- Where applicable, use AHS devices for AHS use.
- Know how to [address harassment and violence](#) from patients, families, or visitors.
- Protect yourself from [online harassment](#).
- Ask others not to record you, or use a recording without your permission.
- Ask for help when you need it.
- Report harassment in [MySafetyNet](#).
- Report suspected privacy breaches using the online [breach notification form](#).



Leaders

Leaders must know and apply AHS' policies and support team members in situations involving recordings. This includes:

- providing applicable harassment [training](#)
- sharing relevant information
- helping your team resolve situations safely, in a mutually agreeable manner
- ensuring incidents are reported
- supporting team members after incidents



Permission is key

While recording another person is not against the law, it feels better when recordings are done overtly and with permission.

AHS expects all workers and encourages patients, designated support persons, visitors, and external parties to ask permission before recording anyone in AHS environments.

Permission means:

- Asking before recording an individual.
- Telling a group if a recording is planned and providing an "opt out" process.
- Respecting the wishes of those who do not want to be recorded.
- Deleting recordings when asked.
- Only using the recording for the purpose it was made.

We cannot stop a recording from happening or require that it be deleted.

However, you can ask others to not record you, or use the recording as intended without your permission.

If your request is not honoured, depending on the situation, it may be harassment.

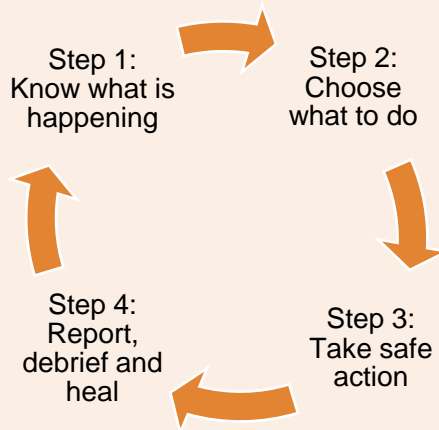


Recordings: Safe work practices

There are many things you can do to stay safe at work. When it comes to recordings, start by [practicing social media safety](#). While working, you should know how to talk about recordings, privacy and safety. If you think a recording is being used to harass you, or you suspect a privacy breach, you need to know how to report it and keep yourself safe.



Steps to stay safe



Step 1: Know what is happening...

Safety requires awareness. Before and during your day, notice what is happening for you, in your environment and for others.



...for you

- How do you feel about recordings at work?
- How are you likely to react if someone records you? Practice [self-awareness](#).
- Notice and care for your needs. How are you?
 - We think more clearly and make safer choices when we practice self-care.



...in your environment

- Make your space safe and comfortable.
- Notice your surroundings. Who is around you? Is there anything unusual?
- Check your exit route and clear your path.



...for the other person

- Before you begin, what do you notice?
 - How do they seem to you?
 - Do they have their phone out?
- Introduce yourself warmly.
 - Use Name, Occupation, Duty ([NOD](#))
- Ask them for their preferred name.

Feelings happen

We can have many different feelings when someone wants to record us or we learn about an unwanted recording.

If someone asks to record you, you may feel flattered, uncomfortable, or insulted.


If you learn about an unwanted recording, you may feel your personal rights and privacy were not respected.

It is okay to feel upset or angry when this happens. It is also a good idea to calm down before you address it with the other person.



Step 2: Choose what to do


Trust your instincts. Do you feel safe to continue, or do you need to ask for help?
Generally you have two choices:

-  1. Stay and continue the interaction. 2. Get help and/or leave if possible.

Step 3: Take safe action


Choice 1: Stay and continue the interaction

- Stay calm and use your communication skills. How we talk to one another matters!


 Use AHS' [values](#), [competencies](#), [patient and family centred care](#), and your [conflict resolution skills](#) to address concerns and create or restore trust.

See the sample scripts in this resource guide for ideas.


- Here are some tips for talking to others about recordings:

 Use body language and a tone of voice that shows respect and supports safety.

- Give everyone personal space.
- Sit/stand tall and relaxed. If standing, place one foot in front the other and knees slightly bent.
- Keep your hands open, in front of you and at your waist.
- Use natural eye contact to show you are listening and help you notice reactions.
- Relax your face and eyes. Keep your voice warm and tone soft.

 Be curious! Learn the other person's reasons for recording before you react.

- Listen to what they say.
- Reflect before answering. Are you comfortable with the recording's use? Do you need more information?

 If you are not comfortable with the recording, say so and explain your reason.

- Protecting the privacy of others in the space.
- Being able to perform your task safely.
- Concerns for your own privacy or safety.


Then, explore other options and offer choices. For example, taking notes to record important information, using simple language, checking in regularly for understanding, or using the [My Care Conversations](#) app.

Once you come to a solution, say thank you!





Step 3: Take safe action (cont'd)

Choice 2: Get help and/or leave if possible

 If you are not sure what to do, or feel unsafe in any way, excuse yourself and get help from a team member or leader.

If the other person is a patient, ensure the room and patient are safe before leaving.

 The sample scripts in this resource guide can help.

 If you are concerned about your immediate safety, call Protective Services at 1-888-999-3770 or law enforcement at 9-1-1.



Has the recording already happened?

Use this resource guide to decide if you think the recording is being used to harass you. If so:

- Do not respond to the person directly.
- Follow **Step 4** below.
- Check the terms of use for the online group or social media site. Consider reporting the recording to the administrator.

Step 4: Report, Debrief and Heal

Reporting is how your leader learns about safety concerns, improve safety over time, and support those affected by incidents. Reporting is required under AHS policy.



Report

- Tell your leader immediately about what happened. If you need time for self-care, ask someone to tell your leader for you.
- If the recording is being used to harass you, report it in [MySafetyNet](#) and take steps to [protect yourself from online harassment](#).
- To report a suspected privacy breach of AHS business, health or personal information, use the online [breach notification form](#).
- If the situation involved inappropriate patient behaviours, document it on their chart using the [Behavioural Safety Program](#) or your local practices.



Debrief

- Talk about what happened with someone you trust. [Debriefing](#) with a team member or leader can help you process safely and with support.



Heal

- Emotions happen! It is normal to feel some stress after difficult interactions. Remember that accepting harassment is never part of your job. Acknowledge your feelings, practice self-care and ask for support if you need it.
- Consider the [Resilience, Wellness, and Mental Health Resources](#) on Insite.



Recordings by patients: Okay or not?



Patients, designated family/support persons and visitors often have valid reasons for recording. See the [Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Audio/Visual Recordings](#) and the [My Care Conversations](#) app to learn when recordings are okay. Refer to [InfoCare](#) on Insite for other privacy and information security concerns.



Scenarios involving patients, family members or visitors

The situation	😊 Not harassment!	😞 It may be harassment
<p>A patient or designated support person makes a recording.</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using the My Care Conversations app to record an appointment. Using the video camera on a mobile device to record and/or live stream the care they receive. Taking pictures of their time in AHS environments. In a long-term care setting, a resident's family puts a camera in their room to record care and to stay connected with the resident. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As long as the recording is accurate and not used in a way that is meant to harass, it is okay! If a recording is made public that shows an AHS worker acting in a way that is inappropriate or harmful, it is not likely to be seen as workplace harassment. The person who made the recording has a right to share the truth of their experiences within our health system. 	<p>The worker asks the person to stop recording and they refuse. Depending on the situation, it may be harassment. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> While recording, the patient makes inappropriate or inaccurate comments about the worker. The patient says they plan to use the recording in a way that would harass the worker or AHS. The recording is posted to social media with negative and inaccurate comments about the worker or AHS.
<p>A patient posts a positive video about their care to social media and identifies a worker by name.</p> <p>The worker has personal reasons for not wanting to have their name or image on social media.</p>	<p>The recording is not used in a way that is meant to harass, so it is okay.</p>	<p>Later on, negative comments about the worker are added to the social media post.</p>



Recording by patients: Sample scripts



? What is happening?

Your patient, John, begins recording you in the middle of care.

👍 Taking safe action

A good first response is to pause and become curious.

- *“John, would you please stop recording so we can talk about it first?”*

💬 Listen, reflect and respond



The recording is valid, but John forgot to ask permission.

John is using the [My Care Conversations](#) app, but he forgot to ask you first.

- *“That’s great! That app is really helpful. Next time, would you please ask your care provider before you start recording?”*



The recording is not being used to harass, but you have concerns.

John is worried about forgetting information.

- *“Thank you for telling me, John. I hear you don’t want to miss important details and recordings can be really helpful.”*

“I have some concerns about privacy. We want to make sure any recordings are secure and are done with permission, in a way that protects the privacy of others nearby.”

“Would you consider using the [My Care Conversations](#) app? Or could we explore some other options together? (e.g. taking notes, going slowly, regular check-ins for understanding)

- *“John, thank you. Do you have any questions before we proceed?”*

The recording may be harassment.



John keeps recording. He smiles, says he “likes your look” and winks at you.

- *“John, I asked you to stop recording and I’m not comfortable with you speaking to me that way. Please stop now. I need to focus on your care. If you continue, I will need to pause your care while I get help.”*





Recordings by AHS workers: Okay or not?



AHS workers must follow the [Collection, Access, Use, and Disclosure of Information](#) and [Information Technology Acceptable Use](#) policies when recording workers or patients. This includes getting permission and, where applicable, using AHS devices for AHS uses. A recording of a patient may also need to be treated as health information.



Scenarios involving other AHS workers

The situation	 Not harassment!	 It may be harassment
An AHS video camera records the activities in a unit or work area.	As long as the recording is used for the intended purpose and not used to harm, it is okay!	The recording is used in an offensive blog post about staff on the unit.
An AHS worker takes a picture of their colleague for a presentation after using the AHS consent form to ask permission.	The recording is used as agreed to in the consent and no harm is done. It is okay!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The team members' photo is used in a way that is offensive. The AHS worker shares the picture with others along with unkind or disrespectful comments.
An AHS worker who has organized a meeting asks to record the discussion. All present agree.	It is common for online meetings and presentations to be recorded for later use. The meeting organizer needs to get permission from participants before making the recording.	A team member asks the person to stop recording, withdrawing their consent, but the AHS worker refuses to stop.



Do you need support?

Talk to your leader about any incident of unwanted recording by another worker. For more information, check out the [Behaviour Continuum Booklet](#) and Conflict Resolution training on the [Respectful Workplaces](#) Insite page.

You can also reach out to conflict.support@ahs.ca for confidential advice and coaching on how to talk to a colleague about recordings that feel harassing.



Recordings by AHS workers: Sample scripts



? What is happening?

1. Your co-worker, Jane, suddenly begins to record your conversation.
2. Jane takes a photo of you with your permission, but then posts it on social media without telling you.
3. Jane covertly records a difficult conversation with you and shares it with your team.

👍 Taking safe action

Often, it is best to talk to your co-worker directly. Pause and become curious.

- *“Jane, would you please stop recording so we can talk about it first?”*
- *“Jane, I was surprised that you shared the recording of me. Can you tell me what you meant to do?”*

💬 Listen, reflect and respond



1. The recording is valid, but Jane forgot to ask permission.

Jane shares that she is feeling overwhelmed and has been recording conversations to help her stay on track.

- *“Thank you for telling me, Jane. It sounds like a really stressful time for you.”*
“It’s always better to ask permission before recording anyone in the workplace. Maybe we can take some notes instead?”

2. The recording is not being used to harass, but you have privacy concerns.



Jane says she often posts pics from her day on her social media.

- *“Jane, I’m not comfortable with you posting that photo of me and I’m concerned you did not ask my permission first. Would you please take it down?”*



3. The recording may be harassment.

Jane rolls her eyes and says “What’s your problem?”

- *“Jane, it’s always better to ask permission before we take or use a recording of anyone at work. I didn’t give you permission and I don’t think it was appropriate for you to share that. I think we need to talk to our leader.”*



Recordings by external parties: Okay or not?



Media and other groups may record at AHS facilities with permission from AHS.

If you do not want to be recorded, walk around the crew! If you have safety concerns, speak to your leader or call Protective Services at 1-888-999-3770.

As with other recordings, if it is later used to in a way that is meant to offend, humiliate or otherwise cause harm, it may be harassment.



Scenarios involving external parties

The situation	😊 Not harassment!	😞 It may be harassment
A news crew with permission to record at an AHS facility takes a video.	The video is available on the news channels web site and open for comments.	That news video is subsequently shared on social media by individuals who have added insulting comments about AHS workers.
An external party is standing on public property near an AHS site and is recording AHS workers coming and going from work.	As long as the recording is not being used to cause harm, it is okay. However, it is a good idea to tell someone about what you saw.	The recording is shared on social media issuing a threat to AHS workers.



Taking safe action

If you are worried about an external party recording at or near an AHS facility, leave and get help from a leader or Protective Services (1-888-999-3770).

When that is not possible – for example, if you are being recorded while working in the community – you may need to speak to the external party directly. Where possible, have another AHS worker with you.



Use body language and a tone of voice that supports safety. See the [Safe work practices](#) in this resource guide.

- *“Excuse me, I see that you’re recording me. I don’t want to be recorded. Please stop. I have a right to privacy and safety, just as you do.”*

Remember, your safety is a priority. Leave if you feel unsafe.



Recordings: Tips for leaders



Leaders are responsible for creating a safe work environment. This includes supporting staff to prevent harassment when we can, address known risks, and respond safely, report, and learn when it happens.



Prevent what we can

Safety requires awareness. Here are some ways you can support prevention by increasing awareness with your team:

- Talk about safety often. Share information with your team.
- Ask staff to voice needs and ideas.
- Talk about recordings. When are they okay? When do they become harassment? Acknowledge that unwanted recordings may happen.
- Provide training for working safely with [co-workers](#) and [patients](#).
- Put up harassment and violence prevention posters in your area:
 - [No pictures please](#)
 - [Safe Care Together](#)
 - [Never part of your job](#)



Address known risks

We are responsible for providing our people with a safe workplace, and our patients with safe, quality care. Here are some ways you can balance the rights of everyone in the environment:

- Know why people may record. Communicate how they can meet their needs safely (e.g. ask permission, take notes).
- For patient-facing teams, use the [Behavioural Safety Program](#) to identify, address and communicate safety risks.
- When recording is a concern, have a plan. How can workers ask for help?
 - Use the [Safe work practices](#) and scripts in this resource guide.
- Help your team resolve conflict.



Respond safely and learn

As a leader, you play an important role in supporting people after an unwanted recording – whether it was harassment or not.

- Is the recording harassment? Make sure it is reported in [MySafetyNet](#). Then, follow the steps for incident investigation and follow-up in AHS' [harassment policy](#).
 - Take additional steps if the recording is being used for [online harassment](#).
- Is there a suspected privacy breach? Report using the online [breach notification form](#).
- How is your team doing? Use AHS' [debriefing](#) resources and offer support. Remind them of the Employee ([EFAP](#)) or [Physician Family Support Program](#).



Recordings: Definitions

Designated Family/Support Person means the individual(s) identified by the patients that they want involved in their health planning and decisions. They can be a relative, legal guardian, close friend, and/or informal care giver.

Harassment means any single incident or repeated incidents of objectionable or unwelcome conduct, comment, bullying, or action by a person that the person knows or ought reasonably to know will, or would cause offence, or humiliation to a worker, or adversely affects the worker's health and safety and includes discrimination, and sexual solicitations, or advances. Workplace harassment can include incidents that occur outside of the workplace or working hours, but are related to the workplace (for example, inappropriate phone calls, e-mails, social media posts, visits to a worker's home and incidents at luncheons or after work socials) or harassment from clients and service recipients. Harassment excludes any reasonable conduct of a manager/medical leader or supervisor in respect of the management of workers or a workplace.

Manager means the individual(s) who has the delegated human resources authority for directly planning, monitoring, and supervising direct reports.

Patient means all persons, inclusive of residents and clients, who receive or have requested health care or services from Alberta Health Services and its health care providers. Patient also means, where applicable:

- a) a co-decision-maker with the person; or,
- b) an alternate decision-maker on behalf of the person

Recording means any audio-visual (e.g., video, audio, virtual, still pictures) capturing of information in any medium (e.g., digital, film, tape, Polaroid etc.).

Violence means the threatened, attempted, or actual conduct of a person that causes, or is likely to cause physical or psychological injury or harm, and includes domestic, or sexual violence. It is acknowledged that harassment may become violence.

Worker means AHS employees, members of the medical and midwifery staffs, students, volunteers, and workers of contracted service providers.

Workplace means a location where a worker is, or is likely to be, while engaged in their work or work-related activities. The workplace includes all locations where business or social activities organized by AHS are conducted, including but not limited to work in the community and locations of work-related social events. Workplace includes any vehicle or mobile equipment used by the AHS worker as part of their job.



Recordings: Legislation, policies and forms

Topic	Where to find
Alberta Occupational Health and Safety Act	Alberta Occupational Health and Safety Act
Collection, Access, Use, and Disclosure of Information Policy	Collection, Access, Use, and Disclosure of Information Policy
Consent to Collect, Use, and Disclose Stories, Photos and/or Video and Sound Recordings: PDF Form	Consent to Collect, Use and Disclose Stories, Photos and/or Video and Sound Recordings (albertahealthservices.ca)
Information Technology Acceptable Use Policy	Information Technology Acceptable Use Policy (ahsnet.ca)
Legal and Privacy: Privacy Behaviours	Policy & Behaviours Insite (albertahealthservices.ca)
Mobile Wireless Devices and Services	Mobile Wireless Devices and Services Policy (ahsnet.ca)
Online and Cyber Harassment	InfoCare Resources Database Insite (albertahealthservices.ca)
Privacy Protection and Information Access Policy	Privacy Protection And Information Access Policy (ahsnet.ca)
Respectful Workplaces and the Prevention of Harassment and Violence Policy	Respectful Workplaces and the Prevention of Harassment and Violence Policy suite
Reporting Work Related Incidents: MySafetyNet	Reporting Work Related Incidents Insite (albertahealthservices.ca)



Recordings: Supporting AHS resources

Topic	Where to find
Behavioural Safety Review	Behavioural Safety Review Debriefing Resource (albertahealthservices.ca)
Frequently Asked Questions: Audio/Visual Recordings	Audio Visual Guidelines (albertahealthservices.ca)
My Care Conversations Recording App	My Care Conversations Consult Recording App Insite (albertahealthservices.ca)
Patient-to-Worker Harassment & Violence Prevention Training Guide	Patient-to-Worker Workplace Harassment & Violence Prevention Training Guide (albertahealthservices.ca)
Posters	No pictures please (albertahealthservices.ca)
Protecting Yourself from Online Harassment	Protecting Yourself from Online Harassment One-Pager (albertahealthservices.ca)
Recording of Staff and Patients Guideline (Protective Services)	Recording of Staff and Patients Guideline PRR-07-01 (albertahealthservices.ca)
Respectful Workplaces (e.g. Conflict Resolution)	Respectful Workplaces Insite (albertahealthservices.ca)
Safe Care Together Campaign: Posters	Safe Care Together
Social Media Privacy Considerations – Think Before You Post	Social Media Privacy Considerations – Think Before You Post (albertahealthservices.ca)
Worker-to-Worker Behaviour Continuum Guide Book	Worker-to-Worker Behaviour Continuum
Zero Tolerance & Providing Care: What is in Place to Protect You as a Healthcare Worker	Zero Tolerance & Providing Care: What is in Place to Protect You as a Healthcare Worker (albertahealthservices.ca)



Recordings: AHS Insite pages

Topic	Where to find
AHS Values and Competencies	Our Values and Competencies Insite (albertahealthservices.ca)
Clinical Ethics Service	Clinical Ethics Service Insite (albertahealthservices.ca)
Employee and Family Assistance Program	Employee & Family Assistance Program Insite (albertahealthservices.ca)
Health Law	Health Law Insite (albertahealthservices.ca)
Legal & Privacy	Legal & Privacy Insite (albertahealthservices.ca)
MyLearningLink	MyLearningLink Insite (albertahealthservices.ca)
Patient and Family Centred Care	Patient and Family Centred Care Insite (albertahealthservices.ca)
Protective Services	Protective Services Insite (albertahealthservices.ca)
Respectful Workplaces	Respectful Workplaces Insite (albertahealthservices.ca)
Workplace Harassment and Violence Prevention	Workplace Harassment and Violence Prevention Insite (albertahealthservices.ca)

