



POLICY: AGGRESSION AND VIOLENCE TOWARDS STAFF

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Copies of this Policy may be made available in alternative formats on request.

Former BHSE Policy No:	BM 1.1A
Previously agreed and approved by the Board:	11 January 2011/8 March 2011
Interim review subject to further Board approval:	27 January 2014
Last agreed and approved by the Board:	21 September 2016/23 November 2016
Review/minor amends:	27 November 2019
Next review date:	November 2022
Published on website:	Yes



POLICY: AGGRESSION AND VIOLENCE TOWARDS STAFF

All reference to 'we', 'our' or 'us' in this Policy should be read as meaning Sandbourne Housing Association.

1. Purpose and aim of the Policy

- 1.1 Our staff may be subject to violence or aggression by people with whom they come into contact in the course of their work. This Policy sets out our approach to the avoidance of violence and aggressive behaviour towards our staff and the arrangements in place for dealing with incidents should they occur.
- 1.2 Individuals should be safe at work and should not be exposed to undue or unreasonable risk. Staff should also be able to work safely, free from threat, or actual injury, or acts of aggression or violence. We aim to minimise, manage and control such risk and such actions.
- 1.3 This Policy applies to all individuals without exception.

2. Definition of violence

- 2.1 For the purpose of this policy, the term 'violence' means:

'Any incident in which a person is verbally abused, threatened or assaulted by a resident, visitor(s), contractors, or others in circumstances relating to his/her employment'.

- 2.2 Violence need not cause physical harm but may include incidents which:
 - 2.2.1 Cause major injury
 - 2.2.2 Require medical assistance
 - 2.2.3 Requires first aid only
 - 2.2.4 Involve a threat, even if no physical injury results
 - 2.2.5 Involve verbal abuse
 - 2.2.6 Involve non verbal abuse (for example stalking, written communication including posting on social media platforms)
 - 2.2.7 Involve other threatening behaviour.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 We will pursue a zero-tolerance policy towards violence or aggressive behaviour directed against individuals.

3.2 Chief Executive

3.2.1 The Chief Executive will ensure that:

3.2.1.1 all reasonable steps are taken to ensure that staff work in a safe working environment

3.2.1.2 staff receive appropriate training in dealing with violence and aggression at work

3.2.1.3 risk assessments are carried out and safe systems of work are devised and implemented

3.2.1.4 all reported incidents are correctly recorded in an Incident Recording system and reported to the Board

3.2.1.5 appropriate support is offered to members of staff who are experiencing violence and aggression at work

3.2.1.6 staff are provided with general guidance and information on equipment, administrative procedures and support available

3.2.1.7 appropriate action will be taken against residents if they, or their visitors, are the cause of the incident (including enforcing the terms of the Tenancy Agreement and/or taking out an Injunction)

3.2.1.8 appropriate action will be taken against contractors or agents if they are the cause of the incident.

3.3 Members of staff

3.3.1 Staff should work to minimise the risk of aggression and violence at all times.

3.3.2 Members of staff must ensure that they:

3.3.2.1 comply with safe systems at work

3.3.2.2 report any incidents verbally to the Chief Executive or their line manager immediately, or as quickly as practicable, after the incident has taken place

3.3.2.3 report every incident to the Chief Executive or their line manager in writing and enter full details of the incident in our Incident Recording system on the central area.

4. Training

4.1 Training will be given to all staff who are considered to be potentially at risk. The line manager will be trained to know how to recognise problems associated with violent and aggressive incidents and how to manage them.

4.2 Training staff can help to achieve:

4.2.1 a reduction in the number of incidents

- 4.2.2 a reduction in the seriousness of incidents
- 4.2.3 a reduction in the psychological effects of incidents
- 4.2.4 an improved response to incidents
- 4.2.5 an improvement in staff morale.

5. Recording and reporting

- 5.1 Staff should report every incident of violence and aggressive behaviour to their line manager as quickly as possible and must also record the incident on our Incident Recording system within two working days. This will allow investigation and remedial action to start quickly.
- 5.2 Detailed information about an incident must be provided.
- 5.3 The main aim of reporting is to identify means to support the member of staff and prevent similar incidents occurring in the future, for example by identifying a need for:
 - 5.3.1 changes to existing working procedures
 - 5.3.2 new working procedures
 - 5.3.3 additional training requirements.
- 5.4 Such records would also be used to identify trends, assist the review process and inform risk assessments.

6. Investigation of incidents

- 6.1 Every incident will be reviewed. Significant incidents of violence may require detailed investigation to establish the cause and any action required to prevent a recurrence. Investigations which focus on 'who was to blame' are insufficient and unhelpful. The focus must be on what went wrong and how to reduce risks in the future.

7. Post incident support

- 7.1 Discussion will take place with the staff concerned as soon as possible after an incident has been reported. This process of 'debriefing' will establish the details of what happened and provide emotional support to the member of staff. Separating 'technical' and 'emotional' briefings may help to ensure that people can contribute to the factual investigation of an incident. The member of staff's line manager will be involved in the factual debriefing to emphasise that we take all incidents seriously.
- 7.2 In serious cases, the matter will be reported to the police and staff may need to be given access to a specialist stress counsellor.

8. Monitoring and review

- 8.1 We will monitor the effect of approaches to controlling violence and aggressive behaviour to find out how successful they have been. It will then

be possible to identify strategies that are not working, or which have unforeseen consequences, and modify or replace them.

8.2 Active monitoring will ensure that systems are working without waiting until something goes wrong.

9. Equality impact assessment/Protected characteristics (as at 8 January 2019 or later amendments/additions)

9.1 Neutral.

10. Consultation arrangements

10.1 Our staff will be consulted on this Policy and any reasonable suggestions will be taken into account before the Policy is approved by the Board.