



# **Violence and Aggression Policy**

**November 2021**

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## 1. Purpose

- 1.1 This policy has been developed to ensure that SW9 CH staff, volunteers, and contractors can work in a safe and secure environment.
- 1.2 This policy has been written to:
- Comply with health and safety law and regulations such as the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, and The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.
  - Ensure that the appropriate steps are taken to minimise any risk of violence or aggression.
  - Any incident of violence and or aggression are dealt with appropriately, in the best interest of SW9 staff, volunteers, contractors and its agents that may come into contact with SW9 residents.
  - Make clear to staff, contractors and partners that SW9 CH has a zero tolerance to any form of abuse or aggression.
  - Any staff member who faces any type of violence or aggression should be encouraged to report it and will be supported. No member of staff should stay silent out of fear of reprisal, guilt or a perception of personal failure.

## 2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all SW9 CH staff and volunteers across SW9 CH, and our contractors and agents are required to cooperate with it as set out in this document and in their respective contracts with SW9 CH.
- 2.2 Residents experiencing any form of violence shall be referred to the Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) Policy.
- 2.3 SW9 CH staff that experience interactions from residents that are repeatedly displaying borderline aggressive behaviour should refer to the SW9 Habitual Complaints Policy.
- 2.4 This policy does not cover where an issue has been raised by a member of the public about the behaviour of an existing resident, we will investigate in line with the ASB policy if appropriate.

## 3. Definitions

- 3.1 Violence (work related): Any incident where a person is abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances relating to their work by a resident, associated family member/guest, or a member of public. (work-related violence as defined by the Health and Safety Executive.

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- 3.2 Incident: in the context of this policy, an incident will be the occurrence of any event that relates to violence, aggression or harassment.

#### **4. Statement**

- 4.1 SW9 CH is committed to continuously improving standards of health and safety for staff, visitors, contractors and residents. This policy promotes SW9 CH's commitment to health and safety.
- 4.2 So far as is reasonably practicable, SW9 CH seeks to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of its employees and other persons who may be affected by our work. This includes sub-contractors and contractors, consultants, and agents.
- 4.3 Staff working alone are expected to use our 'Lone Working Procedure' and use the lone worker device issued to them to contact their line manager and emergency services via the Alarm Receiving Centre for purposes of safety.

#### **4.4 Reporting and Investigating Incidents**

- 4.4.1 All members of staff are expected to report incidents using the incident report form.
- 4.4.2 The Governance and Compliance Manager will report notifiable incidents to the relevant enforcement authority and regulators as necessary.
- 4.4.3 All reported incidents will be investigated.

#### **4.5 Taking action and reviewing incidents**

- 4.5.1 The Governance and Compliance Manager will independently audit all incidents reported via the incident reporting system.
- 4.5.2 Residents who have behaved violently or have threatened violence will be written to by the relevant manager.
- 4.5.3 Further actions with the aim of reducing risk, such as seeking possession of the property will be considered by the service manager in conjunction with the relevant Head of Service.

#### **4.6 Responsibilities of Senior Management:**

- 4.6.1 The relevant head of service will determine whether eviction/ injunction/ possession orders would be necessary and proportionate to the case at hand.
- 4.6.2 The Executive Director will review support and/or legal action taken to protect individual staff members.

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#### 4.7 Responsibilities of line managers:

- Monitor and report all incidents of violence and aggression via the incident report form.
- Ensure that staff and external partners are aware of and have access to this policy and procedure.
- Ensure staff receive training on, and are able to use, Northgate and/or Customer Hub to check for caution alerts.
- Monitor staff compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018 in handling resident and service user information.
- Ensure that alleged perpetrators are written to within 5 working days of the incident being reported as set out in the Violence and Aggression Procedure.

### 5. Training and Support

- 5.1 Training will focus on the potential risks that certain staff members may be exposed to during their work, the precautions they should take, as well as the actions recommended/required in the event of an incident.
- 5.2 Line managers will work with the Business Support Team to develop the appropriate training necessary for their teams, to reduce the risk of a violent incident occurring towards them.
- 5.3 The type and frequency of training may be determined by the nature of work carried out by each team.
- 5.4 Induction of new employees by line managers will include all policies, including the Violence and Aggression Policy, the Lone Working Policy and the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974). HR, supported by managers will be required to carry out a full risk assessment for the role the new employee will be undertaking prior to their appointment.
- 5.5 Line Managers will work with any staff members who may have been victims of violence and or aggression to ensure that they have the appropriate support.

### 6. Monitoring

- 6.1 Audit and review of the risk of violence and aggression will take place alongside other key health and safety risks as detailed in the SW9 CH Health and Safety Policy.
- 6.2 All incidents are included in reports to the SW9 CH Health and Safety Panel

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and to the relevant SW9 Finance, Risk and Audit Committee who scrutinise incidents trends and preventative actions.

## **7. Conditions and Exceptions to policy**

- 7.1 While it is not feasible to eliminate all risk, we will protect staff, contractors, maintenance partners and volunteers as far as it is 'reasonably practicable', from harm caused by a failure of reasonable control measures.
- 7.2 We will ensure that we comply with relevant legislation, including Data Protection Policy (e.g. information sharing protocols) and other relevant SW9 CH policies when implementing this policy.
- 7.3 The caution and alert aspect of this policy and procedure will not apply to a resident or service user's behaviour which is a result of a disability and is being effectively managed, but will apply where there is a failure to take prescribed medication or access agreed support, which then results in behaviour that poses a risk to SW9 CH staff or our external partners.

## **8. Equality and Diversity**

- 8.1 SW9 CH is committed to valuing and promoting equality and diversity. We recognise we have a duty to eliminate unfair treatment and discrimination in the services we provide and to promote and value respect in everything we do. We expect our staff to share these values and treat all residents with fairness and respect. The Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) identifies that an effective health and safety policy and management system identifies risks that could be a barrier to the full participation of some SW9 CH staff with protected characteristics e.g. expectant mothers in the workforce. The policy commits SW9 CH to providing appropriate protection from health and safety risks to all the diverse needs represented in our customer base and workforce.
- 8.2 We will apply this policy consistently and fairly and will not discriminate against anyone based on any relevant characteristics, including those set out in the Equality Act 2010.

## **9. Responsibilities**

- 9.1 SW9 CH has a duty of care to all staff and will support staff to act where appropriate or may take action against the perpetrator for abuse or assault on an SW9 CH staff member, even if the member of staff decided not to take the matter further.
- 9.2 Staff have a duty to take reasonable care of their own and colleagues' health and safety when undertaking their work and to co-operate with SW9 CH in matters of health and safety.

- Work with the relevant head of service to determine caution alert levels to be

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placed on a resident file following an incident and to review them as necessary for DPA compliance.

- Assess risks involved as part of service planning.
- Feedback outcomes of risk assessment to staff through team meeting and one-to-one meetings.
- Identify hazards, carry out risk assessments and implement plans to control risks.
- Set appropriate staffing levels to ensure there are always enough suitably trained staff to cope with any foreseeable risks. This would include ensuring other staff are available to cover where an employee is off sick or absent due to an emergency at satellite sites.
- Delegate responsibility amongst team members to implement procedures to minimise risk and deal with incidents of violence.
- Feedback outcomes of risk assessment to staff appropriately.
- Monitor usage of the Personal Safety devices in the teams where they are used.

### 9.3 All staff

- Report all incidents to line manager.
- Use a personal safety device, where issued, in accordance with training and instruction.

## 10 **Legislation and Regulation**

The legislation listed in this policy is not intended to cover all legislation applicable to this policy. To adhere to any relevant practices set by the Charity Commission, as well as all relevant law, SW9 CH will take reasonable measures to ensure compliance with any and all applicable legislation by reviewing policies and procedures and amending them as appropriate. The legislation listed within this policy was considered at the time of the development of this policy, but subsequent primary and secondary legislation, case law and regulatory or other requirements will be considered, and the policy reviewed and adopted in accordance with the requirements set out therein, even should such subsequent legislation not be explicitly listed within this policy. Any queries relating to the applicable legislation should be directed to the policy author.

## 11. **Review**

- 11.1 We will monitor this policy to ensure it meets good practice and current legislation and will review it in accordance with our review timetable for all policies.

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**Related documents**

- Health & Safety Policy
- Lone Working Policy
- Habitual Complaints Policy
- Anti-Social Behaviour Policy

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## Appendix 1

### Unacceptable behaviour: levels of risk

Level of risk/ Degree	Incident	Action	Warning placed on CRM
<b>Mild</b>	This is not an exhaustive list: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Inappropriate language, including during telephone conversations</li><li>• Inappropriate communication by resident</li><li>• Staff feel resident's behaviour is overassertive, nearly aggressive</li><li>• Staff feel uneasy, unsure, threatened when they are with the resident</li><li>• Resident has issues around substance and/or alcohol abuse</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Visits can be made alone, but with caution</li><li>• Not deemed sufficient to contact police</li></ul>	<b>Caution</b>
<b>Serious</b>	This is not an exhaustive list: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Spitting at someone</li><li>• Threats to injure</li><li>• Sexual innuendo</li><li>• Continuous and aggressive abusive language</li><li>• Inappropriate language, including during telephone conversations</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Meet with resident in the office where possible</li><li>• Where a home visit is absolutely necessary, <b>TWO</b> members of staff <b>MUST</b> attend</li></ul>	<b>Office meet/pairs</b>

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<b>Extreme</b>	<p>This is not an exhaustive list :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resident presents a risk (ASB/ harassment)</li> <li>• Spitting at someone</li> <li>• Independently verified as a potential risk (e.g. from police)</li> <li>• Minor or mild physical contact e.g. pushing or holding</li> <li>• Unacceptable behaviour that includes illegal or physical behaviour sufficient to justify criminal, possession or injunction proceedings, for example:</li> <li>• Threats to injure</li> <li>• Sexual contact</li> <li>• Physical contact</li> <li>• Racist/homophobic/transphobic/sexist etc. language/abuse</li> </ul>	<p>Meet with residents at SW9 CH main site offices only which have suitable interview rooms</p> <p>Where a home visit is absolutely necessary, <b>seek approval of senior manager</b></p>	<b>Consult line manager</b>
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<b>Policy author</b>	<b>Housing Services Manager</b>	
<b>Policy owner</b>	<b>Housing Services Manager</b>	
<b>Accountable officer</b>	<b>Head of Operations and Customer Services</b>	
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<b>Consultation: residents</b>	<b>n/a</b>	
<b>Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)</b>		

**Version Control – Change Record**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>version</b>	<b>Reason for change</b>
<b>23.11.2021</b>	<b>Policy and Performance Officer</b>	<b>V1.1</b>	<b>Adapting Network Homes Existing Policy</b>

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