



Managing challenging behaviour policy and procedure

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Issued: April 2019

Reviewed: June 2026

Next review: June 2029

1. Policy statement

- 1.1. The purpose of this policy is to outline the approach for managing challenging behaviour which includes the risk of violence and aggression towards staff, contractors and visitors. It also provides guidance to staff and managers on the action to take following any reported act(s) of challenging behaviour, violence and/or aggression.
- 1.2. This policy applies to incidents of work-related verbal and physical abuse, threatening and disturbing behaviour, aggression, and violence.

2. Scope

- 2.1. This policy covers all staff, consultants, contractors, volunteers, and agency workers.

3. Definitions

- 3.1. The Health and Safety Executive define challenging behaviours as “actions that cause harm or distress to individuals or those around them, impacting the quality of life for everyone involved. This includes behaviours that may manifest as physical aggression, verbal aggression, self-injury, property destruction, or non-compliance”.
- 3.2. The Health and Safety Executive define work-related as “any incident in which a person is abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances relating to their work”. This definition is useful because it recognises that the results of violence can be visible (physical injury) or virtually invisible (mental health).

4. Responsibilities

- 4.1. Employers must ensure, so far as it is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of their staff and that everyone is aware of their responsibilities in relation to it.
- 4.2. Managers will ensure the following:
 - That all staff are aware of the policy and the procedures implemented to reduce the likelihood of challenging behaviours including violence and aggression.
 - That client risk assessments are carried out, and all staff coming into contact with clients are made aware of the findings.
 - That the appropriate induction and training relating to challenging behaviours and de-escalation are undertaken by all identified staff.
 - Details of all incidents are recorded on our client recording system and handover logs.
 - Serious incident and accident forms are reported where appropriate.
 - Staff involved in incidents, are provided with support and signposted to resources such as the employee assistance programme.



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4.3. Staff will ensure the following:

- That they follow advice and instruction provided through training and given by their line manager.
- They report to their manager and via the appropriate incident reporting system any incidents relevant to this policy, whether physical injury has resulted or not.

5. Interviews, induction and training

- 5.1. When interviewing new applicants for frontline staffing roles, our interviews include questions around safeguarding clients, managing professional boundaries, lone working and how the interviewee would react in a situation where a client became distressed or aggravated, and understanding how they would de-escalate a situation.
- 5.2. During a new staff members induction, the manager will ensure that new staff undertake the mandatory training relating to managing challenging behaviours, which includes de-escalation techniques, as well as safeguarding, managing professional boundaries and lone working in line with our induction programme.
- 5.3. New starters will be provided information by their line manager around the role of our counselling psychologist. This includes when and how we use reflective practice to debrief after a serious incident.
- 5.4. The line manager will ensure that new staff members are aware of any potential risks with our clients and will provide the staff member with access to client risk assessments. They will explain how we use handover notes to inform other staff members within their team of any serious incidents and changing risks the client may have.
- 5.5. We recognise that our staff may be exposed to incidents which may lead to “vicarious trauma.” We’re committed to creating environments where services or staff can understand the impact that incidents may have on them, and we support to develop techniques to prevent vicarious trauma occurring.

6. Policy review

This policy will be reviewed every three years by the health and safety officer, or whenever relevant legislation or circumstances change.

7. Links to other policies

[Equality and diversity policy](#)

[Tell us - our complaints policy](#)



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[OPS 05 Reporting serious incidents](#)

[001 Health and safety policy statement](#)

[General health and safety risk assessments](#)

[HS 05 Lone working policy](#)

[HR 03 Dignity at Work Policy](#)

[Safeguarding and wellbeing policy](#)

[My Journey](#)

[Preventing evictions and abandonments policy](#)

[OPS 47 Reflective practice procedure](#)

[OPS 51 Pet procedure](#)

Version	Date	Type	Summary of changes	Author
3	June 2026	Major	Replaced violence and aggression	RW