

Violence Prevention Arrangement

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1.0 Statement of purpose/objectives

This arrangement will assist in meeting the Council's core value to care for all employees and meet the legislative requirements.

2.0 Scope

This arrangement applies to all Shropshire Council employees including part-time, temporary staff and volunteers including those working for Shropshire Council controlled schools. The council recognises that violence & aggression, threatening or abusive behaviour or harassment towards its employees is unacceptable and that no employee will be required to accept it as part of their employment.

3.0 Definition

For the purpose of this arrangement, violence can be defined as; "Incidents where persons are abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances relating to their work, involving an explicit or implicit challenge to their safety, wellbeing or health", and includes threats made against employee's family.

4.0 Duty of care

Shropshire Council has a general duty of care to protect the health, safety and welfare of its employees as far as is reasonably practicable from workplace violence and aggression.

5.0 Assessment of Risk at the Workplace

Violence prevention relies on suitable and sufficient risk assessment. Managers and employees must work together to identify potential triggers for violence and aggression either from the design of the working environment, methods of communication or the way a service is provided. The risk assessment should also consider why people may become violent to employees, this may be a factor on deciding preventative and protective measures.

6.0 Managing Violence and Aggression in the Workplace.

It is very important that employees feel secure in their working environment. Managers must take responsibility at all times for their employees and ensure adequate safe systems of work and training are provided. Risk assessments will help identify potential issues to be addressed.

7.0 Responsibilities

Shropshire Council is committed to provide a safe working environment for all employees. The prevention and management of workplace violence and aggression is paramount, primarily this responsibility rests with directors to ensure that the managers responsible have sufficient resources to provide appropriate safe systems of work for the employees under their control.

8.0 Information, instruction and training

Training is an essential component in enabling employees to confidently manage potentially violent or aggressive situations.

Managers must ensure training needs are identified for those employees who are required to communicate with the public or service users, for example during induction, appraisal or risk assessment.

9.0 Implementation

Management guidance in the form of Frequently Asked Questions will be provided and updated to support the implementation of the arrangement.

10.0 Compliance

This arrangement will enable Shropshire Council to conform to statutory requirements and best current practice. Further references are provided in Appendix 1

11.0 Review of procedure

This procedure will be reviewed by the Health & Safety Team in three years.

Approving Body

Consultation	Date: October 2008	Health, Safety and Welfare Group
Approval	Date: March 2009	Health and Safety Forum
This revision	Date: November 2021	Health and Safety Officer

Violence Prevention Arrangement

Frequently Asked Questions

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Further information, references and links

1. Roles and Responsibilities/Who does what?

1.1 Shropshire Council as a local authority employer, through its elected members, has ultimate responsibility for compliance with Health and Safety legislation.

1.2 **The Chief Executive and Senior Management Team** are responsible for ensuring:

- The implementation of the prevention of Violence at Work Arrangement across all areas to ensure consistency of approach.
- The allocation of suitable and sufficient resources.

1.3 **Directors** are responsible for ensuring:

The implementation of the violence prevention arrangement and that all employees are familiar with the contents of the procedure insofar as it is relevant to their role and responsibilities.

- Ensuring health and safety standards and performance are monitored and resources effectively managed to prevent violence and aggression in the workplace.
- That suitable levels of competency for managers, supervisors and employees are maintained, to enable them to undertake work activities in safety.

1.4 **Line Managers/Supervisors** are responsible for:

- Ensuring risk assessments relating to potential violence and aggression are undertaken
- Identifying potential violence & aggression risks that employees could be exposed to whilst at work
- Ensuring appropriate risk reduction measures and training needs identified are actioned.
- Ensuring that all employees receive information, instruction and training on the management of potential violence and aggression in the workplace.
- Ensuring that appropriate work practices are observed by employees including safe working methods and adherence to the risk control measures identified in the risk assessment.
- Reporting all incidents of violence and aggression and carrying out investigations as appropriate
- Completing an incident report form on ERP – formerly known as Business World for all reports of violence, aggression or threats this; includes near misses.
- Ensuring any reactive panic alarms are fully operational, routinely tested and response is adequate
- Monitoring to ensure that systems are in place to manage risks associated with violence.

1.5 **The Health and Safety Team** is responsible for:

- Providing advice and guidance to managers on the management of violence at work arrangement.
- Providing advice and guidance to managers on specific training available.

- 1.6 The Occupational Health Service** is responsible for:
- Providing occupational medical advice and guidance or counselling and organising specialist advice and examination where necessary.
- 1.7 All employees** of Shropshire Council including part-time, temporary staff and volunteers are responsible for:
- Complying with the requirements of the violence prevention arrangement.
 - Assisting with the risk assessment process as required.
 - Co-operate with the safe systems of work as identified to enable Shropshire Council to comply with their health & safety responsibilities.
 - Reporting any concerns to their line manager as soon as possible, including issues of work practices, in order that remedial actions can be taken.
 - Report any incidents of violence or verbal abuse at work by completing an on-line report on ERP (Business World).
- 2. What are the categories of violence?**
For risk assessment purposes, violence in the workplace can be broadly defined into 3 categories.
- Violence committed by a person with no legitimate connection with the workplace.
 - Violence committed by a service user or customer.
 - Violence committed by an employee to another employee.
- 3. What are the common forms of violence?**
The common forms of violence can include.
- Name calling and other verbal abuse
 - Staring at a person in a menacing manner
 - Shouting at a person in an intimidating fashion
 - Threatening behaviour
 - Verbally threatening to injure/kill a person (or their friends and family)
 - Physically jostling, pinching, scratching, punching or kicking a person
 - Hair pulling or spitting
 - An attack with a weapon (a weapon can be any physical item e.g. knife, fire extinguisher, hammer).
- 4. What are the effects of violence and aggression?**
If left uncontrolled, violence in the workplace could lead to.
- Death or injury
 - Trauma
 - Low morale and motivation
 - Sickness and increased absenteeism
 - Stress
 - Poor working relations
- 5. Are there any practical tips to help prevent violence or aggression?**
When confronted with a potentially violent situation it is important that you remember the following

- Be prepared for the rare, unpredictable and unexpected incident
- Stay calm
- Try not to respond aggressively or be drawn into an argument
- Trust your intuition and never underestimate the threat
- If you feel threatened do not hesitate to seek assistance
- Always record details of what happened
- Call the police if appropriate.

6. How can I protect my employees from violence and aggression?

Safe practice is part of good practice, be prepared, if you think there is a risk, discuss your concerns with colleagues and other managers

- Gather as much information as possible about potentially threatening service users
- Know how to recognise potentially violent or aggressive situations early
- Assess the risks
- Be clear what actions may need to be taken, ensure your exit and diffusion strategies are in place and that staff are trained and.
- Feel capable about taking those actions
- Feel confident that the safety precautions will work.

7. How can I reduce the risks of violence and aggression?

Managers must take responsibility at all times for their employees and ensure adequate safe systems of work are provided.

Risk assessments will help identify potential issues to be addressed.

- Access to adequate technology (alarms, panic buttons, CCTV)
- Necessary procedures to adopt if the alarm is sounded
- Workers suitable skilled in their work and trained
- Information and guidance provided which is jargon free
- Good record keeping ensuring colleagues are kept aware of incidents and risks
- Know the signs that indicate a person may become violent
- Employees are conversant with procedures and know how to use them if the situation gets out of control, including leaving the scene
- Always review incidents and learn, re-plan for the future
- Provide support that employees feel confident to use.

8. What is hate crime?

Hate crime is defined as any crime or incident motivated by prejudice or hate, and includes crimes based on race, disability, sexual orientation and faith.

9. What is risk assessment?

Risk assessment is a process for identifying and controlling hazards of an organisation's activities. It is as relevant to volunteers as it is to employees. A hazard is anything with the potential to cause harm, such as a faulty electrical socket. Risk is the likelihood of it causing harm and the degree of harm it could cause, such as an electric shock which could lead to a fatality. Risk assessment involves identifying all hazards, assessing risks and putting in place measures to control significant risks. Assessing risk requires detailed knowledge of workplace activities and practices that is normally only possessed by people who do the work. Risk assessment should always involve both employees and volunteers.

NB: In situations where there is potential risk when Lone Working

Refer to Lone Working Arrangements section 5.0 “Assessment of Risk at the Workplace” and follow the best practice guides for Lone Working.

10. Who should carry out the risk assessment?

It is the responsibility of managers to ensure suitable and sufficient risk assessments for potentially violent or aggressive situations are carried out. The risk assessment will identify appropriate risk reduction measures. Managers must ensure these are implemented. The risk assessment will also identify any training needs. The risk assessment will be made available to relevant employees and safety representatives.

11. Where can I get further training?

Training is available via the Occupational Health and Safety Team. Specific areas also provide job related training including Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) Verbal and Safety Intervention™ training and Team Teach (via external provider).

Training Course	Explanation	Types of Job
Personal Safety at Work	This training will raise the awareness of personal risk and safety. and provides techniques to de-escalate conflict & aggression	Lone workers and employees who may have to deal with members of the public, who may be at risk from aggressive behaviour for example; Admin, Library, Transport, Leisure and Social Care workers etc.
General Lone Working & Personal Safety	Employees who work alone	Lone workers
CPI Verbal Intervention™ training To discuss this training further please contact JointTraining@shropshire.gov.uk or visit https://shropshire.gov.uk/joint-training/ for more information.	This training will support staff to: -Respond to crisis situations with a focus on prevention, using verbal de-escalation skills and strategies where restraint is inappropriate -Recognise signs of distress and gain a broad range of tools to help them intervene early to prevent conflict.	Recommended for staff who work in environments that require safe responses to escalating behaviours, but not restrictive or physical intervention techniques. 1)Self-led online learning (2-3 hours) 2)Instructor led Zoom session (2.5 hours)
CPI Safety Intervention™ training To discuss this training further please contact JointTraining@shropshire.gov.uk or visit	This programme includes all of the elements included in the Verbal Intervention™ programme. -Staff will learn simple behaviour assessment and decision-making skills to	Recommended for staff working in health and social care who need to prevent and/or intervene in crisis situations.

https://shropshire.gov.uk/joint-training/ for more information.	ensure escalation is avoided -When faced with a behavioural crisis that places staff or others at risk of injury, staff will learn how to focus on the least-restrictive physical intervention	1) Self-led online learning (2-3 hours) 2) Instructor led classroom based session for either ½ day or a full day (This is dependent on the level of physical intervention skills required)
Team Teach	Employees who may have to use specialised techniques to prevent harm or injury from a physical attack.	Teachers and School Staff

12. Do I need to record violent or aggressive behaviour/incidents?
Yes, all incidents of violence or aggression must be reported using the Council Accident Reporting procedures (on-line via ERP).

13. How do I report violence or aggression?
In the first instance, you must report the incident to your line manager/supervisor where appropriate. The incident of violence or aggression must be reported using the Council on-line accident reporting procedure, via ERP.

14. What support is available after a violent or aggressive incident?
Appropriate support will be provided by line managers/supervisors, if professional support is required, Shropshire Council has a counselling and support service available to all employees. This can be accessed by contacting the Occupational Health Service.

15. What are the legal considerations?
It is the civil right of any person to report an offence to the police, such incidents should be discussed with line managers/supervisors to consider if police action is appropriate.

16. Where can I go for further advice or counselling?
The Occupational Health Service can provide advice and counselling or alternatively there is an independent support & counselling service. Network of Staff Supporters (NOSS) is our independent counselling service which is provided free of charge and is available to all employees.

17. What are the signs of potentially violent behaviour?
Potentially difficult situations can often be anticipated, the signs of potentially violent behaviour include the following:

- Restless behaviour which may include pushing, noisiness and jostling
- Deliberately provocative conduct
- Sudden change in tone, volume or speech pattern
- Attention seeking conduct
- Over sensitive reaction
- Threatening conduct, verbal abuse

- A feeling of heightened tension
- Most violent and aggressive acts result from a build up and progression of factors, alertness to such signs and signals can enable early intervention and prevention.

18. Can I have a personal alarm?

Personal alarms could be issued as a resource, if identified as an additional control measure in a risk assessment, but it is important to remember that the personal alarm alone may not prevent a personal attack also the alarm may not be heard in some circumstances (e.g. lone working or in remote locations). For further advice and guidance on personal alarms please contact the Health and Safety Team.

19. Who monitors the use of panic alarms/personal alarms?

- Where panic alarms have been installed:
- The alarm must be routinely tested to ensure correct function.
- It is the responsibility of line management to ensure instruction training is provided.
- All employees and line management, who would operate/respond to alarm activation, must be fully conversant local response procedure.
- Alarm sounders/bell must be clearly identified in work areas.
- If personal alarms have been issued, it is the responsibility of the individual to ensure the personal alarm is fully functional.
- The issue of personal alarms must be recorded by line managers and routine maintenance (e.g. battery change) must be in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

20. How can I report any concerns?

Employees who have any concerns relating to personal safety or potential violence and aggression should discuss the issue with their line manager, or raise the issue at team meetings. The Council on-line (ERP) accident report form must be completed to report an incident.

21. Is there other related guidance?

Further guidance can be found on the intranet under; Policies and Guidance/HR and Payroll. A poster is available for display in public areas – see appendix 2.

22. What is the whistle-blowing procedure?

Shropshire Council operates a 'whistle Blowing' procedure which may be accessed via the intranet.

23. Where can I get further advice?

Further advice can be provided by the Health & Safety Team. Further advice on information and instruction in lone working situations can be obtained by referencing the Lone Working Arrangements which are available on the intranet.

24. Where can I get further information?

The Councils Corporate Health & Safety Policy, available on the intranet.

Health & Safety Executive: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg69.pdf>

Further references are given in appendix 1 below.

Further references are also given in the Lone Working Arrangements.

Appendix 1

Further information and references

- The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974
- The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (as amended).
- The Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977
- The Health & Safety (Consultation with employees) Regulations 1996
- INDG69 Violence at Work – a guide for employers.

**We will treat all visitors
with respect and courtesy
and ask for the same in return.**



**Aggressive behaviour or threats of
violence will be taken very seriously.**

Thank you.