



hebridean housing  
partnership



# ▶ Managing Violence & Aggression at Work Policy

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# MANAGING VIOLENCE & AGGRESSION AT WORK POLICY

## INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This policy sets out our response to any violent or aggressive behaviour involving its employees, its contractors or its visitors.
- 1.2 In accordance with its responsibilities for the Health and Safety (H&S) of employees, we will apply a zero tolerance approach to violence and aggression against employees, and will take all reasonably practicable steps to prevent violence in the workplace.
- 1.3 These will include the provision of safe systems of work, suitable protective equipment and appropriate training.
- 1.4 Where incidents of violent behaviour from members of the public take place, we will provide appropriate support and help to the victim.
- 1.5 We will take appropriate action against anybody threatening verbally or physically or committing violent acts against employees or visitors on any sites or premises from which the organisation operates or against employees going about their lawful duties.

## AIMS

- 2.1 Prevention of violence is the key aim. It is accepted that violence may occur during the course of an employee's duty but we do not consider that it should be accepted as part of the job.
- 2.2 Our aims are to provide the best possible service to promote and maintain the good health of the people it serves. Our tenants, housing applicants and visitors can expect to be treated with respect whilst employees working for or with HHP are entitled to work without fear of abuse or violence.
- 2.3 Violence is not accepted as an inevitable occupational hazard but as an aspect of challenging behaviour that can be anticipated, reduced and managed to minimize the risk of reoccurrence.
- 2.4 We will develop and implement procedures for the assessment of the potential risk of violence in respect of each job within their area of responsibility.
- 2.5 The organisation will also take appropriate steps to provide employees with the equipment and training to minimise incidents, and to prevent their escalation, with the emphasis on reducing tensions without physical intervention

## IMPLEMENTING THE POLICY

- 3.1 The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy.
- 3.2 Procedures relating to the implementation, monitoring and enforcement of the Policy will be developed and maintained by the Health & Safety Committee as required.

- 3.3 Day-to-day responsibility for the implementation of this policy lies with line managers but all employees are obliged to adhere to, and facilitate the implementation of the policy in the workplace.
- 3.4 Employees are requested to record all incidents (including verbal abuse, threats and actual physical assault), whether large or small, accurately and as soon as possible. Statements should also be taken from witnesses where appropriate.
- 3.5 Employees are also asked to co-operate by completing survey forms fully and accurately and by volunteering relevant information.
- 3.6 Information will be collated with a view to assessing the scale and nature of the problem on a company-wide basis, and coordinating a response.
- 3.7 All employees are reminded of their duty not to endanger themselves or their colleagues. In particular, they are warned against using provocative language or gestures towards members of the public.
- 3.8 While attempting to prevent an act of violence no employee should risk his or her life or the lives of others.
- 3.9 In an emergency, employees should dial 999 and ask for the Police.
- 3.10 The senior manager on site is authorised to take whatever immediate action he believes necessary in order to deal with a violent incident.
- 3.11 We will inform the appropriate enforcing authority when a reportable incident occurs. We will also, in relation to incidents involving our customers, write to them informing them that they have been flagged as being a visit risk. This risk flag will be used to inform us and those working on its behalf as to future visit protocol. The flag will remain in place until we are satisfied that the risk is no longer significant. This will be reviewed on an annual basis.
- 3.12 Managers, after appropriate consultation, will prepare a report on the incident and make recommendations for immediate action, where applicable, to the Health & Safety Committee.
- 3.13 Report forms will be analysed by the Health & Safety Committee and incidents classified in order to build up a picture of violent occurrences from which lessons may be drawn. When a pattern of violence emerges, the Health & Safety Committee will make recommendations as a priority to the Management Team.
- 3.14 Where the need for preventive action is identified, the organisation will take all practicable steps to achieve a safer workplace. These may include:
  - a) measures to improve the system of work;
  - b) provision of additional protective equipment;
  - c) provision of alarm systems;
  - d) reorganising the job to lessen the risk of violence;
  - e) transferring the employee, after consultation;
  - f) redesigning work areas;
  - g) increased training in avoiding and handling violent situations; and
  - h) reassessment of staffing levels.

- 3.15 Employees and their representatives are requested to co-operate fully in planning and executing any changes considered necessary to safeguard the workforce.
- 3.16 All employees who are working away from base must observe safe practices (as detailed in the Lone Working Policy and its procedures) and not put themselves at risk from violent attack.
- 3.17 When keeping an appointment away from the office, employees must check the identity and risk status of the person they are going to meet and leave his details and telephone number with their line manager, together with details of the time and place of the meeting.
- 3.18 When travelling on the organisation's business, employees should not carry more cash than is necessary.
- 3.19 Employees should not travel alone when transporting cash or valuables, if the value of the cash or valuables exceeds the thresholds laid down in our insurance policies which are updated annually. (See Appendix 1) A regular pattern of bank visits should also be avoided.
- 3.20 Employees must on no account give lifts to hitchhikers while travelling on the organisation's business.
- 3.21 Where necessary, personal alarms and mobile telephones will be provided by the organisation.
- 3.22 Employees should not hesitate to call the Police to a violent incident or to consult them if they are worried about the possibility of attack while away from the office.
- 3.23 Where employees are travelling during their working day, systems will be established whereby the location of individuals at any particular time can be determined; this may include the requirement to report to a central point at the end of an appointment or working day. Such systems must be strictly adhered to. (See Lone Working Policy and Procedures)
- 3.24 In the case of employees whose families are believed to be at risk because of their position, the organisation will consult security experts and take appropriate action to safeguard the people concerned.
- 3.25 Not all violent incidents are unavoidable. With effective training employees can learn to defuse potentially violent situations and to minimize risk.
- 3.26 Training in appropriate techniques will take place on a regular basis from induction onwards.
- 3.27 Employees are expected to display a sympathetic and supportive attitude towards victims of violence.
- 3.28 Where an employee suffers injury or illness as a result of violence in the course of employment which necessitates time off work, the sick pay scheme may be extended at the discretion of the Chief Executive.
- 3.29 Counselling or referral to a counselling service will be offered by HHP, if appropriate.
- 3.30 Guidance and help with legal action, where applicable, will be provided.

- 3.31 All proposals relating to measures to reduce the risk of violence will be discussed by the Health & Safety Committee. Where urgent action is necessary the Executive Team will take the appropriate steps and consult with the Health & Safety Committee as soon as possible.

#### **COMMUNICATING THE POLICY**

- 4.1 We will inform its employees about the Managing Violence and Aggression at Work Policy. All employees will be trained in the operation of the policy.
- 4.2 All new employees will be given a copy of the Managing Violence and Aggression at Work Policy (e.g. at induction).
- 4.3 Training should also include ensuring that those people responsible for carrying out risk assessments are competent to do so.
- 4.4 A copy of the policy will be posted on our intranet.

#### **MONITORING AND REVIEW OF POLICY**

- 5.1 We will review this policy every 3 years. More frequent reviews will be considered if, for example, there is a need to respond to new legislation/policy guidance

## APPENDIX 1 – MAX VALUE OF MONIES TO BE TRANSPORTED BY HHP STAFF

The current 2019 limits of our insurance policy are:

- In transit or whilst in Bank Night Safe - £3,000

## POLICY CHANGE HISTORY

| Version | Change Applied                                           | Date      | By            |
|---------|----------------------------------------------------------|-----------|---------------|
| 1       | New policy based on the Croner Model Policy              | June 2011 | Angus Smith   |
| 1.1     | General review of the policy with minor amendments made. | May 2014  | Seonaid Paton |
| 1.2     | Appendix 1 updated                                       | May 2019  | Angus Smith   |
|         |                                                          |           |               |
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|         |                                                          |           |               |

## INTERPRETATIONS & ABBREVIATIONS

The following interpretation and abbreviations are used in this policy:

| Word                                                                                                          | Interpretation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>HHP or Partnership</i>                                                                                     | Hebridean Housing Partnership                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <i>Board</i>                                                                                                  | Means the Board of the Hebridean Housing Partnership                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <i>Board Members</i>                                                                                          | All Members of the Board including co-opted Members                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <i>Physical Violence</i>                                                                                      | The intentional application of force to the person of another, without lawful justification, resulting in physical injury or personal discomfort. Examples include - assault causing death; assault causing serious injury; minor injuries; kicking; biting; punching; use of weapons; use of missiles; spitting; scratching; sexual assault; deliberate self harm.                        |
| <i>Non-Physical Assault</i>                                                                                   | The use of inappropriate words or behavior causing distress and/or constituting harassment. Examples include - verbal abuse; racial or sexual abuse; threats – with or without weapons; harassment or stalking; physical posturing; threatening gestures; abusive phone calls; threatening use of dogs; swearing; shouting; name calling; bullying; insults; innuendo; deliberate silence. |
| <i>Health &amp; Safety Committee</i>                                                                          | Means all Members of the Committee                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| All references to the masculine gender in this policy shall read as equally applicable to the feminine gender |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |



HHP is a registered society under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014, Registered Number: 2644R(S), Registered Office: Creed Court, Gleann Seileach Business Park, Willowglen Road, STORNOWAY, Isle of Lewis HS1 2QP. It is a charity registered in Scotland, Charity Number: SC035767, registered as Registered Social Landlord with the Scottish Housing Regulator, Registration Number: 359 and registered as a Property Factor, Registration Number PF000183

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