



## **Violence at Work Policy**

Northwards recognises and takes seriously the potential problem of violence to its staff.

In accordance with our responsibilities for the health and safety of employees all reasonably practicable steps to prevent violence at work will be taken. These will include the provision of safe systems of work, suitable protective equipment and appropriate training. Where incidents of violent behaviour take place Northwards will provide appropriate support and help to the victim.

### **Definition of Violence**

The application of force, verbal threats or serious abuse by members of the public or staff, arising out of our work, regardless of being at the place of work.

Violent behaviour includes:

1. Verbal abuse or threats.
2. Serious or persistent harassment including racial or sexual harassment.
3. Threats with a weapon.
4. Physical attack, animal attack or attack against property
5. Perceived threat of violence.

### **Procedure**

1. An initial risk assessment of the potential risk of violence in respect of each job will be made and documented. Managers will make on-going risk assessments in respect of jobs within their area of responsibility in order to keep records up to date.
2. Managers will maintain their own awareness and provide guidance to staff to ensure awareness of potentially violent situations or customers.
3. To ensure staff safety, customer files should contain information of any threatening behaviour or acts of violence. Information should be shared with other colleagues as necessary e.g. call centre receptionists, anyone visiting customers etc.
4. Managers will ensure safety measures are built into the design and facilities of buildings and incorporated into working practices in order to develop safe systems of working.

5. 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 or other staff.
6. While attempting to prevent an act of violence no employee should take unreasonable risks to their own safety or the safety of others.
7. In an emergency, employees should dial 999 and ask for the police. Remember it may take several minutes for the Police to arrive.
8. The most senior person on site is authorised to take whatever immediate action he or she believes necessary in order to deal with a violent incident. This may include closing a building or banning/suspending perpetrators. This should be done in a sensible manner to try and prevent retaliation.
9. All staff subject to a violent incident must at the earliest possible opportunity report it verbally and on the appropriate form to their Line Manager.
10. The Manager concerned will investigate all incidents and after referring to the Chief Executive will take appropriate action against the perpetrator.
11. In the case of employees whose families are believed to be at risk, Northwards will take reasonable steps to safeguard the people concerned.

### **Training and Support**

1. Not all incidents are unavoidable, but Northwards believe that with training employees can learn to defuse some potentially violent situations and minimise risk.
2. Line Managers will ensure that staff receive appropriate training on taking up a position with Northwards and refresher training as necessary.
3. If appropriate line managers should allow staff that have been victims of violence to go home or to be relieved of certain duties in the short term.
4. All staff are expected to display a sympathetic and supportive attitude towards victims of violence.
5. Where appropriate referral to a professional counsellor will be offered to victims of violence.

6. Northwards will pursue eviction, appropriate legal action or removal from the waiting list where staff have experienced violent or threatening behaviour from residents, applicants or the general public.
7. Northwards will treat any act of violence by a member of staff against another member of staff, customer or member of the public as gross misconduct that could lead to dismissal.
8. Northwards will provide to staff adequate insurance cover and access to legal advice giving reasonable financial support as necessary, where action is required.
9. The provision of mobile phones will be made following appropriate risk assessment procedures.

### **Monitoring**

1. Following any incident an Incident Report Form (see attached) should be completed by the member of staff, including statements from any witnesses. The completed form should be given to the employee's Line Manager for them to add any comments. A copy of the final document should be sent to the HR Manager.
2. Incident Report Forms will be analysed by the HR Manager in order to build up a picture of violent occurrences from which lessons may be drawn. Monitoring includes identifying any harassment of staff on the grounds of sex, race, disability or religion/belief.
3. Where a pattern of violence emerges, a recommendation for action will be made as a priority, to the Chief Executive and the HR and Equality Sub-Committee.

## Violent Incident Report Form

### CONFIDENTIAL

Any member of staff who has been threatened, intimidated, harassed or assaulted in the course of their work should complete this form. The information provided on this form will ensure that a true and accurate record of events is kept and that monitoring can be undertaken of the incidents facing staff in the course of their duties.

A form must be completed for every incident.

A copy of the completed form should be sent to the HR Manager.

**Name of Staff Member involved in a violent incident:**

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**Sex:** Male  Female  **Date of Birth:** .....

**Sexual orientation (Optional):** Gay  Lesbian  Heterosexual

**Ethnic Origin:**

White: British  White: Irish

White: Other  Asian/Asian British Indian

Asian/Asian British Pakistani  Asian/Asian British Bangladeshi

Asian/Asian British Other  Black/Black British Caribbean

Black/Black British African  Black/Black British Other

Chinese  Other

**Religion/Belief (optional):** .....

**Disability** Yes  No

**Job Title:** .....

**Work location:** .....

**Date of incident:** .....

**Time of incident:** .....AM/PM

**Exact location of incident:** .....

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**Name of any other persons involved in incident other than the perpetrator and witnesses:**

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**Name and address of Perpetrator/s if known:**

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**Description of Perpetrator/s if identity not known:**

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**Name and contact details of any witnesses:** .....

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**Witness statements attached**                      **Yes**                       **No**

**Have the Police been informed?**                      **Yes**                       **No**

**If yes give the name of the Police Officer and crime ref No:**

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**Give a full description of the incident:**

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**Nature of injuries if any and to whom: .....**

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**Was medical help needed? Give details .....**

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**Any other assistance that the Company can provide? Give details...**

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**Line Manager comments: (include details of any action taken or to be taken e.g. prosecution, insurance claim, referral for counselling, training, legal advice etc).**

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**Signature of staff member: .....**

**Signature of Line Manager: .....**

**Date: .....**

**Please send a copy of this completed form to the HR Manager**