

## **Violence and Aggression at Work Policy**

The Bristol Methodist District. (Charity Number 1134873)

First Issued	January 2025
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### **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 This policy sets out our approach to protecting and supporting staff who are subjected to violence and aggression at work, by a third party.
- 1.2 It sets out the steps that we take to investigate and deal with complaints of violence and aggression by third parties and how we will support those affected.
- 1.3 We are committed to providing our workforce with a safe place to work, in terms of both physical safety and mental wellbeing. We take a zero-tolerance approach to violent and aggressive behaviour directed at our staff and will fully support anyone who is faced with such unacceptable behaviour.
- 1.4 This policy does not form part of your contract of employment, and we reserve the right to amend or withdraw it at any time.

### **2 Scope**

- 2.1 This policy applies to anyone working for us. This includes employees, workers, contractors, volunteers, interns, and apprentices.

### **3 What is violence and aggression at work?**

- 3.1 For the purposes of this policy, violence and aggression at work is any incident in which you are abused, threatened, or assaulted by a third party in circumstances related to your work.
- 3.2 The violence and aggression could come from anybody that you come into contact within the course of your work. Violence and aggression at work can include:
  - 3.2.1 physical attacks; and
  - 3.2.2 verbal abuse or threats, whether these are made face to face, online or over the phone.

### **4 What is excluded under this policy**

- 4.1 Under this policy, violence and aggression at work does not include incidents unrelated to your work activity, such as domestic abuse. However, we fully support staff who experience domestic abuse and encourage you to ask for help if you need it.
- 4.2 You can do this by approaching your Line Manager, a trusted colleague, or a senior manager who, in confidence, can signpost you accordingly.
- 4.3 This policy does not cover incidents of violence and aggression between colleagues. Such instances are managed under our Anti-Bullying Policy or Grievance Procedure.

### **5 Immediate steps following an incident**

- 5.1 The immediate priority following a violent and aggressive incident is to:
  - 5.1.1 ensure you are physically safe and protected, including separating you and the perpetrator.
  - 5.1.2 seek any medical attention or first aid that you require, which could include administering first aid for minor injuries or calling an ambulance for more serious injuries.
  - 5.1.3 consider whether to involve the police immediately.

5.1.4 consider whether there is a safeguarding risk and act accordingly.

5.1.5 provide you with any necessary moral and emotional support.

## **6 Reporting incidents of violence/aggression**

6.1 You are required to report all incidents of violence and aggression at work that you have experienced, or that you have witnessed as soon as you can after the incident.

6.2 The report should be made by you to your Line Manager or, if you are unable to make the report (for example because you have been injured or traumatised), by a colleague on your behalf.

## **7 Reporting incidents to the police**

7.1 All physical attacks that result in injury will be reported to the police unless the victim objects.

7.2 For physical attacks that do not result in injury, we will involve the police only if the victim requests us to do so.

7.3 All acts of violence and aggression, whether physical or verbal, that may constitute a hate crime or hate incident will be reported to the police, unless the victim objects.

## **8 Investigation and outcome**

8.1 We will investigate as soon as possible after receiving a report of violence and aggression at work.

8.2 Where you are the victim of violence and aggression at work, the relevant manager will write to you confirming that they are investigating and the timescales for completion.

8.3 The investigator will also interview you to gather as much detail as possible about the incident, including who the alleged perpetrator is; the nature of the incident; the time and date of the alleged act of violence and aggression; and the details of any potential witnesses.

8.4 You should bear in mind that, if the police are involved, the investigator will need to ensure that their investigation does not prejudice or disrupt the police proceedings.

8.5 In these circumstances, the investigator will pursue the investigation as far as possible in the normal way while ensuring that they cooperate with any requests made by the police, including any instructions that they give about what matters can be pursued.

8.6 Following the investigation, the relevant manager will write to you informing you of the outcome and what further actions are being taken, which could include:

8.6.1 actions in relation to an individual, for example barring the perpetrator from our premises or refusing access to the venues that we operate from, and liaising with the police to provide them with our investigatory report; and

8.6.2 wider steps to reduce the risk of work-related violence and aggression, for example changing the workplace design, providing information, and training, and amending working procedures.

8.7 Where you are the victim of violence and aggression at work and you are not happy with the outcome of the investigation, you may decide to raise a formal complaint under our Anti-Bullying Policy or Grievance Procedure.

## **9 Support for victims of violence/aggression at work**

### Internal support

9.1 To support individuals who experience violence and aggression at work, we:

- 9.1.1 run a mental health first-aid programme, with our mental health first-aiders available as a first point of contact following a violent and aggressive incident.
- 9.1.2 are supportive of staff who require sick leave to recover their physical and mental wellbeing, including the potential provision of enhanced sick pay when an individual is on sick leave as a direct result of having experienced violence and aggression at work.

#### Risk assessments

- 9.2 We are committed to undertaking ongoing suitable and sufficient assessments of the risk of violence and aggression in the workplace. Line Managers will:
  - 9.2.1 undertake regular risk assessments of activities to identify significant risks within the working environment of violence and aggression occurring.
  - 9.2.2 ensure that members of staff are consulted on the arrangements for managing the risks and dealing with incidents.
  - 9.2.3 encourage the workforce to report all incidents of violence and aggression.
  - 9.2.4 review job descriptions to identify tasks that may pose a high risk of violence and aggression.
  - 9.2.5 identify people who potentially pose a risk of causing violence or aggression.
  - 9.2.6 take steps to reduce the risk of work-related violence and aggression when risks have been identified or after violent and aggressive incidents, which could include:
    - 9.2.6.1 changing the workplace design.
    - 9.2.6.2 providing information and training.
    - 9.2.6.3 amending working procedures.
    - 9.2.6.4 ensuring that significant findings of risk assessments are recorded.

#### **10 Data protection**

- 10.1 We will ensure that individuals' personal data, including information about their health, collected when preventing and dealing with violence at work (for example during risk assessments and incident investigations) is handled in accordance with our Data Protection Policy.

#### **11 Review**

- 11.1 This policy may be reviewed at any time at the request of any member of staff, but it will be automatically reviewed two years after initial approval and thereafter on a biennial basis unless organisational changes, legislations, guidance, or non-compliance prompt an earlier review.

#### **12 Definitions**

- 12.1 The Bristol Methodist District ("we", "us", "our")
- 12.2 The Employee ("you", "your")

#### **Document control box**

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