

Occupational Violence and Aggression Policy

This policy is about protecting employees and other persons at work from the risk of violence and aggression in the workplace.

Purpose

[Insert organisation] is committed to the provision of a safe and healthy work environment and safe work procedures that protect employees and other persons at work from the risk of occupational violence and aggression (OVA).

Business Priorities and Objectives

As priorities, [insert organisation] will ensure that:

- Employees and other persons at work affected by the organisation's activities will be protected as far as reasonably practicable from all forms of OVA.
- A risk management approach will be followed to eliminate or minimise the risks of OVA.
- We have regular consultation with employees and the OHS committee, to discuss OVA concerns and the factors likely to increase the risk of OVA.
- Employees and other persons at work are informed about unacceptable behaviours in the workplace.
- All incidents and near misses of violence or aggression are reported via [Insert reporting system]. External reporting to WorkSafe may also be required, in the case of notifiable incidents. Refer to *Incident Notification Policy*.
- All incidents and near misses reported are reviewed by [Insert appropriate position e.g. manager or OHS Committee] and will be investigated to identify controls.
- All employees and other persons will be given an induction and on-going training to learn relevant skills and strategies on conflict and aggression management.
- Employees and other persons at work are trained on the appropriate response to the types of violence or aggression to which they are may be exposed.
- Appropriate action is taken after any incidents of violence and aggression, in terms of support, counselling and follow-up.
- Records of clients/visitors who have exhibited past behaviours of violence and aggression will be filed and shared amongst appropriate staff.
- We will implement appropriate security measures to protect the health and safety of staff from OVA.
- All allegations or acts of violence or aggression will be thoroughly investigated, and where appropriate may be referred to the Police.
- We will evaluate the effectiveness of the organisation's policies and procedures to minimise violence and aggression.

Definition:

'Occupational Violence and Aggression' – involves incidents in which a person is abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances relating to their work. This definition covers a broad range of actions and behaviours that can create a risk to the health and safety of employees and other persons at work.

Examples of work-related violence can include:

- biting, spitting, scratching, hitting, kicking
- pushing, shoving, tripping, grabbing
- throwing objects
- verbal threats
- threatening someone with a weapon, armed robbery
- sexual assault
- emotional abuse

Strategies in responding to OVA

- Use calm verbal and non-verbal communication to respond to the client or visitor who is being aggressive or violent.
- Escalate the situation by using support from other team members such as senior staff, management, or the police.
- Ask the client or visitor to leave.
- If the aggressor does not leave, ensure the safety of others and retreat to a safer place or leave the premises.

Manager Responsibilities

- The objectives of this policy are integrated into work processes.
- To build and maintain a workplace environment and culture that supports its commitment to maintaining a workplace that is free from violence and aggression.
- Investigate all incidents and near misses of OVA and complete the *Accident, Illness & Near Miss Investigation Report*.
- Provide on-going education and training for employees based on their risk of exposure to OVA.
- Ensure all new employees receive an induction in relation to preventing and managing OVA in the workplace.
- Manage the implementation and review of this policy.
- Ensure that all employees and other persons at work are made aware of this policy.

Employee Responsibilities

- Immediately report to their manager, any incidents or near misses of occupational violence or aggression which affect their own health or safety, or that of others in the workplace.
- Undertake and apply the training to respond to any incident of occupational violence or aggression.
- Support initiatives aimed at managing OVA.
- Cooperate and support this policy.

Risk Management

[Insert organisation] risk management of OVA is an approach that involves:

1. identifying OVA risks;
2. assessing the likelihood of those risks causing injury or illness;
3. implementing risk control measures to eliminate the risk/s (or, where that is not reasonably practicable, reducing the risk so far as is reasonably practicable); and
4. reviewing and improving the effectiveness of risk control measures over time.

Monitoring and review

[insert organisation] will review this policy annually.

Effectiveness of the policy will be assessed through

- feedback from employees and management
- review of the policy by management and committee to determine if objectives have been met, and to identify barriers and enablers to ongoing policy implementation

Related Resources

Accident, Illness & Near Miss Investigation Policy

Incident Notification Policy

Risk Management Policy

Relevant Forms

Please refer to the following relevant forms:

Form	Application
<i>Accident, Illness & Near Miss Report Form</i>	To be completed when there has been an accident, illness or near miss
<i>Worker Injury Report</i>	To be completed when a worker has been physically injured
<i>Accident, Illness & Near Miss Investigation Report</i>	To be completed when performing the investigation of an accident, illness or near miss