Employee Personal Protection

Safety Guidance Document

Lead Directorate and Service:	Corporate Resources - Human Resources, Safety Services
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1. Background

This safety guidance document on "Employee Personal Protection" provides information on managing personal risks including those associated with violent, aggressive and abusive behaviour, and lone working whilst delivering services in Council premises, schools, in privately owned or tenanted premises including customers own homes and across the wider area of the East Riding.

2. Foreword

In accordance with the Councils corporate safety policy, the Council is committed to pursuing continual improvements in health and safety. This safety guidance document supports this commitment and forms part of the Councils health and safety management system.

3. Implementation

Directorates are responsible for the implementation of this safety guidance document, and communication of its content as appropriate.

This safety guidance document is available on the Safety Services intranet page and, where employees do not have access to the council's intranet, via their line manager/headteacher.

The Council relies on the co-operation of all employees, and trades unions for the successful implementation of this safety guidance document.

A review of this safety guidance document will be undertaken 3 years after its implementation, and where significant changes in legislation or working practices deem this appropriate.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 Directors and Heads of Service

Directors and Heads of Services are ultimately responsible and accountable to the Chief Executive for ensuring this safety guidance document is issued to their management team.

4.2. Managers/Headteachers/ Supervisors

Managers/Headteachers/Supervisors are responsible for achieving the objectives of this safety guidance document where relevant to their area of service delivery and are responsible for ensuring that:

- The information contained within this safety guidance document is implemented and complied with;
- Risk assessments are completed taking on board staff feedback resulting from the completed 'employee personal protection assessment' found under *Appendix I* (which may be completed as a team or on an individual basis);
- Control measures (safe systems of work) are introduced to reduce any potential risks to a reasonable level;

- Relevant information, instruction and training is provided to staff to enable them to undertake their job safely and without risk;
- Sharing of information protocols are adopted and information on high risk individuals, premises/dwellings, remote locations, etc remain up to date;
- Management systems such as diary monitoring, telephone/radio communication, vehicle tracking, lone worker monitoring systems, etc are in place so that information regarding potentially vulnerable worker's whereabouts is available at all times;
- Emergency procedures are in place so that members of staff can obtain assistance if required;
- All incidents of violence, aggression, threatening and abusive behavior are investigated and recorded in accordance with the accident/ incident investigation safety guidance document.
- Wellbeing assessments/discussions are carried out wherever possible with victims of violence, aggression or threatening and abusive behavior following incidents.

4.3 Employees

Employees must ensure they carry out assigned tasks and duties in accordance with information, instruction, training and agreed safe systems of work. Specifically they must ensure:

- This safety guidance document is complied with;
- Review available databases and management systems (which may hold relevant information) particularly prior to undertaking visits to individual properties to minimise the risk;
- They participate in the completion and review of risk assessments by initially completing the 'employee personal protection assessment found under *Appendix I* (which may be completed as a team or on an individual basis) feeding back to their manager/headteacher;
- They cooperate to enable their manager/headteacher to formulate and implement effective management systems, including providing and keeping up to date personal information;
- They undertake training which has been identified to assist them in maintaining their personal protection whilst at work, such as managing challenging behaviour, dealing with difficult situations, conflict resolution and personal safety etc;
- They are aware of hazards and where required are able to carry out risk assessments (which may sometimes need to be 'dynamic') before undertaking visits to remote/unknown locations/educational visits, checking all available sources of background information. Employees required to carry out risk assessments should have appropriate training and competency;
- They inform their manager/headteacher of any concerns they have relating to violence at work and report any incidence of aggressive, violent, abusive or threatening behaviour;
- They participate in investigations and wellbeing discussions following incidents;
- Their own health and safety and that of others are not put at risk by their actions.

4.4 Safety Services

The primary function of Safety Services is to support the Council and its employees by providing professional, authoritative, impartial advice on all aspects of health, safety and wellbeing. Where managers/headteachers/supervisors require further assistance, safety

services will advise on achieving compliance with this safety guidance document and will support with incident investigations for major events.

4.5 Occupational Health

The Occupational Health Unit will support this policy and procedure by providing managers/headteachers/supervisors and employees with guidance on all work related health issues, including access to counselling services. Further information on the role of occupational health can be found on the Council's intranet.

5. Arrangements

5.1 Establishing Good Management Systems

Managers/headteachers/supervisors are responsible for establishing and maintaining a safe place of work and implementing safe working procedures when planning and managing service delivery. Documented procedures should be produced and should take in to account such things as:

- Personal safety and wellbeing of staff ;
- Safeguarding;
- Security arrangements;
- Dealing with violent and aggressive behaviour;
- Lone working;
- Risks associated with delivery of services to customers within council premises and schools;
- Risks associated with delivery of services in privately owned or tenanted premises including customers own homes;
- Risks associated with delivery of services in peoples own homes;
- Risks associated with delivery of services in remote areas.

5.2 Assessing Risks

The Council undertakes a number of activities which involve employees working in a variety of settings. The hazards associated with these settings and activities will vary dependant on the task being undertaken and the location in which it is being delivered.

Managers and headteachers are legally required to undertake risk assessments and introduce control measures to manage any identified risks associated with their area of service delivery. Managers and headteachers must undertake risk assessments in consultation with their staff.

Risk assessments must reflect the potential hazards associated with the work being undertaken, and safe systems of work and management controls must be introduced to reduce risks to their lowest level.

The risk assessment must cover all significant risks including arrangements for dealing with accidents and emergency situations including violence and aggression towards staff members. Where lone working is identified as part of an individual's job, appropriate measures must be put in place to manage the significant risks.

The risk assessment must take into account all employees including part time employees, shift workers and night workers.

The physical environment may have a bearing on the way individuals react towards staff members and may heighten the possibility of violent incidents occurring. Buildings need to be friendly, welcoming and non confrontational, whilst achieving appropriate levels of security.

Where required, interview facilities may need providing. These should create a friendly, conducive and safe environment which includes necessary security arrangements (desk layout, panic alarms, and means of escape).

It may however be necessary to have restricted public access in certain buildings such as schools, care homes etc, and robust security arrangements may need to be considered which satisfy the requirements of external regulatory bodies such as OfSTED and the Commission for Quality Care. In such cases consideration should be given to:
- Secure access arrangements (manned reception areas, key fobs, key pads, access intercoms, CCTV etc);
- Signing in procedures;
- Safeguarding procedures (CRB checks, staff accompanying visitors etc).

5.3   Managing the Risks

There may still be occasions where individuals have been granted access to secure premises and due to particular circumstances, they may become angry or agitated and display violent and aggressive behaviour.

)Customer-facing employees are frequently the employees that our customers meet and approach. They contribute to first impressions and they may be able to defuse anxiety, tension and potentially aggressive situations. Conversely if they are not appropriately trained and skilled to handle such situations they could exacerbate situations.

Managers and headteachers must ensure that front line employees are trained to deliver high levels of customer service excellence and that they have the appropriate training to enable them to deal with members of the public, and manage difficult situations which may have the potential to result in violent abusive or threatening behaviour towards the employee.

Similarly, employees working in such settings as schools, residential care establishments, care homes, day centres etc may also be at risk from exposure to violent and aggressive individuals and as such should be appropriately trained/skilled in methodologies which equip them to manage and deal with violent and aggressive incidents in accordance with safeguarding, child protection, and vulnerable adult procedures.

Those working in the community face additional risks. It is difficult to influence the working environment, so it is particularly important to ensure appropriate working arrangements are introduced to minimise any potential risks associated with the service delivery.

Those working in public places such as highways, open spaces, remote locations, may be at greater risk. It is essential that controls are in place to minimise the risks including pre-planning**,** risk assessments, safe systems of work, emergency procedures, and appropriate personal protective equipment including means of maintaining communication.

Managers/headteachers/supervisors must remind those employees who drive vehicles as part of their employment to do so in accordance with the requirements of the Highway Code, and insurance policies. In addition to these requirements, managers and headteachers must ensure that a risk assessment is carried out for those employees who as part of their duties carry passengers within vehicles.

It is recognised that in certain situations there is no alternative but to deliver services in privately owned or tenanted premises including customers own homes. The risk in these environments may vary and it is therefore essential that suitable pre-planning takes place which should include reference to background information on individuals and premises held on directorates own internal systems. Employees must be able to risk assess the premises and the situation at the point of service delivery (dynamic risk assessment) to minimise the risk when entering into unknown situations. The risk assessment must also assess if it is safe for an individual to visit on their own or if they should be supported by other employees or partner agencies. The following advice should be considered:

- **When arriving at unfamiliar premises/persons home.** If possible park in a well lit area facing the direction for departure and close to your destination. When entering premises, visually assess the premises, noting exits and route of escape. If possible avoid a customer/third party being between you and the door. Minimise the risks by avoiding confrontational body or verbal language. Keep your vehicle keys and mobile phone on your person.

- **Contingency plan for withdrawal from premises.** Having reason to suspect that a visit is unsafe due to behaviour exhibited by the customer or a third party ie substance misuse, alcohol misuse or lack of medication, then make a polite excuse, leave the premises if possible and contact office base and summon assistance. Lock yourself in your vehicle and await support if the service must be continued. If the service need not be continued return to office base and report the incident. All incidents must be reported and the databases updated if appropriate.

- **Being in a premises when a police raid takes place.** In the unlikely event of a police raid taking place whilst a member of staff is working in a customers home, employees must be instructed to follow instructions and stay neutral until it is safe and appropriate to make themselves known to the police. They must be instructed to state that they are a Council employee undertaking Council business. Employees must never attempt to reach for an identity badge or provide information in front of a third party which could put you at risk in the future.

5.4 Maintaining Employee Personal Details

The Council's employees are a valued key resource within the organisation. To manage their health and safety effectively it is important that Managers/Headteachers/Supervisors maintain up to date personal details for all their employees particularly those who work away from one fixed base. This must be held with the consent of the employee and must include:

- Full name, address, telephone numbers (business, personal, mobile), description of individual (photo is always useful);
- Next of kin contact details (work and home);
- Vehicle make, model, colour and registration (both for Council owned vehicles and

personal vehicles used for work) or a log of the vehicle assigned to an individual on a particular day;
- Driving licence and insurance details (which should be checked on at least an annual basis)
- Medical information if known (diabetic, epileptic).

Appendix II of this safety guidance document gives a suggested format for this information to be recorded on. This information will then need to be held appropriately (without breaching any confidentiality/data protection guidelines) so that it is available in an emergency.

5.5   Monitoring and Supporting Staff

It is vitally important that managers/headteachers/supervisors have in place systems to enable themselves and others to be aware of staff whereabouts so that they can monitor their safety especially when delivering services in the community. This must include:

- Preplanning work activities which may include detailing routes/work patterns so that individuals can be located or assisted in the event of an emergency;
- Where staff manage their own workloads, ensuring they keep diaries, prediction sheets; signing in and out books/boards are up to date with clear information. Where staff use electronic diaries these should be configured so that they can be accessed by their manager/headteacher/support officers;
- Protocols for recording staff whereabouts, which include name and locations of individuals being seen and estimated time of arrival and departure from each location;
- Systems to keep in contact with staff working away from the office, including the provision of radios, vehicle tracking devices, mobile phones and predetermined monitoring protocols;
- Systems for maintaining regular contact with those working from home or on their own in offices/other buildings;
- **Note:** If teams are unable to successfully monitor the whereabouts of staff they should consider the use of the corporate lone worker monitoring system provided through East Riding Lifeline on 01482 396052.

6.   Incident Management

Despite pre-planning, risk assessments and precautionary measures, events can still occur which will require managers/headteachers/supervisors to take immediate action. At this stage attention must focus on the employee rather than continuation of service delivery. Therefore managers/headteachers/supervisors must have systems in place to deal with:

- **Loss of contact with staff**. Try and track down the employee by phoning their mobile phone number, contacting their last known appointment, contacting colleagues who are working in the same geographical area to identify if the 'missing' employee's vehicle is still at the last known location and if not trace back to last known point of contact.
- **Contacting next of kin**. If all above has failed, contact the next of kin in a non-alarmist manner to enquire about any known whereabouts.
- **Police involvement**. Only when all options have been considered and the individual cannot be traced, then the police must be notified and all information provided to assist with their work.

7. **Reporting and Investigating Incidents**

In accordance with the Councils corporate safety policy and the Council's accident reporting guidelines, every manager/headteacher is responsible for, and will, ensure all accidents and incidents including violence and aggression are investigated and reported.

8. **Supporting Employees Post Incident**

The long term effects of having been a victim of violence will differ between individuals. The manager/headteacher must ensure that the employee receives full support as individuals can sometimes feel a sense of failure when they have been involved in such an incident. They should be reassured this is a normal reaction. If in the opinion of the manager/headteacher; the employee would benefit from professional support (counselling etc.), then the employee should be referred to the Occupational Health Unit who will facilitate this.

The employee has a right to notify the police of any incident of violence and aggression. Managers/headteachers/supervisors should ascertain whether the police are likely to take any action. If the Police decide to take action then the manager/headteacher must give the employee all the assistance they require.

Even though an employee is medically fit to return to work, they may still experience some long term effects especially if returning to similar situations. This is even more likely if the employee is returning to a similar situation in which the incident was originally triggered. Consideration should also be given to how a situation can be managed to eliminate contact with the aggressor

Managers/headteachers/supervisors who believe that the individual, and/or the individual's work is suffering as a result of long-term effects arising from the incident, must handle the situation sensitively, seeking advice from Human Resources, the Occupational Health Unit, and Safety Services as necessary.

The Council's Attendance at Work Policy and Procedure should be referred to for information on absence management and ongoing support resulting from the incident.

Appendix 1

Name/Team:		Work Base & Telephone Number:		Date Completed:	

Employee Personal Protection Assessment Form *(To be completed either individually or as a team)*	YES	NO ⇩	N/A	Comments
1.0 Service Delivery				
1.1 Do you come in to contact with individuals who may exhibit violent and aggressive behaviour?				
1.2 Do you have access to relevant information about individuals (including information shared by other agencies) which may indicate any potential risks (including when working outside core hours)?				
1.3 Do you have to work alone in situations where potentially violent and aggressive individuals may be present?				
1.4 If you have concerns about delivering services in vulnerable/isolated locations have these been raised with a manager?				
1.5 Have you provided your manager with up to date 'personal information', including emergency contact telephone numbers, your address, type of vehicle you drive, next of kin etc?				
1.6 Are you aware of the mechanisms which are in place to support you should you become the victim of violence and aggression whilst at work?				
2.0 Procedures, Management and Training				
2.1 Have you read and understood the safety guidance document on 'Employee Personal Protection'?				

Employee Personal Protection Assessment Form _(To be completed either individually or as a team)_	YES	NO ⇩	N/A	Comments
2.2	If required, have you received training to help you identify, and manage potential violence and aggressive behaviour, which includes looking at your approach, body language, attitude and mannerisms and how this may influence the customers, clients, and young person's behaviour?				
2.3	If required, have you received training to help you deal with verbal aggression, including verbal aggression received over the telephone?				
2.4	If required, have you been trained how to respond/react in violent and aggressive situations including how to defuse potentially violent situations and premature termination of interviews?				
2.5	Are you aware of the procedure which must be followed for recording and reporting incidents of violence and aggression (AIF Accident, Incident Form)?				
2.6	Are reported incidents of violence and aggression investigated and discussed as a team where appropriate (whilst at the same time respecting the victim's rights to confidentiality)?				
2.7	Are risk assessments and safe systems of work reviewed after significant incidents, and if necessary revised?				
2.8	Are you happy that safe systems of work and risk assessments cover all aspects of the work you are required to undertake.				
2.9	If you are required to transport clients, young people etc on your own, in your own vehicle, are appropriate safe systems of work, procedures and risk assessments in place?				

Employee Personal Protection Assessment Form *(To be completed either individually or as a team)*	YES	NO ⇩	N/A	Comments
3.0 Planning Work, Attending Meetings and Making Visits				
3.1 Do you have a clear understanding and appreciation of the hazards and risks associated with your area of work?				
3.2 Do you understand the importance of ensuring you carefully prepare when interacting with known customers, clients, young people etc who may have any previous history associated with violence and aggression?				
3.3 Are appropriate locations, premises etc available which will safely support working with customers, clients, young persons?				
3.4 If you visit people in outside locations do you plan your appointments and ensure that someone within the office/team knows where you are and how to contact you at any given time during the day?				
3.5 If you work outside core hours (out of hours working) do you ensure that you have a point of contact who knows where you are and how to contact you at any given time?				
3.6 Do you keep regular contact with the office/team between appointments, notify them of any changes in schedules and let them know when you have finished for the day and that you are safe?				
3.7 Do you have a means of being contacted/contacting others (a mobile phone, radio or contact telephone number)?				
3.8 When high risk situations are identified, do you have access to other colleagues/additional support for example an ability to 'double up' or to access support from the police?				
3.9 Where deemed necessary, are you provided with a personal attack alarm (which should be kept close to hand and in good working order)?				

Name / Address	(Stick photograph here)
Home Telephone Number Mobile Telephone Number Business Telephone Number	Known Medical Conditions (if consent given and info relevant to emergency medical treatment)
Vehicle Details Make Model Registration Colour	Second Vehicle Details (If applicable) Make Model Registration Colour
Driving Licence Details	Insurance Details
Next of Kin (Name / Address)	Next of Kin Contact Numbers Home Telephone Number Mobile Telephone Number Business Telephone Number