

## **Workplace Violence Policy**

Interchange Outer East (IOE) is committed to ensuring a safe and healthy workplace for employees and volunteers and takes workplace violence extremely seriously.

Workplace violence can have significant short and long term impacts on an employee's and/or volunteer's psychological and physical health.

The scope of this policy includes violence and aggression towards employees and volunteers by;

- Employees
- Volunteers
- Board members
- Parents/families
- Guardians
- Members of the public
- External service providers
- Participants (where there is an understanding of their behaviour)

### **Types of Workplace Violence**

Workplace violence includes but is not limited to:

<b>Verbal abuse</b>	This may be in person or over the phone and may include yelling, screaming, swearing, personal insults, name calling, discriminatory language.
<b>Threats, harassment and intimidation</b>	Verbal, written and implied, bullying, stalking behaviour (e.g. via social media), physically standing over someone, threats of power over someone's current employment or future prospects.
<b>Physical Assault</b>	Pushing, shoving, tripping, grabbing, throwing objects, intentionally coughing on, biting, spitting, scratching, hitting, kicking, or threatening someone with a weapon.
<b>Sexual harassment and assault</b>	Unwanted sexually suggestive comments or jokes, sexual innuendo, inappropriate staring or leering, unwelcome hugging, kissing or other physical contact.

### **Reporting Workplace Violence**

All incidents of workplace violence are to be reported to the direct manager as soon as practical. The direct manager is required to undertake an internal investigation of the incident.

Victims of workplace violence will be supported to report allegations to the police where required.

Where allegations are made against another employee or volunteer, they may be immediately suspended from duties while an investigation is completed.

If it is found that an employee or volunteer has perpetrated workplace violence they will be subject to employment performance management that may result in a formal warning or, where there is a pattern of such behaviour or dependant of the severity of the incident, termination of employment may occur.

Where the violence is perpetrated by a participant, family member or guardian, services may be restricted or complete cessation of services may occur.

Volunteers and employees who have experienced any type of workplace violence will be provided with support and have debriefing opportunities made available to them.

### **Managing Escalating Conversations**

IOE acknowledges that working and negotiating with service providers can be stressful, particularly when it is felt that the service and/or interactions are not to an individual's standard. Regardless of frustrations there is an expectation that conversations remain respectful, free from yelling, swearing, screaming, insults or threats.

Where a volunteer or employee encounters conversations that are escalating and no longer productive they are encouraged to suggest having the conversation at a later date where it can be conducted in a reasonable and productive manner.

If the conversation becomes verbally abusive, employees and volunteers should remove themselves from the situation and inform their direct supervisor. If outside of office hours, contact should be made with the after hours emergency phone.

All incidents that escalate to verbal violence will be addressed, investigated and reviewed to identify the risk of reoccurrence and cessation of service will be considered.

Related Policies:

- Bullying and Harassment
- Instant Dismissal
- Occupational Health and Safety