



Violence at work policy



Violence at work policy

Purpose of this policy

The purpose of this policy is to set out Westchurch Homes policy and procedures to prevent, manage and respond to work-related violence.

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (HSWA)

Westchurch Homes as the employer have a legal duty under this Act to ensure, so far as it reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of their workers when at work.

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

Under these regulations employers have a legal duty and must consider the risks to workers this includes the risk of reasonably foreseeable violence and decide how significant these risks are to their employees and decide what to do to prevent or control the risks, and develop a clear management plan to achieve this.

Definition of work-related violence (HSE)

Westchurch Homes will define work-related violence as any incident in which an employee is verbally abused, threatened, or physically assaulted, by another member of staff, contractor, delivery personnel, visitors or member of the public in circumstances arising out of the course of their employment.

This type of behaviour is totally unacceptable in any part of Westchurch Homes development sites or workplaces, any type violence or harassment will not be tolerated and treated as disciplinary offence up to and including dismissal or, if appropriate, following criminal action.

Westchurch Homes management supports this policy and we will not tolerate any instances of work-related violence, threatening behaviour including verbal abuse to any member of our staff.

It is important to note at this stage that no member of staff will be blamed for an instance of work-related violence caused by another member of staff, contractors, delivery personnel, customer or visitors or any member of the public.

All employees have the right to be treated with consideration, dignity and respect. This policy applies to all staff working on our premises, including our head office, all development sites and show houses / sales offices, contractors and delivery personnel.

Paid employment gives people not only an income but also affords them opportunities to contribute to society as a whole, their employer's business and their individual development. The workplace should not be a setting where people are subjected to threats of or actual violence, harassment or bullying.



Both employer and employees have an interest in reducing violence at work. For employers, violence can lead to poor morale and a poor image for the organisation, making it difficult to recruit and keep staff. It can also mean extra cost, with absenteeism, higher insurance premiums and compensation payments.

For a variety of reasons some employees may be reluctant to report incidents of aggressive behaviour which make them feel threatened or worried. They may for instance feel that accepting abuse is part of the job.

All Westchurch Homes staff members will be encouraged to provide support to any victims or witnesses of violence, threats or abuse through appropriate training, and managers will provide support, including where needed, allowing time off work for individuals to recover.

Westchurch Homes management team will record any and all reported incidents to enable them to build up a complete picture of a problem. Westchurch Homes will encourage employees to report incidents promptly and fully and to co-operate in any investigation and let them know that this is what you expect from them.

Responsibilities of staff and managers

These relate to all members of staff, including senior management, site and assistant site managers, plant operators, contractors, sales staff, and other personnel who work on any of Westchurch Homes premises, or have responsibilities relating to them.

Managers

All managers have a responsibility to implement this policy and to make sure that all their staff are aware of it and understand it.

All site managers will explain this policy at the site induction process.

- Managers will treat any reports of work-related violence, threats or abuse seriously and respond to them promptly.
- Record details of the incident where appropriate and give all employees involved in the incident full support during the whole process.
- Managers will respond and consider seriously any suggestions made by any member of staff about how to improve any situation and violence prevention and management and give feedback to staff about their suggestions, including whether it will be taken forward and if not, why not.

Managers will set a positive example by reporting all incidents of violence and abuse and not tolerating abusive behaviour from staff, contractors, delivery personnel, customers and members of the public.



Policy on work-related violence

- Westchurch Homes will respond promptly to and where possible resolve incidents, ideally before they escalate.
- Monitor incidences of violence and abuse and initiate appropriate action if more measures are needed.
- Review and amend this policy and the risk assessment as necessary.
- Where possible, direct staff to appropriate support and advice after an incident has occurred.
- Encourage other staff members to support their colleagues, including those that might have witnessed the incident. If victims are particularly traumatised by the event, provide support where possible, such as time off work or changes to their tasks.
- If an investigation is needed, work with the police and offer any assistance needed to help in their enquiries.
- Managers have a responsibility and will act in a way that will deescalate the situation and does not incite or increase the likelihood of violence.
- They also have a duty and responsibility to respond to any reports of violence.
- Any manager found to be encouraging or inciting violence or not resolving a potentially violent or abusive situations may be subject to disciplinary action and or dismissal.

Staff

All Westchurch Homes staff have a personal responsibility for their own behaviour and for ensuring that they comply with this policy.

There are a number of things that staff can do to help prevent work-related violence.

All staff, contractors, delivery personnel, be made aware of Westchurch Homes Company's policy and comply with it.

- Recognise the potential for work-related violence and take action to resolve it early on.
- Staff should take positive action and, for example, contact a manager if they think a situation is arising that might cause problems.
- Don't accept instances of work-related violence directed towards you, your work colleagues or others.
- Staff should report any instances of violence, threats or abuse immediately including any details about when it happened, who was involved and any relevant information that may aid an investigation or circumstances that may have contributed to the incident.



- Serious incidents will be recorded in the incident book kept in the manager's office but minor incidents and incidents of verbal abuse should be reported to and dealt with to managers as they occur.
- Staff will be encouraged to be supportive of colleagues who are victims or witnessed work-related violence.
- Staff will be encouraged to suggest additional measures to managers which might help to prevent and manage work-related violence.
- Staff have a responsibility to act in a way that will deescalate the situation and that does not incite or increase the likelihood of violence.
- Any staff member found to be encouraging or inciting violence or not resolving potentially violent or abusive situations may be subject to disciplinary action and or dismissal.

Staff and managers should work with trade unions or staff representatives where relevant, in preventing, addressing, reporting and responding to incidents or work-related violence.

Risk assessments

Westchurch Homes risk assessments for work-related violence are kept in the manager's office in the health and safety folder and will be referred to and referenced at the site induction process for all employees to sign the compliance sheet attached.

The risk assessments were conducted by Warburton Associates Westchurch Homes Health and Safety consultants and reviewed by WH senior management team, the assessment are reviewed periodically or unless an increase in the number of incidents suggests the assessment should be reviewed more frequently.

Policy on work-related violence

The risks were assessed by talking to staff, reviewing the incident book and considering the work environment and job design. If staff believe a risk factor has not been covered by the assessment or have ideas on further prevention measures, they should discuss these with their line managers.

The contents of the risk assessment will be communicated to all staff at site induction and appropriate toolbox talk training will be given periodically.

Induction Training

The following training will be provided to all staff, contractors, delivery personnel attending site for the first time.

- All staff, including new starters will receive awareness training from line managers on work-related violence, our policy and procedures, how to prevent work-related violence.
- Reporting procedures and what to do following verbal abuse, bullying or threatening behaviour or physical violence.



- Managers will act responsibly in a way that will deescalate and defuse any situation to prevent the likelihood of violence.
 - Managers will also respond to any reports of violence and take appropriate action.
 - Emergency first aid treatment if required will be given by the site manager and if necessary will arrange for any injured persons to attend the nearest A&E hospital.
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- Westchurch Homes management will inform the police should a serious incident involving physical attack or serious cases of threatening or verbal abuse occur.
 - The Police will also be informed of persistent cases of threatening or violence, threats and abusive behaviour continue.

Reporting and recording systems

All Westchurch Homes staff have a responsibility to report incidences of work-related violence, including threats and verbal abuse to managers.

All incidents, including physical attacks, serious or persistent threats and verbal abuse, must be recorded in the incident book in the manager's office.

This asks for details of when the incident occurred, who was involved, descriptions of the perpetrator and any relevant circumstances that may have contributed to the incident.

Any incidents resulting in major injury to staff or that cause staff to be off work for Seven days or more must be reported under the RIDDOR Regulations 1995.

Any incident which results in a member of the staff or the public being taken directly to hospital from the premises must also be reported.

Managers should contact the HSE Incident Contact Centre on 0845 300 9923 to report the incident.

Less serious incidents should still be reported to managers as they occur and managers should make a note of these and if necessary take appropriate action.

If managers notice an increase in reports within a short period or reports about the same persons involved managers should record the details, ask staff for more information and take appropriate action, this may include contacting the police.

Reviewing the risk assessment and considering further prevention measures, or increased vigilance by managers or staff to prevent a more serious incident occurring.

As far as possible, any identified shortcomings in facilities, systems of work and training will be investigated and corrected as necessary.



All incidents will be monitored and reviewed regularly (time scale to be agreed by the board) by the Chief Executive and senior management team.

If necessary, any changes will be made known to all employees through tool box talk or team briefing.

Review date

This policy will be reviewed annually at the same time as other Westchurch Homes policy's or following a serious incident arises that suggest it needs to be revisited.