

Violence in the Workplace Prevention Policy

Scope

This policy applies to all employees, contractors, or volunteers working with or for EPS.

Policy

EPS has a no tolerance policy to workplace violence, whether between employees, contractors and volunteers or customers and clients towards our employees, contractors and volunteers.

EPS cannot predict violent acts, but can take reasonable steps, as out line in this policy, to minimise the risks. Report any concerns or violent acts to HR as soon as possible.

What is Workplace Violence?

“**Workplace Violence**” means acts of violence or threats of violence to a person or property. Abusive behaviour can include verbal, psychological or physical violence, and can be conducted in person or via a carriage service, including phones and/or the internet.

More specifically:

- Verbal abuse can be using unwelcome, embarrassing, offensive, threatening or degrading language.
- Psychological abuse is an act, which provokes fear or diminishes a person’s dignity or self-esteem.
- Sexual abuse is any unwelcome verbal or physical assault.

Examples of violent behaviour include but are not limited to:

- Intimidation or bullying;
- Abusive language;
- Physical assault;
- Threatening behaviour;
- Using a weapon;
- Sexual or racial harassment; and
- Retaliation to Workplace Violence.

Reporting and investigation of Workplace Violence

Workplace Violence is considered an Incident in accordance with EPS' Incident, Injury and Near Miss Policy and must be reported in accordance with that policy. Upon being reported, all instances of Workplace Violence will be investigated in accordance with the Incident, Injury and Near Miss Policy.

Workplace Violence between Employees, Contractors and Volunteers of EPS

Where an Employee, Contractor or Volunteer is found to have acted in a violent manner to another Employee, Contractor or Volunteer, EPS may take disciplinary action against that person, which can include up to the termination of their employment and/or engagement.

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Workplace Violence directed at EPS Employees, Contractors and Volunteers by third parties at a Client's workplace

Where an EPS Employee, Contractor or Volunteer is subject to violence at a client's workplace, EPS will report the violence to the client, and request they conduct an investigation in relation to the alleged Workplace Violence in conjunction with EPS.

Where the client refuses to undertake an investigation, EPS will conduct an independent investigation, a report of which will be provided to the client.

Identifying Risks and Hazards of Workplace Violence

Risks and Hazards that can increase the risk of Workplace Violence include, but are not limited to:

- Handling of Cash, Drugs and/or alcohol;
- Possession of other valuable items;
- Working alone, in isolation, in the community, at night;
- Working where the possibility of being outnumbered is high;
- providing services to distressed, angry or incarcerated people.

EPS employees will often meet one or more of the above indicators, and therefore have a higher likelihood of encountering Workplace Violence. The form that follows this Policy contains a Work-related Violence Risk Control Measures Tool. Where Employees, Contractors and Volunteers are working in an area, which is contained in the Hazard column, they should consider the risk factors and the Measures to control the risk.

Work-related Violence Risk Control Measures Tool

Hazard	Risk factors	Measures to control risks
Handling cash, drugs and/or valuables	<p>Business is located in a high crime area; few workers on site; working alone; number of ways to exit the site; restricted observation by passers-by; lack of: visibility from outside; visibility of alarms and security devices;</p> <p>Those risks are increased by:</p> <p>Ready access to ways to escape; armed offender/s; frequency of incidents; Lack of security measures; minimal protection for workers;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • building is secure, maintained and fit for purpose • where possible, workers are separated from the public; (eg – with protective barriers/screens) • access to the premises and vulnerable areas is appropriately controlled • no public access to the premises when people work alone or at night • workers can see who is coming into the premises and can restrict access when concerned • security measures are used (eg – CCTV/anti-jump screens; drop/timer safes) • communication and alarm systems are in place (regularly maintained and tested) • cash, valuables and drugs are stored securely • where possible, limit amount of cash, valuables and drugs held on the premises • workplace only uses safe glass, eg – laminated, toughened, perspex (including picture frames, mirrors etc.) • no access to dangerous implements and/or objects that could be thrown or used to injure workers • internal and external lighting assists visibility • clear signage allows the public/clients to easily find their way • identification system is in place (workers and authorised visitors are clearly identified) • service areas have good visibility • safe room/place is provided (for workers and others to retreat to) • furniture and partitions are arranged to prevent people being trapped and allow good visibility of service areas • cash handling procedures (electronic funds transactions only; locked drop safes, carrying small amounts of cash, varying time that banking is done; signs state limited cash held) • workplace policy states appropriate action will be taken to protect workers and others from violence • workers are inducted on violence prevention measures before starting work • workers are trained in workplace policy and procedures (including emergency response) • workers are trained in de-escalating aggression (signs of aggression; verbal and non-verbal communication strategies; encouraging reasoning; listening carefully; acknowledging concerns) • workers receive communication skills training • workers receive regular support and supervision

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Hazard	Risk factors	Measures to control risks
<p>Working alone/working in isolated or remote areas/ working off site and working in the community</p> <p>Note: remote or isolated work, in relation to a worker, means work that is isolated from the assistance of other persons because of location, time or the nature of the work.</p>	<p>Lack of information; working in a high crime area lack of: visibility from outside, security measures</p> <p>Those risks are increased by: armed offender/s; frequency of incidents.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> building is secure, maintained and fit for purpose where possible, workers are separated from the public; (eg - with protective barriers/screens) no public access to the premises when people work alone or at night internal and external lighting assists visibility communication and alarm systems are in place (regularly maintained and tested) operational procedures and back up are in place for when workers are alone or isolated workers are monitored when working in the community or away from the workplace (eg - supervisor checks in regularly throughout the shift) workers are rotated into alternate duties to reduce exposure
Working in unpredictable environments	<p>Lack of information; working in a high crime area</p> <p>Those risks are increased by: Lack of security measures; Lack of supervision; lack of monitoring systems; armed offender/s; frequency of incidents</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> procedures and back up are in place for workers working alone or in isolation communication and alarm systems are in place (regularly maintained and tested) regular handover and information exchange occurs (with workers, other agencies, carers and service providers) workplace policy states appropriate action will be taken to protect workers and others from violence workers are monitored when working in unpredictable environments (eg - supervisor checks in regularly during the shift)
Hazard	Risk factors	Measures to control risks
Working at night or outside business hours	<p>lack of: security measures and alarms; visibility from outside;</p> <p>Those risks are increased by: Lack of security measures; Ready access to ways to escape; Lack of supervision; lack of monitoring systems; armed offender/s; frequency of incidents</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> building is secure, maintained and fit for purpose where possible, workers are separated from the public; (eg - with protective barriers/screens) there is no public access to the premises when people work at night internal and external lighting assists visibility service areas have good visibility a safe room/place is provided (for workers and others to retreat to) communication and alarm systems are in place (regularly maintained and tested) furniture and partitions are arranged to prevent people being trapped and allow clear visibility of service areas cash handling procedures (electronic funds transactions only; locked drop safes, carrying small amounts of cash, varying time that banking is done; signs state limited cash held)

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<p>Providing care or services to people who may be: distressed; afraid; ill; angry; incarcerated; or have unreasonable expectations of what an organisation and/or worker can provide them</p>	<p>Waiting; anxiety; overcrowding; communication difficulties; certain behavioural and/or psychiatric conditions; untreated pain; lack of information; no client compatibility assessment</p> <p>Those risks are increased by:</p> <p>Person/client is intoxicated or affected by drugs; prolonged and untreated pain, unwelcome and coercive treatment; frequency of incidents</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • building is secure, maintained and fit for purpose • facility has safe glass only, eg: laminated, toughened, perspex (including picture frames, mirrors etc.) • signage directs and assists clients and visitors to find their way • waiting rooms and reception areas are clean and well maintained. • internal and external lighting assists visibility • service areas have good visibility for workers • a safe room/place is provided (for workers and others to retreat to) • process in place for client compatibility and suitability assessment • client intake assessments include screening for aggression • regular handover and information exchange with workers, other agencies, carers and service providers • workplace policy states appropriate action will be taken to protect workers and others from violence • no access to dangerous implements and/or objects that could be thrown or used to injure workers • structured and planned activities for clients • communication and alarm systems are in place (regularly maintained and tested) • furniture and partitions are arranged to prevent people being trapped and allow good visibility of service areas • behaviour and treatment programs are reviewed after incidents and/ or changes in behaviour • where client is known to have a history of aggression, a management plan is in place that has been developed in consultation with appropriately qualified people • policy on the ongoing treatment of clients known to be aggressive or abusive, such as: treatment contracts • workers are trained in de-escalating aggressive behaviour (signs of aggression; verbal and non-verbal communication strategies; encouraging reasoning; listening carefully; acknowledging concerns) • workers are trained in situational risk assessment (for visiting homes or working off site) • ratio of workers to clients is adequate for the level of care needed and take into account the range of activities undertaken (such as: peak periods; transfers; meal times, night work; sleep-overs; emergency responses; acute care/crisis; respite) • where possible workers are permanent or regular employees who are known to the clients and workplace • workers are inducted on violence prevention measures before starting work • workers are rotated into alternate duties to reduce exposure • procedures and back up are in place for workers working alone or in isolation • workers trained on workplace policy and procedures (including emergency response) • workers receive communication skills training • workers receive regular support and supervision

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Hazard	Risk factors	Measures to control risks
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> workers are trained in positive behaviour strategies and managing behaviours of concern work practices are evaluated to see if they contribute to aggression behaviours and what triggers them are identified – strategies to avoid/ address behaviours and triggers are implemented
Service methods cause frustration, resentment, or misunderstanding	<p>Waiting; anxiety; overcrowding; communication difficulties; certain behavioural and/or psychiatric conditions</p> <p>Those risks are increased by: Person/client is intoxicated or affected by drugs; unwelcome and coercive treatment; frequency of incidents</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> building is secure, maintained and fit for purpose waiting rooms and reception areas are clean and well maintained. internal and external lighting assists visibility service areas have good visibility signage directs and assists clients and the public to find their way a safe room/place is provided (for workers and others to retreat to) communication and alarm systems are in place (regularly maintained and tested) furniture and partitions are arranged to prevent people being trapped and allow good visibility of service areas workplace policy states appropriate action will be taken to protect workers and others from violence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> work practices are evaluated to see if they contribute to aggression skill level, training and experience of workers is appropriate for duties allocated to them workers are rotated into alternate duties to reduce exposure workers are inducted on violence prevention measures before starting work workers trained on workplace policy and procedures (including emergency response) workers are trained in de-escalating aggressive behaviour (signs of aggression; verbal and non-verbal communication strategies; encouraging reasoning; listening carefully; acknowledging concerns) workers receive communication skills training workers receive regular support and supervision

Hazard	Risk factors	Measures to control risks
Enforcement activities	<p>Working in unpredictable environments</p> <p>Those risks are increased by: Lack of supervision; lack of monitoring systems;</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> communication and alarm systems are in place (regularly maintained and tested) operational procedures for working in isolation and uncontrolled environments workers are monitored when working in the community or away from the workplace (eg – supervisor checks in regularly throughout the shift) procedures and back up are in place for workers working alone or in isolation system to map and record areas/ places of concern workers receive regular support and supervision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> workers are rotated into alternate duties to reduce exposure workers are inducted on violence prevention measures before starting work workers trained on workplace policy and procedures (including emergency response) workers are trained in de-escalating aggressive behaviour (signs of aggression; verbal and non-verbal communication strategies; encouraging reasoning; listening carefully; acknowledging concerns) workers are trained in situational risk assessment (for visiting homes or working off site) workers receive communication skills training