

# SAFE WORKING PROCEDURE

## Preventing Workplace Harassment and Violence

CORPORATE HEALTH & SAFETY | VERSION 8.2 | January 2025

### **STATEMENT:**

In order to comply with legislation and fulfil statutory responsibility, the council must make sure that:

- Risk assessments consider the hazard of workplace harassment and violence.
- Controls are in place to prevent staff being subjected to workplace harassment and violence.
- Where staff have been the subject of workplace harassment and violence, the perpetrators are dealt with in accordance with Council procedures.

### **SCOPE:**

This Safe Working Procedure applies to:

- All managers including headteachers.
- All employees of Southampton City Council.
- All contractors working on behalf of the Council.



## 1. Responsibilities

### Managers/Headteachers are responsible for ensuring:

- 1.1. Risk assessments consider the hazard of harassment and violence. Controls are in place to prevent incidents occurring so far as is reasonably practicable.
- 1.2. Incidents of harassment & violence are reported/recorded in accordance with Safe Working Procedure (SWP) for Accident/Incident Reporting and Investigation.
- 1.3. Incidents of harassment & violence are investigated, and appropriate action is taken against the perpetrator.

### Managers are responsible for ensuring compliance with the SWP and must:

- 1.4. Carry out suitable and sufficient risk assessments and consider the hazard of harassment & violence in accordance with SWP – Risk Assessment and SWP – Working Alone in Safety.
- 1.5. Consider the design of the workplace in relation to violence and harassment.
- 1.6. Implement controls to reduce the risk of harassment & violence to as low as is reasonably practicable.
- 1.7. Provide employees with information, instruction and training to deal with situations that they may encounter during their normal work activities.
- 1.8. Report incidents of harassment and violence in accordance with SWP – Accident /Incident Reporting and Investigation, using the HSMS Online reporting system.
- 1.9. Investigate incidents of harassment and violence and take appropriate action against the perpetrator, where necessary refer to HR policies and procedures.
- 1.10. Notify the Corporate Health and Safety Service, where the perpetrator is not a member of staff in accordance with the SWP – Incident List for consideration for inclusion on the 'list'.

### Employees must:

- 1.11. Follow procedures, controls and systems of work put in place to prevent the risk of harassment and violence.
- 1.12. Report any incidents of harassment and violence to you or your colleagues to your line manager and follow the SWP – Accident/Incident Reporting, using the HSMS Online reporting system.

## 2. Procedure

### 2.1. Definition

- 2.1.1. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and others define 'Violence' as:
  - 2.1.1.1. 'Any incident, in which a person is abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances relating to their work.'
  - 2.1.1.2. 'Unacceptable behaviour by one or more individuals.'
- 2.1.2. Harassment and violence can:
  - 2.1.2.1. Be physical, and or sexual.
  - 2.1.2.2. Be one off incidents or more systematic patterns of behaviour.
  - 2.1.2.3. Be amongst colleagues, between superiors and subordinates or by third parties such as clients, customers, patients, pupils etc.
  - 2.1.2.4. Range from minor cases of disrespect to more serious acts, including criminal offenses, which require the intervention of public authorities.
- 2.1.3. Southampton City Council further recognises this to include attacks by animals, verbal abuse, attack against property and intimidation.

### 2.2. Risk Assessment Guidance

The links below will take you to sources of information that will help inform the risk assessment process in accordance with the Council's safe working procedure for Risk Assessment and to develop controls.

- 2.2.1. This link will take you to the HSEs guidance document INDG69 [Violence at work – a guide for employers](#).
- 2.2.2. This link will take you to the HSEs [Workplace Violence microsite](#).
- 2.2.3. This link will take you to [Preventing Workplace Harassment and Violence](#), joint guidance, 'implementing a European social partner agreement' – source HSE.

### 2.3. Employee Assistant Programme

- 2.3.1. Southampton City Council provides employees with a free high quality confidential help, support and counselling for any personal or work-related issue.
- 2.3.2. For more information and how to access the service, visit [Employee Assistance Programme](#).

## 3. Safe Working Procedures Relevant to This Document

- 3.1 Managing Health and Safety
- 3.2 Risk Assessment
- 3.3 Working Alone in Safety
- 3.4 Accident/Incident Reporting and Investigation
- 3.5 Managing Wellbeing at Work
- 3.6 Incident List

**Note:** Other safe working procedures may apply and the assessor should consult the SWPs. An A-Z is available on the Council's [Health and Safety Intranet](#) and [Schools Guidance](#) web pages.

## 4. Main Legislation Relevant to This Document

- 4.1 [Health and Safety at Work etc Act](#)
- 4.2 [The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations](#)
- 4.3 [Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013](#)
- 4.4 [Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations and The Health and Safety \(Consultation with Employees\) Regulations](#)

## 5. Contact Address's and Guidance Links

- 5.1 Health and Safety Executive  
[www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk)
- 5.2 Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents  
<https://www.rospa.com/>
- 5.3 Institute of Occupational Safety and Health  
[www.iosh.co.uk/](http://www.iosh.co.uk/)
- 5.4 Home Office Victim Support  
<https://www.gov.uk/get-support-as-a-victim-of-crime>
- 5.5 Victim Support (Charity)  
[www.victimsupport.org](http://www.victimsupport.org)
- 5.6 Corporate Health and Safety Service  
[Health and Safety Intranet](#)
- 5.7 [5.6.1. Managing Wellbeing at work Microsite](#)  
[Employee Assistance Programme](#)

**For full contact address visit the health and safety intranet [Useful Contacts](#).**