



BEMBRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL

The Clerk to the Council,
5 Foreland Road, Bembridge, Isle of Wight, PO35 5XN
Tel: 01983 874160 **Email:** clerk@bembridgepc.org.uk

VIOLENCE AND AGGRESSION POLICY

September 2024



BEMBRIDGE PARISH COUNCIL VIOLENCE AND AGGRESSION POLICY

Bembridge Parish Council operates a zero-tolerance approach towards any act of violence and/or aggression towards its employees.

Violence and aggression are defined as:

- Violence is the use of force against a person and has the same definition as “assault” in law (i.e. an attempt, offer or application of force against the person). This would cover any person unlawfully touching any other person forcefully, spitting at another person, raising fists or feet or verbally threatening to strike or otherwise apply force to any person
- Aggression is regarded as threatening or abusive language or gestures, sexual gestures or behaviour, derogatory sexual or racial remarks, shouting at any person or applying force to any practice property or the personal property of any person on the practice. This would cover people banging on desks or counters or shouting loudly in an intimidating manner.

Bembridge Parish Council acknowledge that violence and aggression can lead to poor morale and a poor image for the company, making it difficult to recruit and keep staff. It can also mean extra cost, with absenteeism and higher insurance premiums. For employees, violence can cause pain, distress and even disability or death. Physical attacks are obviously dangerous, but serious or persistent verbal abuse or threats can also damage employees’ health through anxiety or stress.

There are five main pieces of health and safety law which are relevant to violence at work. These are:

- The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 (HSW Act) Employers have a legal duty under this Act to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of their employees.
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. Employers must assess the risks to employees and make arrangements for their health and safety by effective: planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review. The risks covered should, where appropriate, include the need to protect employees from exposure to reasonably foreseeable violence.
- The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR). Employers must notify their enforcing authority in the event of an accident at work to any employee resulting in death, major injury or incapacity for normal work for 7 or more consecutive days. This includes any act of non-consensual physical violence done to a person at work.
- Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations 1977 (a) and The Health and Safety (Consultation with Employees) Regulations 1996 (b) Employers must inform, and consult with, employees in good time on matters relating to their health and safety.

Bembridge Parish Council will ensure that all premises visited by their staff are checked to ensure that any potential sources of violence or aggression are kept to a minimum as far as is practically possible. Employees are actively encouraged to speak to the Company Health and Safety Officer – (the Clerk) immediately about any incident of violence and/or aggression that they experience, either from a client or fellow worker. Any act of violence and/or aggression will be recorded, and the appropriate authorities alerted. In the instance of the violence/aggression being directed at a co-worker, this action will be deemed gross misconduct and could result in immediate dismissal.

Any incidents that happen will be recorded and the following information will be collected and kept on file:

- An account of what happened.
- Details of the victim(s), the assailant(s) and any witnesses.
- The outcome, including working time lost to both the individual(s) affected and to the organisation as a whole.
- the details of the location of the incident.

All employees are requested to speak to the Company Health and Safety Officer about any concerns they may have about violence and/or aggression whether this has taken place yet or not. The Company will then take any necessary steps to try and ensure that the potential action does not occur or is dealt with promptly and appropriately.

Bembridge Parish Council acknowledge that 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. The Company Health and Safety Officer will regularly monitor the employees and encourage them to speak to him/her about any concerns they may have.

If a pattern of violent/aggressive behaviour emerges, Bembridge Parish Council will record the events and either separately or together with the appropriate authorities, work out a plan of action so that the behaviour ceases.

Bembridge Parish Council have created a lone worker policy to protect those who often find themselves working on their own. Employees should ensure that they have read and understood this policy.

Bembridge Parish Council understand that experiencing an act of violence and/or aggression can be extremely upsetting and harmful to the person in question but may also upset co-workers who may then become worried for their own safety or feel concern for the person directly affected. The Company Health and Safety Officer will do everything he/she can to ensure that the appropriate support and reassurance is provided to anyone affected by any instances of violence and/or aggression.

In addition to the support of the Company, further help may be available from victim support schemes that operate in many areas. The local police station can give advice on the nearest one. Alternatively, those affected can visit the Victim Support website at www.victimsupport.org.uk or call the Victim Support Free Support Line on 0808 1689 111.

Name:

Signed

Date: