

Zero Tolerance on the Abuse of Staff

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1. Introduction

The Insolvency Group (TIG) have a Zero Tolerance approach to abuse of staff, where employees may undertake their duties without fear of abuse or violence in any form. Albeit the majority of our business is carried out via telephone/email, this is not always the case.

We are committed to:

- Ownership and responsibility for staff safety
- Introducing preventative measures to minimise the risk to staff
- Ensuring that all staff are appropriately trained
- Reporting and monitoring all incidents
- Communicating to staff to ensure awareness of policy and procedures
- Staff support including appropriate support in taking action
- Public Awareness of our Zero Policy Statement
- Influence how perpetrators should be dealt with

All staff have a vital role to play in protecting themselves, including participation in appropriate training, reporting of incidents, and taking appropriate action against perpetrators of abuse or violence. TIG has a responsibility to ensure that appropriate support is given to staff in such instances.

2. Purpose of this Policy

- To achieve a positive attitude and approach towards TIG staff
- To prevent incidents of abuse including aggression and violence
- TIG will seek to ensure that staff receive appropriate support in recovering from the effects of an incident and in trying to prevent recurrence
- To ensure that TIG complies with its statutory responsibilities towards their employees

3. Scope

This Policy applies to violence and aggression towards all TIG employees as well as to employees of external contractors, including Recruitment Agency staff. This policy applies to situations arising during the course of professional duties or due to employment. It also applies to those undertaking work on behalf of TIG, whether from service users, other staff, or members of the public.

4. Accountability

The HR department will be accountable for the effective implementation and monitoring of this policy across the organisation. Responsibility for the day-to-day implementation will rest with the line management structure.

5. Definitions

Here are the following definitions on Zero Tolerance:

- 5.1 Non-Physical Abuse: The use of inappropriate words or behaviour causing distress and/or constituting harassment. This includes receipt of abusive telephone calls/emails from any source.

5.2 Physical Abuse: The intentional application of force against the person of another without lawful justification resulting in physical injury or personal discomfort.

5.3 Anti-Social Behaviour: The following are examples of anti-social behaviour that are not acceptable at or in connection with work:

- Excessive noise e.g., loud, or intrusive conversation, or shouting
- Threatening or abusive language including excess swearing or offensive remarks or gestures via telephone or written communication
- Derogatory racial, religious or sexual remarks or behaviour
- Malicious allegations relating to members of staff
- Inappropriate behaviour as a result of alcohol or misuse of illicit drugs, including non-prescribed medication or drugs
- Intimidation, threats or threatening behaviour (e.g., 'I know where you work/live')
- Harassment or stalking
- Violence, perceived acts of violence or threats of violence
- Any explicit or implicit challenge to the safety, well-being, or health of any member of staff
- Brandishing weapons or objects which could be used as weapons.

6. Role of Senior Managers

Senior managers must, in consultation with staff and their representatives assess the risk of violence within their working environment and within the scope of their responsibilities. They have an on-going duty to:

- Establish a safe system of working conditions for their staff including, where necessary, an assessment of the compatibility of the employees' circumstances/condition with the workplace
- Ensure that this policy can be accessed by all staff and any training needs conducted for staff within their area of responsibility
- Ensure that staff receive relevant and timely support including counselling following incidents of violence, so they are enabled to evaluate and learn by experience.

7. Role of Line Managers

Line Managers have a responsibility to:

- Ensure that their staff understand the policy and related operational procedures regarding handling incidents of violence
- Ensure that where staff have identified any potential area of risk, this is managed sufficiently
- Ensure that where staff are placed in imminent danger immediate action is taken to minimise or remove the danger
- Ensure that this policy can be accessed by all staff and any training needs conducted for staff within their area of responsibility
- Ensure that relevant reporting documentation has been completed
- Provide timely and appropriate support to staff who have been victims of abuse/violence
- Provide feedback to affected staff on action taken by TIG

- Support staff in relation to all incidents of abuse of violence at work, including those that are transphobic, sexist, homophobic, sectarian, disability, race, religion, or political opinion related.

8. Role of the employee

All staff have the responsibility to:

- Accept responsibility for their own safety
- Consider the safety of others who may be affected by their actions or omissions
- Familiarise themselves with and follow this policy and to bring to their managers attention concerns relating to personal safety
- Participate fully in assessments conducted in their work area
- Participate in any training that is made available to them
- Report all incidents of violence or threatened violence to their line manager
- Contribute towards reviews concerning any violent incidents in which he/she has been involved.

9. Training

This policy will be incorporated into the suite of policies available on the company Intranet. All staff are invited to review the company policies and training needs identified will be addressed by the line manager.

10. Reporting, Investigating and Monitoring

All incidents of abuse or violence to staff must be formally reported to their line manager, providing evidence of any incident.

All incidents should be investigated and reviewed by the line manager to ensure that control measures are appropriate. Records should be maintained by the HR Manager.

Monitoring of all incidents will be conducted by the relevant Senior Manager and any follow up action required will be assessed to ensure that it is appropriate and has been conducted.

Monitoring of trends will be conducted to identify problem areas to anticipate future preventative action. Any incidents or trends that emerge will be reported to TIG's Board via the HR Manager.

TIG will ensure that members of the public accessing its facilities/services are made aware of its commitment to zero tolerance of abuse or violence against staff including what actions TIG may take against perpetrators. This policy will be located on the company website.

11. Staff Support

In the event of an employee becoming a victim of abuse or violence at work, TIG will ensure that appropriate support is given.

12. Escalating Continued Threats/Abusive Behaviour

Where a member of staff has suffered continued abuse, physical injury, or threatening behaviour it is important that the matter is referred to the police for investigation if appropriate. This will constitute a breach of this policy. The decision to escalate this lies with the staff member and relevant Line/Senior Manager, who will provide support, as necessary.

This could result in termination of an Insolvency appointment, if the Insolvency Practitioner deems this a suitable course of action, or this could be escalated to the Police.

TIG will support the police when undertaking a criminal investigation with a view to prosecution. It is important that staff affected co-operate in this process.