

Overview

Workplace bullying and violence are unacceptable codes of behaviour at SKG Services. In Australia, occupational behaviour, which can be classified as either bullying or violence, is against the law.

A breach of this policy may initiate appropriate action as outlined in the Disciplinary Procedure or part thereof.

Our company is committed to taking all practicable steps to ensure bullying and occupational violence does not occur in its workplaces, or that employees are not subject to such experiences when representing the company at other workplaces.

In the workplace bullying is considered to be repeated, unreasonable behaviour directed toward an employee, or group of employees, that creates a risk to health and safety.

No single incident of workplace bullying will be condoned or ignored as it could lead to repeated bullying behaviour.

Occupational violence is considered to be any incident where an employee is physically attacked or threatened in the workplace [either our workplace or a customer's workplace], whether by a co-worker, manager, subcontractor or customer.

Occupational violence is considered to be both a physical attack and a threat of attack by menacing behaviour or verbal intimidation.

Authorities and Responsibilities

Responsibility for implementation of this policy lies with the General Manager or most senior person at each workplace or area.

Issues relating to this policy should be referred to your immediate Manager. OH&S issue resolution procedure applies to this policy.

What Is Considered Bullying?

The following behaviour is considered to be bullying:

- Verbal abuse
- Excluding or isolating employees
- Psychological harassment
- Assigning meaningless tasks unrelated to the job
- Giving employees impossible assignments
- Deliberately changing work rosters to inconvenience particular employees
- Deliberately withholding information that is vital for effective work performance.
- Cyber Bullying/ After hours harassment or inappropriate contact

What Is Considered Violent Behaviour?

The following behaviour is considered to be violent:

- Striking, kicking, scratching, biting, spitting or any other type of direct physical contact
- Throwing objects
- Attacking with knives, guns, clubs or any other type of weapon
- Pushing, shoving, tripping grabbing
- Any form of indecent physical contact

Physical attack is defined without consideration of the attacker's intent. Therefore, a mentally disabled person who does not have the capacity to have intent to harm, may still attack a person – this is still violence.

What Should You Do If You Experience Bullying Or Violence?

1. Inform your direct line Manager of the incident, providing as many details as possible. If it is not appropriate to inform this Manager, refer to the next line Manager as appropriate.
2. The Manager will follow the grievance process to deal with this problem whilst at all times, maintaining a level of confidentiality as required by law and according to the request of the individual reporting the incident. This shall include:
 - Getting all the facts and determining that the incident is bullying or violence
 - Consulting and communicating with the person/s involved as necessary to resolve the issue to the satisfaction of the person reporting the incident
 - Monitoring and following up to ensure no further incidents have occurred
 - Determining the need for any additional awareness or training for employees
3. Should further bullying or violence occur, our company Disciplinary Procedure shall be initiated?

Identifying Stress in the Workplace

Diagnosing stress-related illness is a job for professionals. However, if you can assist staff to access assistance early, they may suffer far fewer ill-effects. Symptoms of stress-related illness include, but are not limited to:

- Changes in mood or personality, in particular, becoming 'down', irritable and cynical
- Absenteeism, especially single days without a medical certificate at the beginning or end of a week
- Increased low level illness such as colds, headaches etc.
- Changes in work pattern, especially growing disinterest or reluctance
- Poor concentration
- Higher rates of accidents or injuries
- Depression and anxiety
- Increase in coping' behaviours, such as smoking more
- Withdrawing from social contact
- Changes in relationships with other employees

Violence On Site

All cleaners or security staff engaged by SKG Services are required to read, agree, and sign a Code of Integrity Conduct to ensure that our clients always receive the most reliable services. Included in the code are statements covering bullying, innuendo, physical abuse, and racial vilification.

When site staff are placed in venues that require persons to isolate or remain in closed quarters there is a high probability that domestic violence will occur as the duration of the confinement may be over long periods of time.

Cleaners

If cleaners, maintenance staff or guards observe either physical or verbal attacks, they are trained to recognise either form as abuse or are required to report it immediately. **SKG Services staff are not to intervene in the dispute**, to avoid injury and possible legal issues.

If there are Security Personnel on site these should be the first to be informed and if there are no security on site, the cleaner is to contact his/her supervisor and report the details. The Supervisor will then contact the client and if required (by the client) notify the police.

Further, SKG Services cleaners are aware that they may be called upon to provide full and frank details of the incident or incidents as observed as part of any follow up police or client investigation. If the perpetrator remains on site and subsequently threatens SKG Services cleaner, SKG Services will transfer the cleaner to another site to restore harmony and permit the normal function of cleaning duties.

Security

Where SKG Services security staff are deployed to an isolation or and immigration centre and witness verbal and physical abuse they may intervene to stop the incident by talking to the offender(s). **Security under no circumstances apply physical restraint.** Applying physical contact may lead to legal action – and this should be avoided.

If the abuse continues report the incident to your supervisor, client staff or the police. SKG Services security staff may be called upon to provide full and frank details of the incident or incidents as observed as part of any follow up police or client investigation.

Australia

The **National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and Their Children** also points to the importance of taking an intersectional approach to the prevention of violence against women. It emphasises the need to consider gender inequality together with other forms of social discrimination and disadvantage, such as racism, classism, ageism, dispossession, homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia. It points to the need to respect, listen, and respond to women’s diverse lived experiences; and to understand and address the way in which multiple forms of discrimination or inequality intersect to create disproportionate impacts across society.

(An Initiative of the Council of Australia Governments – 2010 – 2022)

The views and policies of the 3 eastern states and the Commonwealth on domestic violence have similarities but also differences in the way the issues are addressed.

To ensure compliance in each jurisdiction SKG Services modifies instructions to cleaners and security accordingly but maintains a general procedure as outlined below.

Queensland

“The contemporary understanding of domestic violence is a person being subjected to an ongoing pattern of abusive behaviour by an intimate partner or family member. This behaviour is motivated by a desire to dominate, control, or oppress the other person and to cause fear. It includes behaviour that is physically, sexually, emotionally, psychologically or economically abusive; threatening or coercive; or any other way controls or dominates another person causing fear.” (Queensland Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012, supporting documents)

New South Wales

“Domestic violence is a term which can mean different things to different people. It is often understood to relate to all violence which occurs amongst family members or in the ‘domestic sphere’. Violence in the home can take many forms, including but not limited to partner abuse, abuse of parents by adult children, child physical abuse and neglect, sexual abuse of children or adults, abuse of older people and co-tenants in a household. Accordingly, there are many possible victims who include children, parents and adults, or child siblings. These forms of abuse or violence can also occur outside the home and between people who are unrelated. The term ‘family violence’ is preferred by many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities as it encapsulates the extended nature of Indigenous families and the context of a range of forms of violence occurring frequently between kinspeople in Indigenous communities (Memmot & Stacy 1999). (NSW Health – Policy Directive PD2006_084)

Victoria

The drivers of violence against women arise from unequal and discriminatory institutional, social, and economic structures, social and cultural norms, and organisational, community, family, and relationship practices. Together, these structures, norms and practices create environments in which women and men are not considered equal, and violence against women is both more likely to happen, and more likely to be tolerated and even condoned.

Primary prevention is an approach that uses whole-of-population initiatives to address the drivers of violence against women. Change cannot be achieved at the individual level prior to, or in isolation from, a broader change in the underlying drivers of violence across communities, organisations, and society as a whole. (Vic Health - Position paper | COVID-19 and primary prevention of violence against women – June 2020)