

**NEW POLICY – DEALING WITH UNREASONABLE
BEHAVIOUR POLICY**

Internal Procedure – Dealing with Difficult Customers

Meeting Date: 14 December 2021

Number of Pages : 3

Internal Procedure

Procedure Name	Dealing with Difficult Customers	Number	PM/135/15
Objective	To communicate in difficult situations while ensuring a peaceful and appropriate resolution in an effective and timely manner.		
Scope	All Staff		
Review			
Last Updated	Review Date		
17/08/2015	01/07/2021		

Responsible Officer: All Staff	<p>Council representatives are expected to treat customers with courtesy and respect at all times and to make every reasonable effort to address the needs of customers, even when they are being difficult. However, sometimes there are customers whose issues cannot be dealt with to their satisfaction.</p> <p>Where a Supervisor/Manager is satisfied that every effort has been made by staff to address a customer's needs, they may make a decision that there is no reasonable prospect of reaching a position where a particular customer is satisfied. In this instance the Supervisor/Manager may decide to stop or limit responses to the customer in relation to the issue in question.</p> <p>Where this decision has been made, the Supervisor/Manager is to ensure that this is communicated in writing to the customer and that the customer is given the opportunity to make representations to the Council about the proposed course of action. The Supervisor/Manager will continue to monitor any further contact with the customer over the issue.</p> <p>Customers who are Rude, Abusive or Aggressive</p> <p>Rude, abusive or aggressive behaviour may include rude or otherwise vulgar noises, expressions or gestures, verbal abuse of a personal or general nature, threatening or offensive behaviour, physical violence against property or against a person.</p> <p><u>On the Telephone</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If, in the opinion of any staff member, rude, abusive or aggressive comments or statements are made in the telephone conversation, the staff member is to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Warn the caller/customer that if the behaviour continues, the conversation will be terminated; and b) Terminate the conversation if the rude, abusive or aggressive behaviour continues after a warning has been
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Internal Procedure

given.

2. Where a conversation is terminated, the staff member is to inform his/her Supervisor/Manager of the incident.
3. The staff member involved must make file notes of exactly what has happened and these should be recorded in the Electronic Records Management System (ERMS).

In Person

1. At the Shire Office - If a staff member is dealing with a customer at the front desk and feel that they or other customers or staff may be placed in a dangerous situation, the staff member is to:
 - a) Use the duress alarm; and
 - b) Another member of staff may call the police if required.
2. At all other Shire Outstations/Workplaces - If a staff member is dealing with a customer and feel that they or other customers or staff may be placed in a dangerous situation, a staff member is to:
 - a) Call the Shire Office front desk and ask them to inform the relevant Supervisor/Manager of the situation. If they are not there, then any available Supervisor/Manager should be informed. That Supervisor/Manager should then go to the assistance of the staff member immediately;
 - b) Where assistance is required outside of normal working hours the Emergency Call Out Phone (Works and Services) should be called; and if required;
 - c) Call the police immediately.

Documentation and Reporting

In all situations, staff are to document the incident and a record must be made and maintained in the ERMS.

BACKGROUND:

PROCEDURE REF NO:	PM-135-15
OWNER DEPARTMENT:	Organisation
ORIGINATOR (TITLE):	OS&H Administration Officer
PROCEDURE APPROVED BY:	
REVIEW FREQUENCY:	2 Years
RELATED DOCUMENTS:	
ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:	