

Zero Tolerance Policy

Review Cycle	Annual
Date written	August 2020
Date reviewed	August 2021
Date of next review	August 2022

Our staff and volunteers come to work to care for others, and it is important for everyone to be treated with respect

The Purple Elephant Project has a duty and responsibility to ensure that all staff and volunteers can go about their work and professional practice without being subjected to unacceptable behaviour. This is in compliance with The Health and Safety at Work Act (1974), which requires all organisations to ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of its employees.

The Purple Elephant Project operates a zero tolerance policy towards harassment and abuse of its staff and volunteers, which includes (but is not limited to) homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, racism, sexism, ageism or harassment or abuse on basis of disability, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, religion or belief.

We aim to manage unacceptable behaviour in a manner that protects our staff, volunteers and members of the public wherever it is appropriate and necessary to do so. We recognise that in some circumstances, people may have a disability or mental health problem that may make communication more difficult. Where there is a concern about unacceptable behaviour, we will always consider individual needs and circumstances before deciding on how we should respond.

DEFINITION

Unacceptable behaviour includes (but is not limited to):

- Offensive or abusive language, verbal abuse and swearing including specific references to homophobia, biphobia and transphobia (whether aimed at or conducted by either clients or staff)
- Any physical violence towards any member of the charity team or other clients such as pushing or shoving
- Racial abuse and sexual harassment
- Loud and intrusive conversation
- Persistent or unrealistic demands that cause stress to staff/ volunteers. Requests will be met wherever possible, and explanations given when they cannot
- Unwanted or abusive remarks
- Negative, malicious or stereotypical comments
- Invasion of personal space
- Brandishing of objects or weapons
- Near misses i.e., unsuccessful physical assaults
- Threats or risk of serious injury to a member of staff, fellow client or visitors
- Bullying or victimization
- Intimidation, including acting in a way which inspires fear, demands great respect or frightens into submission
- Stalking
- Spitting
- Alcohol or drug fuelled abuse
- Unreasonable behaviour and non-cooperation
- Any of the above which is linked to destruction of or damage to property.

NB – It is important to remember that such behaviour can be either in person, by telephone, letter or e-mail or other form of communication such as graffiti on our property.

This policy applies throughout the charity including our premises, car park and grounds. It also applies to any staff member or volunteer away from the centre, but only in so far as it relates to the business of the charity.

Following an incident

Any incidents of abusive or threatening behaviours towards our staff or volunteers will be taken very seriously. We recognise that violence, aggression and abuse at work is distressing and damaging to the health and well-being of those involved. Support and assistance will therefore be made available to anyone affected.

Should a member of our staff or volunteer feel they are being exposed to unacceptable behaviour, the matter will be passed immediately to our CEO, who will attempt to resolve matters to ensure continuation of services where possible.

Appropriate risk assessments will be conducted to assess and review the duties of the staff member, identify any "at risk" situations, and take appropriate steps to reduce or remove the risk to staff or volunteers, particularly if they are working alone. However, this may involve reducing direct contact with the staff member involved in the first instance, and/ or our CEO being in attendance during any contact (for example, meetings). Clients will be notified with regards to this.

Should the situation persist, this may result in removal from our services and all interventions ceasing with immediate effect. There will be no appeal process in these circumstances. In some cases, this may also involve reporting incidents to the local police or safeguarding boards.

We hope you understand the need for this policy and ask you to treat all our staff and volunteers with respect

Thank you for your cooperation.