

# Challenging Behaviours, Aggression & Violence Procedure (18)





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## 1. PURPOSE

To provide the minimum standard for the prevention and management of challenging behaviours, aggression, and violence (CBAV) risks across all worksites.

## 2. SCOPE

This procedure applies to all workers under the Catholic Church Endowment Society Inc. (CCES).

## 3. DEFINITIONS

Definitions can be found on the [Catholic Safety & Injury Management Website](#).

### 3.1. Information

Each workplace is to ensure that there are appropriate resources to identify, prevent, manage, and respond to challenging behaviours, aggression, and violence.

Challenging behaviour can:

- potentially or stop, interrupt or limit the ability for service or care to be provided in a way that is safe for both consumer and workers;
- result in a person or people feeling unsafe or threatened or feeling that intervention, or retreat / withdrawal, is warranted to avoid or limit, physical or psychological harm to someone, or property.

CBAV also includes workplace bullying as well as incidents that are premeditated by persons with decision making capacity and have an escalated outcome. Refer to the [Bullying & Harassment Procedure \(21\)](#).

## 4. RESPONSIBILITIES

Specific responsibilities for conducting certain actions required by the CCES, have been allocated to position holders within the organisation. Such responsibilities are consistent with the obligations that the legislation places on officers, managers, supervisors, workers, and others in the workplace.

Responsibility, authority, and accountability processes have been defined in [Responsibility, Authority & Accountability Procedure \(12\)](#), and summarised in:

- [Responsibility, Authority & Accountability Matrix – Workers \(025G\)](#);
- [Responsibility, Authority & Accountability Matrix – Managers & Supervisors \(023G\)](#);
- [Responsibility, Authority & Accountability Matrix – Officers \(024G\)](#); and
- [Work Health & Safety and Injury Management Policy](#).

You are required to familiarise yourself with this procedure to understand the obligations that you may have in relation to its implementation and to carry out your assigned actions and responsibilities.

This Procedure is to be read in conjunction with your Organisational Policies and / or Procedures.



## 5. PROCEDURE

### 5.1. Identification of CBAV hazards / risks

The worksite shall identify hazards / risks present in the workplace (and those likely to be encountered through the course of undertaking work related activities) through:

- review of workplace hazard and incident reports.
- consultation with workers regarding possible violence hazards, including but not limited to bullying, harassment, conflict, physically or verbally aggressive behaviour.
- seeking other sources of information such as reviewing security information, look at the characteristics of the workplace, the community / environment to obtain an overall picture of the violence risk within the workplace.
- review of high-risk tasks that may attract violence (e.g., cash handling, working in isolation / alone, working with distressed / hostile people, family law matters, home visits, collaborating with people with special needs).

For those working in health services, CBAV can be categorised as:

- service-related, which arises when providing a service to consumers. It can be intentional or deliberate, or unintentional when associated with health conditions such as delirium, dementia, psychosis.
- external, when the person exhibiting CBAV from outside the health service and the action is associated with crime for example robbery or vandalism.

Types of service related CBAV include:

- verbal abuse.
- disrespectful behaviour (e.g., intimidation).
- disruption to care and health services.
- actual or threat of physical violence.
- intrusive behaviour.

Refer to the [Occupational Violence Guideline \(006G\)](#) and [Challenging Behaviour Guidelines \(007G\)](#) for further assistance on identification of hazards / risks.

Abuse can be face to face, by phone or in writing (including electronic communication / images). Perpetrators of abuse can be clients, students, co-workers, or other persons who meet workers.

Interpretation of what constitutes abusive behaviour may differ from individual to individual, but any of the following could be classed as abusive:

Behaviour	Examples
Emotional / passive abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 'Put downs'</li><li>• Insults</li><li>• Unwarranted exclusion</li></ul>
Physical violence against a person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hitting, kicking, grabbing, punching, or pushing</li></ul>



Physical violence against property	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Kicking, defacing, or destroying property</li><li>• throwing property or objects</li></ul>
Stalking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Clients, students, or others waiting outside offices / buildings</li><li>• Being followed</li><li>• Harassment in public places</li><li>• Repeated telephone calls or texts</li></ul>
Threatening or offensive behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Swearing</li><li>• Vulgar noises or gestures</li><li>• Spitting</li><li>• Death threats or threats of violence</li></ul>
Verbal abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Innuendo</li><li>• Raised voice</li><li>• Vulgar expression or obscenities</li></ul>

#### 5.1.1. Community workers

For those workers required to visit client's homes, this is deemed a workplace. Clients must provide, as far as is reasonable, a safe working environment for workers coming into their home. The workers in consultation with clients shall implement procedures to assist an individual to identify any potential hazards / risks at a client's home. Attending an appointment or escorting a client for a service (e.g. shopping) is also deemed a workplace.

#### 5.2. Assess the risk

Worksites will conduct and document the risk assessment. Refer to [Hazard Management Procedure \(14\)](#).

To assist with identifying risks, worksites are encouraged to refer to the [South Australia Police Business Security document](#).

#### 5.3. Controlling the risk

Workplaces need to develop site specific procedures for the management of any foreseeable event or serious or imminent danger. Controls related to CBAV include but are not limited to:

- have a procedure and guidelines for the prevention and response to CBAV.
- training of workers as determined through the risk assessment.
- development of specific protocols locally and across the workplace.
- use of appropriate personal protective equipment.
- physical work facilities (e.g., access to and the amount of personal / fixed duress alarms, on-call support, CCTV, phone access and security measures).
- work systems for how activities are undertaken (e.g., cash handling, working alone, out of hours work, access and egress, trigger points for at-risk individuals).

##### 5.3.1. Physical work environment and security

The physical work environment can affect the likelihood of violent incidents occurring and the ease with which people can respond to those incidents.



The following control measures are the most dependable and will provide the highest protection for workers:

- the building is secure, maintained and fit for purpose.
- security measures are used (e.g., CCTV, anti-jump screens, timer safes).
- where possible, workers are separated from the public (e.g., with protective barriers or screens).
- access to the premises and vulnerable areas is appropriately controlled.
- there is no public access to the premises when people work alone or at night.
- workers can see who is coming into the premises and can restrict access when necessary.
- communication and alarm systems are in place, regularly maintained and evaluated.
- cash, valuables, and drugs are stored securely.
- cash-handling procedures are developed and implemented (e.g., electronic funds transfer only, locked drop safes, carry lesser amounts of cash, vary banking times, 'limited cash held' signs displayed).
- where possible, limit the amount of cash, valuables and drugs held on the premises.
- the workplace uses safe glass e.g., laminated, toughened or Perspex (in picture frames and mirrors also).
- there is no access to dangerous implements or objects that could be thrown or used to injure someone.
- internal and external lighting is installed to assist visibility.
- workers and others have a safe retreat to avoid violence.
- furniture and partitions are arranged to allow good visibility of service areas and avoid restrictive movement.
- there is appropriate signage to direct clients and visitors.

### 5.3.2. Work systems

Work systems and procedures are administrative controls and should be part of the overall work health and safety prevention strategies. They should be used together with control measures relating to the physical work environment and security.

Procedures may include the following:

- arrangements for working in isolation and in uncontrolled environments.
- requirements for opening and closing the business.
- how workers are monitored when working in the community or away from the workplace (e.g., a supervisor checks in regularly throughout the shift).
- a system to map and record areas of concern for safe access and egress.
- that regular handover of information occurs (e.g., with workers, other agencies, carers, and service providers).
- a process is in place for client compatibility and suitability assessment.
- work practices are evaluated to see if they contribute to aggression.



- behaviours and their triggers are identified, and strategies to address them are implemented and monitored.
- identification system is in place (e.g., workers and authorised visitors are clearly identified).
- arrangements for understanding client / student condition / disability / triggers / care and behaviour management plans.
- behaviour and treatment programs are reviewed after incidents or changes in behaviour.
- where client / student is known to have a history of aggression, a management plan is in place that has been developed in consultation with appropriately qualified people.
- information on the ongoing treatment of clients / students known to be aggressive or abusive, such as treatment contracts / plans.

### 5.3.3. Responding to abusive behaviour

All workers, where there is significant risk, such as the individual has a weapon, or become violent in any way has the right to activate the worksites emergency procedures. This may include:

- activating duress alarm.
- activating lock in procedures.
- workers retreating to a safe place.
- contacting South Australian Police (SAPOL) immediately.

Workers must always seek assistance from their immediate supervisor / manager or a clinical worker (where available) if they are faced with an individual presenting at the worksite and there is a perceived or real risk of safety.

Incidents of abusive behaviour can have serious effects. Any worker effected by abusive behaviour must be given the opportunity to be debriefed and to be relieved from duties if deemed necessary and must be provided with the worksite Employee Assistance Provider details.

### 5.4. Incident Reporting and Investigation of CBAV

All incidents of CBAV must be reported and logged onto the Incident Reporting Database.

Examples of incidents that must be reported include, but are not limited to:

- biting, spitting, scratching, hitting, kicking.
- punching, pushing, shoving, tripping, grabbing.
- throwing objects.
- verbal threats.
- aggravated assault.
- any form of indecent physical contact.
- threatening someone with a weapon or armed robbery.

Immediately after an incident, ensure that:





- everyone is safe.
- first aid or urgent medical attention is provided.
- individual support is provided where required, including practical and emotional support. Engage your EAP where required.
- the incident is reported including details of what happened, who was affected and who was involved.
- police are called where necessary.
- conduct a team debrief post incident.

The [Behaviour Management Flow Chart \(005T\)](#) can be used to assist with the investigation.

### 5.5. Training

Workers who are at risk shall be identified through a training needs analysis. Training should be provided in:

- violence prevention measures (e.g., part of the induction training package before starting work).
- workplace policy and procedures, including emergency response.
- de-escalating aggression (e.g., identify signs of aggression, verbal, and non-verbal communication strategies, encourage reasoning, listen carefully, acknowledge concerns.
- communication strategies.
- situational risk assessment (e.g., when visiting homes or working off-site).
- positive behaviour strategies and managing behaviours of concern.

### 5.6. Records

Document used to manage challenging behaviours, occupational violence and aggression as prescribed by this procedure will be produced in a format that allows tracking for verification and review and be in accordance with requirements detailed in [Document Control Procedure \(23\)](#).

### 5.7. Review

This procedure will be subject to a planned review by the document owner in accordance with the requirements outline in [Document Control Procedure \(23\)](#).

Other methods for reviewing and evaluating the performance of this procedure will include:

- audit activity.
- investigations.
- performance reports.

## 6. RELATED SYSTEM DOCUMENTS

### 6.1. Policies & Procedures

Bullying & Harassment Procedure (21)

Document Control Procedure (23)

Hazard Management Procedure (14)





Responsibility, Authority & Accountability Procedure (12)

WHS & Injury Management Policy

## 6.2. Forms & Tools

Behaviour Management Flow Chart (005T)

Group Legal Register (010T)

## 7. REFERENCES

Legislation and other requirements related to this procedure are defined in the [Group Legal Register \(010T\)](#) which can be accessed via the Catholic Safety & Injury Management website.

### 7.1. Internal Resources

Challenging Behaviours Guidelines (007G)

Occupational Violence Guidelines (006G)

Responsibility, Authority & Accountability Matrix – Managers & Supervisors (023G)

Responsibility, Authority & Accountability Matrix – Officers (024G)

Responsibility, Authority & Accountability Matrix – Workers (025G)

### 7.2. External Resources

Preventing and Responding to Workplace Challenging Behaviour, Violence and Aggression Policy Guideline, SA Health (2015)

Work-related violence, Preventing and responding to work-related violence, SafeWork SA (2018)

[Challenging behaviour – from ambulance to bedside, Workshop resource list, SafeWork SA \(2018\)](#)

[SAPOL Safety and Security website](#)

## 8. AUDITABLE OUTPUTS

The following examples of records will be used to verify implementation of this procedure:

- Training needs identified
- Training provided where identified
- Site specific procedures
- Documented risk assessments
- Hazard reports
- Incident reports



## 9. VERSION CONTROL & CHANGE HISTORY

Version	Approved by	Approved Date	Reason for Development of Review	Next Review Date
V3	Sector Forums	July 2013	Legislation – New WHS Act	2016
<b>April 2015 – Document consolidated across CCES sectors</b>				
V1	Executive Manager CSHWSA	24/04/2015	Procedure Consolidation	2016
V2	Executive Manager CSHWSA	15/03/2017	Procedure Review	2020
V3	Executive Manager CSHWSA	22/01/2021	Reviewed content, Reformatted template, Title change.	2022
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