



West Lothian
Council

Personal Safety at Work Policy



Human Resources
Reviewed January 2013

WEST LoTHIAN COUNCIL

PERSONAL SAFETY AT WORK POLICY

(Covers ALL council employees)

1. POLICY STATEMENT AND PRINCIPLES

West Lothian Council has a statutory duty to safeguard the health, personal safety and welfare of its employees whilst at work. The nature of services that the council provides can potentially place the personal safety of some employees at risk. The council's policy is to take all reasonable practicable steps to eliminate or minimise that risk.

2. POLICY AIMS

The aims of the Personal Safety at Work Policy are to:

- establish, communicate and promote the council's commitment to minimising the risks to employees from violence at work;
- ensure that all employees are aware of the definitions of violence at work;
- require the reporting and monitoring of all acts of violence to employees in the course of their duties;
- promote a working environment which is supportive to the after care of victims of violence;
- make available appropriate support services such as counselling to help employees cope with the effects of violent behaviour;
- require effective risk assessments in relation to the personal safety of employees;
- ensure that effective systems are in place for the monitoring of incidents within each service group.

3. IMPLEMENTATION

The policy will be implemented through the 'Personal Safety at Work Framework Procedure' and will be supported by the 'Personal Safety at Work Guidance Notes for Employees' and any further advice and guidance that may be issued by Occupational Health & Safety.

4. DEFINITION OF VIOLENCE

For the purposes of this policy, violence is defined as any behaviour towards an employee in the course of their work that has an adverse physical or psychological effect on them

Examples of such behaviour are:

Non-physical Violence

- threatening gestures
- verbal abuse
- harassment in all forms
- racial or sexual abuse
- swearing/shouting
- bullying
- abusive telephone calls

Physical Violence

- kicking
- use of weapons
- spitting
- assault
- punching
- throwing objects
- sexual assault

5. EMPLOYER RESPONSIBILITIES

Health and Safety legislation requires the council to conduct suitable and adequate assessment of risks to the health and safety of employees, including risk to personal safety. Risk assessment findings must be communicated to employees, together with the actions proposed to prevent or minimise the risks.

The council must also introduce safe systems of work for their employees following the risk assessment process.

6. EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES

The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 requires employees to take care of themselves and others who may be affected by their acts or omissions.

Employees must observe procedures that have been put in place to safeguard their personal safety.

All incidents of violence must be reported to the appropriate manager or supervisor within specified timescales.

7. MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

To ensure the effective implementation of this policy, a system will be put in place to monitor the number of:

- violent incidents, attacks assaults or injuries; and
- days lost as a result of incidents of violence

8. REVIEW OF POLICY

This policy will be reviewed as appropriate in consultation with the trade unions and in light of Health & Safety or other specialist advice.