



ELY CATHEDRAL

Ely Cathedral Violence and Aggression Policy

1.0 Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to address instances of unacceptable behaviour which may cause harm or the fear of harm to any person within the Cathedral. The scope of this policy is therefore:

Instances of violence or aggression committed by any person, towards any other person on the Cathedral premises.

2.0 Definition

- **Violence** is the use of force against a person and has the same definition as "assault" in law (i.e., an attempt, offer or application of force against the person). This would cover any person unlawfully touching any other person forcefully, spitting at another person, raising fists or verbally threatening to strike or otherwise apply force to any person.
- **Aggression** is regarded as threatening or abusive language or gestures, sexual gestures or behaviour, derogatory sexual or racial remarks, shouting at any person or applying force to any property in the Cathedral or the personal property of any person in the Cathedral.

This policy applies throughout the Cathedral itself, Chapter House and all other Cathedral premises.

3.0 Responsibilities

Officer holders, staff and volunteers should:

- Take responsibility to ensure their own safety and that of their colleagues at work. It is essential, therefore, that all are familiar with policies and procedures, equipment and precautions adopted to combat the risk of physical and verbal abuse.
- Familiarise themselves with policies and procedures, guidelines and instructions.
- Use any equipment or devices provided for 'at risk' situations i.e., alarms, or walkie talkies.



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- Participate in relevant training made available by the Cathedral.
- Report all incidents of physical and verbal abuse (threatened or actual).
- Record details of incidents in compliance with Cathedral procedures.
- Contribute towards reviews concerning any incidents in which they have been involved.
- Suggest precautionary measures involving changes in the layout of the work environment that can reduce risk.
- Make use of any available support and counselling.
- Advise the Health and Safety Officer of any perceived risks involved in Cathedral activities.

The Cathedral Responsibilities

- Carry out risk assessments to assess and review the duties of office holders, staff and volunteers, identifying any 'at risk' situations and taking appropriate steps to reduce or remove the risk.
- Assess and review the layout of premises to reduce the risk to officer holders, staff, volunteers, visitors and worshippers.
- Assess and review the provision of personal safety equipment, i.e. alarms.
- Develop policies, procedures and guidelines for dealing with physical and verbal abuse.
- Provide support and counselling for victims of any incidents of violence and/or aggression or refer to suitably qualified health professionals.
- Make officer holders, staff and volunteers aware of risks and ensure the provision of relevant training courses.
- Record any incidents and take any remedial action to reduce the risk of similar incidents taking place.

4.0 What To Do

If violence and aggression are encountered:

- In the first instance, office holders, staff or volunteers should ask the perpetrator to stop behaving in an unacceptable way and request assistance as soon as possible. Sometimes a calm and quiet approach will be all that is required. If the situation allows, try to obtain the person's name and address as this will assist with recording the incident.
- If the unacceptable behaviour continues after reasonable requests to stop, then the perpetrator should be requested to leave the Cathedral premises.
- If the perpetrator refuses to leave or if the office holders, staff or volunteer feels in need of additional support, they can request a Verger or other



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member of staff to call RGP Security Services who will respond to security matters which are not serious enough for police attendance. Intended response time is within 20 minutes. Vergers and staff must have access to the contact details for RGP Security.

- If the person is acting in an unacceptable and unlawful manner, causes damage or actually strikes another, then the police should be called immediately.
- If the police have been called office holders, staff and volunteers should attempt to evacuate the area and move themselves and visitors away from the person who is being violent or aggressive.
- Should it prove necessary to protect others or themselves from harm, then office holders, staff or volunteers should not, except on the most extreme occasions, attempt to physically intervene and use only reasonable force when doing so.
- Office holders, staff and volunteers who are involved in or witness an incident of violence or aggression must complete a written note of the incident, detailing in chronological order what has taken place and the exact words used, prior to leaving the building where possible.
- It is the policy of the Cathedral to press charges against any person who damages or steals Cathedral property or assaults any office holder, staff member or volunteer.

5.0 Procedure Following an Incident. The Departmental Safeguarding Lead (or Chapter Lead) will:

- Review the incident with the office holder, staff member or volunteer immediately to determine severity
- Determine if the police should be called if they have not already (e.g., if a crime may have been committed)
- Make a record of the incident (even a brief record if it is a 'low-level' or repeat incident) to assist with building up a chronology of events should it be required by the police or another statutory agency. This record should be made on the Cathedral Incident Log in the Health and Safety folder on the X Drive. The Cathedral Safeguarding Advisor should be informed of additions to this log.



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- If a person has been physically hurt, the incident must be additionally recorded in the relevant Accident Log (with the First Aid box in the Verger's Vestry and in other locations)
- Risk-assess whether any additional measures or changes in practice are needed

6.0 Support for Office Holders, staff or volunteers subjected to abuse

The Cathedral takes a serious view of any incidents of physical and verbal abuse against those individuals affected and will support them if assaulted, threatened or harassed.

The first concern of managers after an incident is to provide appropriate debriefing and counselling for those affected. Depending on the severity of the incident this counselling may be undertaken by trained professionals.

The relevant Departmental Safeguarding Lead will assist victims of violence with the completion of the formal record of the incident and where appropriate will report the incident to the police.

7.0 Document History

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