



PLAIN ENGLISH ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY FOR VIOLENCE, AGGRESSION, ABUSE, AND THREATENING BEHAVIOURS (POLICY)

Last amended: 27.09.21

Made by the Complaints Officer: Jillian Cordeiro

Main points

- We need **your help** to make our workplace a safe place for everyone.
- **Sometimes you might not be happy with us.** At Banter Speech & Language Pty Limited, we do our best to help people. But we are not perfect. Sometimes, you, or someone else, might not be happy with us. For example, you might not be happy with some of our supports and services.
- **You have a right to complain.** You have the right to make complaints about our supports and services at any time. If you want to make a complaint, we want to help you to make it quickly and easily, and without stress. Our **Complaints Policy** explains how to make a complaint easily and without stress.
- **You are not allowed to hurt or abuse our staff for any reason.** No one is allowed to be violent, aggressive, abusive or threatening to our staff or visitors for any reason - even if they are really upset or stressed out, or if we have done something wrong. Our staff include our owners, managers, employees, contractors,

volunteers, and students. Visitors include anyone else at our workplace who are not staff and include other clients and their family members, carers and supporters.

- **We must all follow the law.** It is never OK for anyone to hurt or abuse our staff or visitors. Hurting or abusing someone is against the law. The law also says that providers like us must work hard to keep our staff safe from harm. This includes making sure that our staff do not get hurt or abused by anyone at work.
- **This policy applies to everyone.** This policy is written for you because you are our client. But it applies to everyone who is receiving supports or services from us. It also applies to family members, carers and any other people who come with you or other clients. In fact, it applies to everyone who comes to our workplace for any reason.
- This policy forms an important part of our system for managing **workplace safety risks.**

What behaviours are not OK

Violence is any behaviour that hurts, injures, or kills people. Violence is never OK.

Aggression is violent or attacking behaviour, and often involves anger. Aggression towards staff or visitors is never OK.

Abuse is extremely rude and insulting things that people say to others, especially when they are angry. Abuse of staff or visitors is never OK.

Threatening behaviour is any behaviour that our staff or others might think reasonably is going to result in them getting hurt or harmed, or otherwise affect the safety of someone else. It can include things you say or things you do with your body, or both. It is never OK to threaten staff or visitors.

Putting up with these behaviours is **NOT** part of anyone's job and is also unfair to visitors. Our staff do not have to put up with these behaviours. We do not put up with them because we need to keep our staff and visitors safe.

What happens if you breach the policy

We have a **zero-tolerance policy** towards violent, aggressive, abusive and/or threatening behaviours. That means we **will not put up with them at all**.

If your behaviour is violent, or aggressive, or abusive, or threatening:

- we may tell you to stop the behavior straight away; and/or
- send you a written warning; and/or
- we may need to take steps to stop you from being violent, aggressive, abusive, or threatening - especially in an emergency or if think, on reasonable grounds, that your behaviour poses a safety risk or staff, visitors other others; and/or
- you may be asked to leave; and/or
- we may call for backup, security and/or the police.

If we ask you to leave, you **must** leave straight away. If you do not leave when we ask you to leave, we may call other staff members as back up, or we may call security or the police. We may also start our emergency procedures, which we use to keep our staff safe, including lock-down procedures designed to keep our staff safe.

If your behaviour is violent, or aggressive, or abusive, or threatening, we may also **suspend or end our supports and services immediately** because we need to make sure our staff are always safe.

Which behaviours are OK

Complaints: You can complain to us any time about the quality or your services or supports. We tell you how to do this in our Complaints Policy, and you can ask any of our staff to help you to make a complaint any time. It's your right to complain about us. But you must never be violent, aggressive, abusive or threatening to staff or visitors when you are making a complaint.

Respectful disagreement. Different people sometimes have different ideas and thoughts on lots of topics, and that's OK. You can disagree with us about anything to do with your supports and services. But you must not be violent, aggressive, abusive or threatening when you disagree with us.

Incidents will be reported to the Incident Officer

All incidents of violence, aggression, abuse and/or threatening behaviours must be reported promptly by staff to our Incidents Officer, and are deemed to be Incidents for the purpose of our Incidents Management Policy. Among other things, the Incidents Manager is required to investigate any incident reported under this policy and to take action to ensure that risk management principles are applied to reduce systemic and recurrent risks, and that any mandatory reporting obligations to regulators and to others are satisfied in compliance with laws.

All serious physical acts of violence and assaults, and threats of violence, against individuals will be reported by the Incidents Officer or senior management to the police.

Review of Zero Tolerance Policy

This policy will be reviewed periodically - at least once a year – to ensure it is effective.

Status of this Document

This policy is intended to document this provider's zero tolerance approach to violence, aggression, abuse, and threatening behaviour as part of our commitment to maintaining a safe workplace for everyone.

Distribution of this Document

This policy forms part of the provider's compliance system. A copy is provided to:

- each person receiving support or services from us; and
- our staff.

Who is responsible for making sure this system is followed?

The **Complaints Officer** has primary responsibility for training all provider staff to comply with the requirements of this policy, including making sure clients and others are aware of their rights and responsibilities.

The Complaints Officer also has primary responsibility for the oversight and review of this policy. On all matters relating to this policy, the Complaints Officer reports to **senior management** of the provider, including our directors, David Kinnane and Jillian Cordeiro, who bear ultimate responsibility for preventing and managing violence.

Thank you

We take our obligation to provide a safe workplace very seriously, and will work hard to address and resolve safety issues that arise from violent, aggressive, abusive or threatening behaviours efficiently as set out in this policy. If you would like to discuss this policy further, please contact the Complaints Officer.