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| **POLICY NO & NAME:** | **013 – OCCUPATIONAL VIOLENCE** |
| **APPROVED BY:** | **Bec Symes, CEO** |
| **DATE CURRENT POLICY APPROVED:** | 22/01/2019 |
| **REVISION DATE/S:** | 22/01/2019 |
| **DATE CREATED** | 22/01/2019 |

**POLICY STATEMENT**

Greendale Community Support Services is committed to providing all employees, volunteers and students with a safe and healthy work environment free from violence.

**SCOPE & PURPOSE**

To create an awareness and to minimise the risk of occupational violence in all Greendale Community working environments.

**DEFINITION**

**An authorised person** is the relevant Manager or the Chief Executive Officer.

**Debriefing** is a process of evaluation and review focused on prevention and performance improvement.

**Assault** is defined as direct or indirect application of force by a person to the body of, or to the clothing or equipment worn by another person, with the intention of inflicting injury, pain, discomfort, damage, insult, threat or deprivation of liberty.

**Occupational Violence and Aggression** can be defined as anincident where an employee, volunteer or student, engaged in work duties, is physically attacked or threatened in the workplace and off-site situations, such as attending training courses, in a service user’s home or engaging with service users who display behaviours of concern. This applies to all forms of physical and psychological attacks on employees, volunteers or students, including, but not limited to:

* Aggressive gestures or expressions such as eye rolling and sneering
* Verbal gestures such as yelling, swearing and name calling
* Intimidating physical behaviour such as standing in a person’s personal space or standing over them
* Physical assault such as biting, spitting, scratching, pushing, shoving, tripping, grabbing or any type of direct physical contact
* Extreme acts of violence and aggression such as hitting, punching, strangulation, kicking, threats with weapons, sexual assault
* Throwing objects
* Attacking with knives, clubs or any other type of weapon
* Any form of indecent physical grabbing
* Verbal abuse and threats.

**Occupational Violence** can be perpetrated by:

* a co-worker
* a manager
* customer or service user
* person known to the service user
* person known to the organisation or the employee, volunteer or student
* a stranger (intruder).

**Occupational Violence** **and Aggression** may also occur between other individuals, including service users and witnessed by employees, volunteers and/or students.

The employee’s volunteer’s and/or student’s first response to any violence between other individuals is to keep themselves safe and not intervene.

Evasion should be the first line intervention.

In line with the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Act, the employees, volunteers and/or students safety comes first, before a duty of care to the service user.

This may be difficult to achieve if a vulnerable service user is being hurt, but other measures must be tried in line with the service user’s behaviour management plan, prior to intervening and the employee, volunteer or student being injured themselves.

**A behaviour of concern is a** behaviour of such intensity, frequency or duration that the physical safety of the person or others is placed in serious jeopardy or behaviour which is likely to seriously limit or deny access to the use of ordinary community facilities**.**

**A physical attack** can occur regardless of the attacker’s intent and includes situations where an employee is attacked by a person who may not be able to form intent, but their behaviour can cause harm.

In line with the requirements of the Disability Act 2006 and the Aged Care Act 1997, it should be noted that employees must not physically restrain a service user except to keep them safe in an emergency situation eg preventing them from running onto a roadway. Seclusion can only be used as part of a Behaviour Support Plan and reported to the Office of the Senior Practitioner as per the requirements of the Disability Act 2006 and Aged Care Act 1997. Employees, volunteers and students must always employ a least restrictive approach to prevent the person from causing injury to him or herself or another person.

**RESPONSIBILITIES**

Under section 21 of the OHS Act 2004, employers, volunteers and students have a general duty to provide and maintain, so far as is practicable, a working environment that is safe and without risk to health.

In line with the generic organisation wide Occupational Violence Risk Assessment, Greendale Community will provide ongoing training, risk assessments and individualised service user Behaviour Support Plans. The purpose of this targeted intervention is to assist employees, volunteers and students in their work.

The greatest risk of experiencing occupational violence is within the Accommodation and Specialist Support services division. Extensive training, induction and documentation requirements are therefore in place to address and minimize this risk.

Employees, volunteers and students have duties under section 25 of the OHS Act 2004 to take reasonable care of their own health and safety, and the health and safety of others in the workplace. They must cooperate in any action taken by their employer to comply with measures

ensuring health and safety. Greendale Community Support Services offer employees, volunteers and students an opportunity for debriefing or access to the employee assistance program (EAP) after an injury or an incident involving physical assault. Additional support sessions or additional training opportunities are available on request.

Greendale Community regularly reviews process and procedures in line with continuous quality improvement processes.

**Reporting**

Greendale Community complies with the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), the Department of Health (Commonwealth), the Department of Education and Training (DET), the Department of Ageing and Aged Care Incident Reporting Policies and Procedures. Greendale Community also provides service to participants within the National Disability Insurance Scheme, in line with the National Standards for Disability Services.

Incidents and injury data is reported and discussed at the Greendale Community Support Services monthly board meeting.

**It is mandatory for any employee, volunteer or student who experiences or witnesses Occupational Violence to report it, in line with Greendale Community Emergency Response and/or Incident Reporting Policies and Procedures.**

When Occupational Violence is reported, it is seen as a serious matter and will be investigated in a timely manner.

Greendale Community also complies with the DHHS mandatory reporting policy for allegations of physical assault and sexual assault against a person with a disability.

**REFERENCE**

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|  | Reference: | Occupational Health & Safety Act 2004 Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017  Disability Act 2006  Worksafe ([www.worksafe.vic.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au)) guides and workplace kits for example:   * Disability services – Occupational Health & Safety Compliance kit * Preventing and responding to work-related violence: A guide for employers * Prevention and management of violence and aggression in health services   DHHS – Framework for preventing and managing occupational violence and aggression (OVA)  Disability Act 2006  NDIS Act 2013  Children’s Services Regulations 2009  National Quality framework for Children’s Services  Commission for Children and Young People Act 2012  Home and Community Care Program (HACC)  Commonwealth Home Support Programme (CHSP)  Aged Care Act 1997  Ageing and Aged Care, Department of Health. |
|  | Industry Standard reference | National Standards for Disability Services  DHHS Standards  Home Care Standards  Victorian Child Safe Standards  Victorian ECI standards  Aged Care Quality Standards  Home and Community Care Standards |