# Handling Angry and Abusive Calls

[Call Handling](#_Toc181914317)

[Related Documents](#_Toc181914318)

**Description:** Guidelines on handling abusive callers and / or callers displaying inappropriate behavior and / or language, and provides details on when and how to escalate the call, if necessary.

|  |
| --- |
| Call Handling |

While most of our calls can be handled by using good customer service skills to diffuse and / or deescalate, the below process outlines the steps we should take for those rare exceptions when the member is abusive and / or displaying inappropriate behavior and / or language.

Perform the following steps when the caller is using profane language, continuous screaming, or abusive behavior:

**MED D Only:** Refer to [MED D - Escalating Disruptive Behavior Calls (027632)](https://thesource.cvshealth.com/nuxeo/thesource/#!/view?docid=0bbd24e0-6b0a-4686-be87-7e37a9c53058).

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Step** | **Action** | |
| **1** | Stay calm and professional.  Is the member angry, being abusive or using suggestive/lewd language?   * An angry caller is not an abusive caller. We will have to manage angry callers from time to time. Handling angry callers is an essential skill for Customer Care. | |
| **If the caller is using...** | **Then...** |
| Angry Language | Manage the **interaction**, not the caller’s anger.   1. Let the caller vent their anger. 2. Listen closely to determine the underlying problem. 3. Apologize, acknowledge and empathize with the caller’s problem. 4. Stay calm, and remain courteous and professional. 5. Give the caller time to calm down by lowering your voice. 6. Continue to apologize and acknowledge, but do not put the caller on hold. Placing the caller on hold will only make them angrier. 7. Proceed to help with the problem.   **Icon - Important Information** Do not take the anger personally. Remember, the caller is angry at the situation, not at you personally. |
| Abusive Language  (Cursing, Personal attacks, Threats) | 1. Remain calm and speak slowly and clearly. 2. Kindly ask the caller to please refrain from using abusive language. 3. Give the caller time to calm down and change their language by lowering your voice. 4. Continue to apologize and acknowledge, but do not put the caller on hold. 5. If the caller will not stop the abusive language, place the caller on hold and check documentation to determine if this is a repeat offender.    1. If this is a repeat offender:  * I’m required to let you know that I will report this to your benefits office. * Release the call.   **Note:** If member is not fully authenticated, take down their phone number before releasing the call.   * Proceed to **Step 5**.   1. If this is a first offense, proceed to **Step 2**.   **Note:** We will have callers who curse and/or make derogatory statements because they are angry at the situation. If the member is not directing abusive language and/or cursing **at** you, then they are not being abusive. |
| Suggestive / Lewd Language | 1. Remain calm and speak slowly and clearly. 2. Kindly ask the caller to refrain from using inappropriate language. 3. If the caller will not stop the inappropriate language, place the caller on hold and check documentation to determine if this is a repeat offender.    1. If this is a repeat offender:  * I’m required to let you know that I will report this to your benefits office. * Release the call.   **Note:** If member is not fully authenticated, take down their phone number before releasing the call.   * Proceed to **Step 5**.   1. If this is a first offense, proceed to **Step 2**. |
| Will not calm down to a non-abusive tone and refuses help or assistance from you. | Proceed to **Step 2**. |
| **2** | Explain that you are going to allow the caller to speak with someone who can assist further, then warm transfer them to the Senior Team.  **Note:**This policy is not designed to encourage escalated calls. Our primary goal is exceptional Customer Care at all times. | |
| **3** | Explain the situation fully to the Senior Team representative prior to transferring, so that the caller does not have to repeat themselves. This includes whether or not the member has prior history of using abusive language noted in their file. | |
| **4** | After transferring the call, thoroughly document your interaction with the member to note the member’s disruptiveness, and be specific.  **Examples:**   * Member was transferred to Senior Team as an abusive member due to physical threats. * Member was transferred to Senior Team because they would not stop using suggestive language.   **Note:** Refrain from notating any profanity within the member’s account. | |
| **5** | Email your Supervisor and Manager with the following so they can listen to the call:   * Member ID * Member name * Day and time of call * Details of the perceived member issue * Details of the call as well as the pattern of abuse that is present in documentation * Caller’s phone number (if not fully authenticated) | |

[Top of the Document](#_top)

|  |
| --- |
| Related Documents |

**Parent Document:** [CALL 0049 Customer Care Internal and External Call Handling](https://policy.corp.cvscaremark.com/pnp/faces/DocRenderer?documentId=CALL-0049)

**Abbreviations/Definitions:** [Customer Care Abbreviations, Definitions, and Terms (017428)](https://thesource.cvshealth.com/nuxeo/thesource/#!/view?docid=c1f1028b-e42c-4b4f-a4cf-cc0b42c91606)

[Top of the Document](#_top)

Not to Be Reproduced or Disclosed to Others without Prior Written Approval

**ELECTRONIC DATA = OFFICIAL VERSION / PAPER COPY = INFORMATIONAL ONLY**