

Violence and Aggression at Work

Health and Safety Standards for Reception
Areas



Reception Standards

These reception standards have been produced to assist with the management of violent and aggressive (V&A) incidents in reception areas.

Standard	Recommendation
Improvements to reception areas	All plans and requests for improvement schemes should be agreed by the following panel: Occupational Health, Safety & Wellbeing (OHS&W), the Security and CCTV Sections, Asset Management and Employee Representatives. Where appropriate, the plans may be subject to the Capital Programme Management Office (CPMO) process.
Closed circuit TV (CCTV)	Fitting of CCTV with links to Barking Control should be seriously considered in all open reception areas and those which are situated in remote locations. Where CCTV is fitted, signs indicating its use should be clearly displayed. A copy of the CCTV procedures for receptions & interview rooms should also be accessible, see attached link for assistance: http://lbbd/hr/health-and-safety/pdfs/reception-cctv-guidance.pdf
Panic alarms (PAs)	PAs should be fitted and working in all reception and interview areas, positioned in a discrete and easily accessible position and wherever possible linked to Barking Control. PAs must be tested on a regular basis – weekly (pre-arranged with the CCTV control room) and records maintained. Barking Control and reception location must agree the course of action to be taken in event of alarm activation. Note: Barking Control needs to be clear on actions required of them, so be sure to correctly identify which alarm has been activated e.g. Panic/security/fire.
Furniture/counter	Desks/counters should be of sufficient width to prevent aggressors gaining easy access i.e. jumping over or reaching across. All reception and interview areas (closed and open plan) should be designed to allow speedy and safe egress of staff to a secure area. The height of the counter should permit disabled access but should not be designed in such a way that staff are placed at risk.

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	(Alternative access/service could be provided via a meet & greet service).
Responding to a PA/violent or aggressive incident	A formal procedure detailing arrangements to be taken is required for each reception location, and staff briefed on its content. ‘Back office’ staff should only be involved if they consent and are adequately trained to cope with possible situations. Where buildings are occupied by different departments or are linked (e.g. Roycraft House and Stour Road offices), response to incidents must be co-ordinated between them. This must be reflected in the response procedure, and staff in all affected areas should be appropriately briefed and trained. Receptions that suffer a serious violent incident must notify all other Council receptions, giving brief details, ASAP following the incident.
Risk assessment	Reception activities should be covered by an up to date risk assessment which should be regularly reviewed especially following any V&A incident.
Lone working	A local procedure should be prepared & implemented by the manager following risk assessment. Please see the council’s “Lone Working” general policy and standards document available on the OHS&W section of the intranet. See link below for assistance: http://lbbd/hr/health-and-safety/pdfs/lone-working-policy-and-standards.pdf
Welcome poster (To advise that V&A towards staff is not acceptable in any circumstances)	These posters should be displayed in a prominent position in all reception and interview areas. Please see the OHS&W section of the intranet (link below), for copies of the poster. http://lbbd/hr/health-and-safety/pdfs/reception-welcome-poster.pdf
First aid	A trained first aider (preferable) or appointed person should be available to cover reception and interview areas.
Training	All frontline reception staff should receive both “Violence and Aggression” and “Customer Care” training. No member of staff should be expected to fill this role unless adequately trained. Training should be provided on a two year cycle.

Standard	Recommendation
	Training for handling telephone abuse should also be given to all reception staff expected to deal with customers by phone. All training can be booked using the Learning & Development catalogue via the oracle online management (OLM) system.
Cash handling	No cash should be dispensed except at designated cash desks e.g. Civic, Barking Learning Centre or 90 Stour road. For locations where significant quantities of cash are handled, e.g. Leisure centres, procedures for safe handling should be agreed and reviewed on a regular basis with the CCTV & Security Contract section. As a general principle cash should not be kept unsecured on premises overnight.
V&A (V&A) incident reporting/wellbeing	All incidents of V&A to employees (verbal & physical) must be reported by completing the council accident/incident report form and sending it to both the OHS&W section and Security Manager. Serious incidents should be notified immediately by phone. See link for assistance: http://lbbd/hr/health-and-safety/accident-injury-reporting.htm Employees should be offered counselling following V&A incidents.
Miscellaneous items Plants etc Housekeeping Fire Extinguishers	Items such as flowers/plant pots which are used to welcome and brighten areas for the public should be too large to pick up and use as projectiles or weapons. Large planters are preferable to plant pots. Clutter should be kept to a minimum and sharp objects should not be left in such a way as to be accessible to potential aggressors. Fire extinguishers should be kept behind counters but accessible.
Out of hours security measures	Advice on out of hours security arrangements should be obtained from the CCTV & Security Contract section.

Accident/Incident Reporting Flowchart

(Includes notification/process for
Violence and Aggression)



The Accident/Incident report form should be used for all types of hazardous incidents including work related illness/disease, stress, violence and aggression and motor vehicles accidents/incidents.

