

# UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR POLICY

## Introduction

Charles Burrell Centre ('CBC') believes that tenants and visitors have the right to express their views and ask questions about the CBC's services. It believes comments and suggestions are important in helping the CBC shape and improve the services it provides. We also recognise that in times of trouble or distress people may act out of character when they approach us. The CBC does not view behaviour as unacceptable simply because someone is reasonably forceful or determined in their approach. Unfortunately, on occasion, some tenants or visitors may choose to behave in a manner towards CBC staff or volunteers or to other tenants or visitors that are unacceptable. This policy sets out the CBC's approach should it be the case that CBC has assessed behaviour as being unacceptable. It also sets out the various actions we may take in order to manage any instances of such behaviour. The policy applies to staff and volunteers.

This policy does not supersede other policies in place for specific areas of the CBC.

## Defining unacceptable behaviour

**Abusive or offensive behaviour.** CBC staff or volunteers have the right not to suffer abusive, offensive or threatening behaviour even when a tenants or visitors is under stress.

Some examples of unacceptable behaviour might include:

- Abusive or offensive language; remarks of a sexual nature; racist language; homophobic or other discriminatory remarks
- Shouting
- Offensive gestures
- Verbal or physical threats
- Punching, kicking, head butting, spitting
- Bullying or intimidating behaviour
- Attempting to assault someone
- Using, brandishing or throwing weapons or objects aiming to inflict harm
- Stalking or other forms of harassment
- Publishing unacceptable information on social media, websites, newspapers, etc.

**Unacceptable demands on services.** Some tenants or visitors may make unacceptable demands on services due to the amount of information they ask for, the nature and scale of service they expect and the number of approaches they make in relation to an issue(s). The CBC recognises that in some cases this may be unintentional and what amounts to unacceptable demands will depend on the circumstances surrounding the particular issue(s) and the tenants or visitors behaviour. Examples of unacceptable demands might include:

- Demanding responses within an unreasonable timescale
- Insisting on seeing or speaking to a particular member of staff
- Sending the same or similar request to several members of staff
- Refusing to end a telephone call – and/or insisting on speaking to someone who is either not available or not the appropriate person (e.g. the Chief Executive)
- Requiring responses to correspondence where the content is malicious

The CBC can view these and other types of contact to be unacceptable if it impacts significantly upon workloads and/or the capacity to deliver an effective service, for example, taking an excessive amount of staff or volunteers' time to the disadvantage of other tenants or visitors.

**Unacceptable persistent contact.** The CBC recognises that some of our tenants or visitors will not or can not accept that the CBC is unable to assist them further or provide a level of service other than that already provided. Tenants or visitors may persist in disagreeing with the action or decision taken in relation to their concerns or they may contact the CBC persistently about the same issue(s). Examples of unacceptable persistent contact might include:

- Persistent refusal to accept a decision that has been made in relation to their complaint
- Persistent refusal to accept explanations relating to what the CBC can or cannot do
- Persistent refusal to follow the proper procedures explained to them in order to pursue their issue/concern
- Making an excessive number of telephone calls or visits to CBC offices
- Sending an excessive number of emails, faxes or letters
- Continuing to contact the CBC on the same issue(s) without presenting any new information
- Use of other names by the tenants or visitors to try and play one member of staff against another.

It is not necessarily the manner in which such tenants or visitors communicate with the CBC, but their persistence in doing so that goes beyond them being reasonably forceful or demanding. In certain instances, continuously contacting an individual member of staff or the CBC with telephone calls, texts, emails etc. or other unacceptable persistent behaviour may be considered to be harassment.

**Unacceptable behaviour whilst engaging in public expression of views or acts of civil disobedience on CBC premises.** Everyone has the right to access the services of the CBC without disturbance. Our commitment is to deliver excellent service in a space that is welcoming and safe and we ask all our tenants or visitors and visitors for their co-operation in maintaining this environment. The CBC also recognises the importance of striking a balance between providing an opportunity for the lawful expression of views and opinions and unacceptable behaviour and actions that affect its

staff or volunteers, other tenants and visitors. Some examples of unacceptable behaviour in these instances might include:

- Using any foul, abusive, threatening, intimidating or discriminatory language or behaviour towards CBC staff or volunteers, other tenants or visitors.
- Harassing and/or bullying CBC staff or volunteers, tenants or visitors
- Disorderly conduct which can include, but is not limited to, causing a disturbance, shouting, causing a nuisance to CBC staff or volunteers, tenants or visitors and/or otherwise hindering the day to day business of the CBC, its staff or volunteers, tenants or visitors
- Congregating in the building and/or obstructing thoroughfares and emergency routes and access points and otherwise hindering the day to day business of the CBC, its staff or volunteers, tenants or visitors
- Entering or attempting to enter restricted and/or non public areas of the building
- Recording or photographing people without their permission
- Wilful damage to any CBC property, defacing or spoiling CBC property and/or interfering with CBC property.
- Failing to follow instructions of CBC staff or volunteers or security staff when instructed to leave the premises

The CBC reserves the right to remove any person from its property and to take the necessary action to prevent any person/s from entering its buildings or property.

### **How we manage unacceptable behaviours**

**“Face to face” contact.** CBC staff or volunteers are empowered to ask a tenants or visitors to leave the CBC’s premises if they feel the tenants or visitors are being aggressive, abusive or offensive. The person dealing with the tenants or visitors has the right to make this decision. In most cases the person involved will advise the tenants or visitors that their behaviour is unacceptable and ask them to leave if it does not stop.

CBC staff might ask visitors to leave if they are not adequately supervising any children or adults accompanying them.

Tenants or visitors may be refused entry if they attempt to bring animals, other than guide or assistance animals, into the building.

**Telephone calls.** The use of abusive and offensive language towards CBC staff or volunteers will not be tolerated. CBC staff or volunteers will end any telephone call if they feel the caller is being aggressive, intimidating, abusive or offensive. The person taking the call is empowered to make this decision. The caller will be advised that their behaviour and/or language are unacceptable and that the call will be politely ended if it continues. The call may also be ended if the caller refuses to conclude the conversation and persists in staying on the line. There may be rare occasions when the person involved is unable to give a warning that the call will be ended in which case they are empowered to end the call immediately.

**Correspondence.** The CBC will not process any correspondence (email, letter or facsimile) that is abusive. If communications of this nature are received we will tell the

sender that their communication is considered to be inappropriate and offensive. They will be asked to stop corresponding in this way and state that if they do not stop, the CBC will not respond to any further communication from them. The CBC may also consider requiring all future contact to be made through a designated third party.

**Restricting Tenants or visitors Access.** Where there is a concern about the behaviour of tenants or visitors that may fall within the scope of this policy, the CEO CBC will, in the first instance, ask the tenants in writing to modify their behaviour.

If a tenants behaviour continues to cause concern after being given an initial warning then the CBC will look to restrict access.

Where a tenants or visitors behaviour is so extreme that it poses an immediate threat to the health, safety or wellbeing of staff or other service users, the tenants or visitors may not receive prior warning that access to CBC services may be restricted. And if necessary reserve the right to call the police.

Sometimes a tenants or visitors behaviour can cause significant alarm, distress or concern that a criminal act may have taken, or be about to take place. When such situations arise, the CBC will consider reporting the matter to the police or other relevant authorities. The underlying principle will be the need to protect our staff and others from harm or the threat of harm.

If any of the circumstances outlined above occurs the tenants lease will be reviewed and may be terminated.

If the CBC does decide to restrict a tenants or visitors access, it may decide to adopt one or more of the following actions (or any other action deemed appropriate):

- Request the tenants or visitors to only send communication to a dedicated CBC email address and/or only use a dedicated CBC telephone number
- Place time limits on telephone calls and/or personal contacts
- Require that any personal contact takes place in the presence of a witness (including telephone calls)
- Record all telephone calls and/or personal contacts
- Arrange for a named member of staff to deal with all calls or correspondence from the tenants or visitors
- Require the tenants or visitors to make an appointment to see a named employee before visiting CBC premises
- Limit communication to written only
- Inform the tenants or visitors that their correspondence will only be read (to ensure no new issues have been raised), acknowledged and filed
- Inform the tenants or visitors that all contact must be through a designated third party
- Apply a “warning flag” on the service user’s electronic record to classify them as using unacceptable behaviour
- Block or redirect the tenants or visitors telephone number or email address
- Ban the tenants or visitors from entering CBC premises

