

ORGANISATION NAME

THREATS AND VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND RESPONSE POLICY

Purpose and Scope

Organisation Name is committed to providing a safe environment for everyone who works, volunteers, or participates in our programs and activities. Threats and acts of violence directed at our organisation, its staff, volunteers, board members, or facilities will not be tolerated, ignored, or condoned, regardless of who makes them.

This policy sets out how **Organisation Name** prevents, prepares for, and responds to threats and violence, and the responsibilities of everyone involved in identifying, reporting, and addressing them.

This policy applies to every person working for **Organisation Name**, including but not limited to employees, volunteers, managers, board members, officers, contractors, and consultants, wherever **Organisation Name** business or activities take place. It should be read alongside our Respectful Workplace Policy, Volunteer Code of Conduct, and Volunteer Termination Policy, which this policy complements.

Policy Statement

Threats are increasingly common across the charitable and not-for-profit sector, and can come from clients, members of the public, former volunteers or employees, or other parties connected to our work. A threat does not need to result in physical harm to be taken seriously; verbal, written, online, and property-directed threats can all cause real harm to the people who experience them and to the organisation as a whole.

Organisation Name will take all reasonable steps to prevent threats and violence, to ensure that everyone covered by this policy knows how to recognise and report them, and to respond to any incident promptly, fairly, and with the safety of those involved as the first priority.

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, threats and violence may include, but are not limited to:

- Verbal or written harassment, including abusive calls, emails, letters, or messages;
- Online harassment or targeting, including on social media;
- Threats directed at a specific staff member, volunteer, or board member;
- Intimidation connected to our advocacy positions or the services we provide;
- Threats of physical harm or violence;
- Threats to, or damage of, property or facilities; and
- Any other conduct that a reasonable person would perceive as intended to intimidate, frighten, or coerce.

Organisation Responsibilities

As part of our commitment to a safe environment, **Organisation Name** is responsible for:

- Developing, reviewing, and updating this policy and its associated procedures on a yearly basis;
- Taking reasonable steps to prevent, or otherwise minimise, threats and violence connected to our work;
- Providing a clear, accessible way for anyone covered by this policy to report a threat;
- Investigating and addressing all reports in a timely, fair, and confidential manner;
- Cooperating with police or other authorities as required; and
- Training leaders, employees, and volunteers on this policy and increasing awareness of it.

Leader of Volunteers and Management Responsibilities

Organisation Name's Executives, Directors, Managers, Supervisors, and the leader of volunteers are responsible for:

- Ensuring the immediate safety of anyone involved in or affected by a threat before taking any further action;
- Ensuring volunteers and employees know how to recognise and report a threat;
- Documenting and escalating any threat that comes to their attention without delay;
- Cooperating with police, investigators, or other authorities as required; and
- Supporting anyone affected by a threat, including through debriefing and, where appropriate, referral to professional support.

Employee and Volunteer Responsibilities

Employees at all levels and volunteers at **Organisation Name** have a responsibility to:

- Take all threats seriously, whether directed at themselves or someone else;
- Remove themselves from an unsafe situation where possible, and prioritise their own safety and the safety of others;
- Report any threat as soon as possible, following the reporting steps set out below;
- Document what occurred as accurately as possible; and
- Cooperate with any investigation arising from a report made under this policy.

Immediate Response

If a threat involves immediate danger, call emergency services (911 or the local equivalent) without delay. Safety comes first; reporting to **Organisation Name** under the steps below can happen once immediate danger has passed.

Where there is no immediate danger but a threat has occurred, remove yourself from the situation if it is safe to do so, and notify your supervisor or the leader of volunteers as soon as possible.

Reporting Incidents

Anyone who experiences or witnesses a threat should document the specific details as soon as possible, including the date, time, location, who was involved or present, and exactly what was said or done.

- Volunteers should report the incident to their supervisor and the leader of volunteers.
- Employees should report the incident to their manager and to Human Resources.
- If the complaint involves a supervisor or manager, report it directly to the leader of volunteers or Human Resources, as appropriate.
- If the complaint involves the leader of volunteers or Human Resources, report it directly to the Executive Director.

Reports should be made in writing where possible. All reports will be taken seriously and treated confidentially, except where disclosure is required by law or necessary to protect the safety of any person. There will be no retaliation against anyone who reports a threat in good faith.

Investigation

Organisation Name will investigate all reports made under this policy promptly, fairly, and impartially, in a manner similar to investigations conducted under our Respectful Workplace Policy. In complex or sensitive situations, an external investigator may be engaged.

The investigation will typically involve interviews with those affected, any witnesses, and, where appropriate, the individual alleged to have made the threat. Any relevant evidence, such as messages, emails, recordings, or photographs, will be reviewed and retained.

Response and Corrective Action

Where a threat has come from within the organisation, such as from an employee, volunteer, or board member, corrective action will be taken in accordance with this policy, the Respectful Workplace Policy, the Volunteer Code of Conduct, and the Volunteer Termination Policy, and may include disciplinary measures up to and including termination of employment or volunteer involvement.

Where a threat has come from a client, donor, member of the public, or other third party, response may include a documented warning, restriction or suspension of services, a formal no-contact request, or referral to police, depending on the severity and nature of the threat.

Any threat involving physical violence, or a credible threat of physical violence, will be reported to the police as appropriate, regardless of its source.

Support for Those Affected

Experiencing or witnessing a threat can be distressing even where no physical harm occurs. **Organisation Name** will ensure that anyone affected is offered a debrief and, where appropriate, referral to the Employee Assistance Program or other professional support. No one will be required to continue in a role or situation that places them at further risk while a report is being addressed.

Policy Review and Training

This policy will be reviewed annually, and updated as needed to reflect changes in legislation, best practice, or the organisation's operating environment. All employees and volunteers will be asked to review and acknowledge this policy annually, and will be offered training on recognising and responding to threats as scheduled.

This policy may be amended or revised as necessary. If any part of this policy does not comply with jurisdictional legislation, the prevailing legislation will apply.

Employee / Volunteer Acknowledgement

I have read all sections of this Threats and Violence Prevention and Response Policy and understand my obligations and responsibilities.

Name of Employee / Volunteer (please print) Date

Signature of Employee / Volunteer