



Public Service

Ombudsman

Respectful behaviour policy

Rules about what happens if
people treat our staff badly





About our policy

We are the Public Service Ombudsman.



We look into **complaints** about the NHS in England and UK government services.

A **complaint** is when you tell someone you are unhappy about something.



We know it can be really hard to make a complaint.



Some people might feel very upset or angry.



They might behave badly towards our staff and not treat them very well.



When people behave badly, it can stop us from doing our work.



It can also upset our staff.



It is important for us to protect our staff.

We want them to feel safe and happy at work.



This **policy** says what we will do if someone behaves badly towards our staff.

A **policy** is like a set of rules that tell us how to do things.

How we treat people



We talk to people in different ways about a complaint.



We can speak on the phone.



We can email people.



We can speak to people on video calls.



We can speak to people on **social media**.

Social media is things like Facebook, X or Instagram.



We always try to think about everyone's needs.



We make sure we **communicate** with people in the way that is best for them.

Communicate means being able to tell other people what you want and how you feel.



We treat everyone we talk to with respect.



We want everyone to feel listened to and understood.



People who use our services should treat all our staff with respect too.

How some people might treat our staff

Sometimes, people treat our staff badly. They might do things like:



- pester us to make a decision too quickly



- phone or email us lots of times



- make it hard for us to do our job properly - things like not giving us the right information about their complaint



- record or take photos of our staff without telling them or asking them first



- lie to us



- shout at us or use words that are upsetting



- threaten or **harass** us.

Harass means trying to bully or upset someone on purpose.

Things like picking on someone and not leaving them alone.



If anyone threatens or harasses our staff, we will stop talking to them.



We might tell the police.

What we will do if someone treats us badly

Step 1: Ask the person to stop

The first time it happens, we will tell the person we do not like what they have said or done.



We will ask them to stop.



We will find out if the way we do things is making the person upset.



We might need to think about making changes to support the person. Things like giving information in a way that is easy to understand.

Step 2: Give a warning



If the same person keeps on treating our staff badly, we will give them a warning.

This means we will ask the person to stop.



We will tell the person that if they do not stop, we might stop working with them.



We will write to the person to tell them about the warning.



A warning lasts for 6 months.



We will keep a list of any warnings we give.

Step 3: Deal with bad behaviour



If the person does not listen to the warning, we will decide what to do next.



We might make some rules about how often the person can contact us and when.

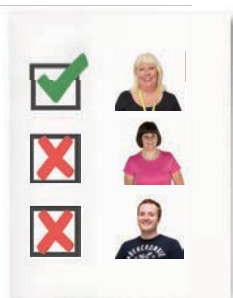


This does not happen very often.
We will tell the person about it first.



We might make rules like this.

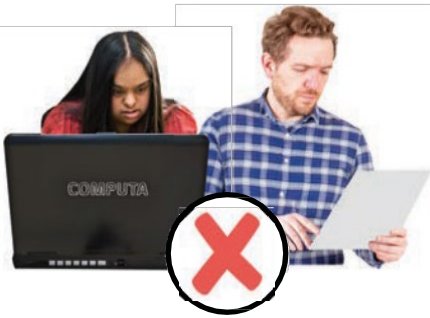
- Having a meeting with the person to talk about their behaviour.



- Only letting the person work with 1 of our staff.



- Not answering any phone calls from the person.



- Not reading any emails or letters that are rude or threatening.



If we make some rules about working with a person, we will write to them.

The letter will say:



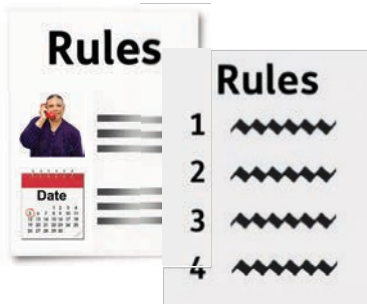
- why we have had to make the rules



- what the rules are and what this means for the person.



The things we do in Step 3 will last for 6 months.



If the person keeps behaving badly, we might need to add new rules.



If the problem is really serious, we might stop working with the person.



We will always make sure we think about people's needs and treat everyone fairly.

How to contact us



If you have any questions or want to know more about the things in this policy, you can contact us.



Phone:

0345 015 4033



Visit our website:

www.ombudsman.org.uk