



FIRST STOP CENTRE

INCIDENT PROCEDURE

1. Introduction

- 1.1 First Stop Centre exists, amongst other things, to help people with mental health problems and/or a social or economic disadvantage. It is possible, therefore, that visitors may be emotionally upset and/or vulnerable. The Centre wants to offer its service to all visitors whenever reasonably possible. Therefore, the Centre needs to maintain conditions on its premises which do not deter vulnerable visitors or prevent staff from delivering the service.
- 1.2 An incident is an event or a set of events which may: (a) deter visitors from attending; or (b) compromise the ability of the Centre to deliver the service; or (c) compromise the health or safety of staff (employed or voluntary) of the Centre.
- 1.3 This definition of an incident includes, but is not limited to, physical, verbal or psychological abuse. It can include racist, sexist or threatening behaviour; behaviour relating to substance misuse; and damage to the premises and any property within. What specifically constitutes an incident is at the judgement of the staff under the guidance of the Management Committee.
- 1.4 Visitors are expected to use the Centre in a way that avoids incidents occurring.
- 1.5 Staff are expected to run the Centre in a way that minimises the possibility of incidents occurring. (If it is believed that a member of staff is responsible for an incident then the Complaints Procedure should be used.)

2. Incident Log

- 2.1 Staff shall maintain an incident log which details the date, time and nature of every incident that occurs, together with a statement of how each incident was handled.
- 2.2 The log entry should name the person(s) involved in the incident if appropriate. Staff should restrict their comments to matters of fact (see the Confidentiality Policy).
- 2.3 The incident log should be presented to the Management Committee at the next meeting after an incident has been recorded.

3. Incident Handling

- 3.1 If, in the judgment of a member of staff, a visitor is considered to be responsible for an incident, the visitor shall, in the first instance, be given an informal warning



by the Centre Manager, who shall decide whether the visitor needs to be named in the incident log. When a visitor is named, he or she shall be told of the procedure for handling further incidents (see below).

- 3.2 If a visitor is found to be responsible for a further incident, whether similar to or different in nature from the previous one, within six months of the previous incident, he or she shall be issued with a formal warning by the Centre Manager or, in his or her absence, a responsible member of staff. The visitor will always be named in the incident log.
- 3.3 If a visitor persists in causing incidents, or is responsible for a critical incident, he or she will be asked by the Centre Manager or, in his or her absence, a responsible member of staff, to leave the Centre immediately and will be banned from using the Centre for a specific period.
- 3.4 The period of the ban shall be at the discretion of the Centre Manager. The appropriate length of bans for various types of incident shall be a matter of consultation between the Management Committee, the Centre Manager and other staff, and shall be reviewed on a regular basis.
- 3.5 The Management Committee may, if it considers it necessary, impose a ban of any length on a visitor. The period of a ban shall be specified at the time it is issued to a visitor. In serious circumstances the ban may be permanent.
- 3.6 A critical incident is one that involves:
 - A threat to the health or safety of any person in the Centre
 - Damage or threat of damage to the premises
 - The possession of alcohol or illegal substances
 - The use of other intoxicating substances
 - Illegal acts taking place or:
 - Any other incident which, in the opinion of the Centre Manager, warrants an immediate ban.
- 3.7 If an incident is so serious that it involves the death or serious injury (such as that requiring hospitalisation) of any person in the Centre, then the Centre Manager shall inform Management Committee as soon as possible, either by contacting the Chairman or the Vice Chairman. It shall be the responsibility of the Management Committee to inform the funding agencies, *if considered appropriate*, of such a serious incident and this shall be done as soon as practicable after the facts of the incident have been established.
- 3.8 Staff should inform a visitor who has been given a warning or a ban and who considers that he or she has been unjustly treated, that he or she may make a complaint about the ban (see the Complaints Procedure).
- 3.9 Staff should not put themselves at risk in dealing with visitors, and should not hesitate to call the police in cases of confrontation.

