



## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 We are committed to providing a fair, consistent and accessible service. We believe that everyone who contacts us has the right to be heard, understood and respected. We believe that our staff have the same rights, and we must provide a safe working environment for our staff.
- 1.2 This policy provides the guidelines on what will be considered unreasonable behaviour and what actions we will take in circumstances where we believe such behaviour has taken place.

## 2. Unreasonable Behaviour

### 2.1 What is unreasonable behaviour?

Unreasonable behaviour is any behaviour that is deemed unacceptable. We do not view behaviour as unreasonable just because a person is forceful or determined. However, we do consider behaviour that results in unreasonable demands of our staff, or unreasonably distresses our staff, to be unacceptable.

Wherever possible, we will give the person the opportunity to change their behaviour or action before a decision is taken.

In the event that action needs to be taken to deal with unreasonable behaviour, we will make a detailed note of events, including the unreasonable behaviour and any action taken to mitigate it. This will be recorded in a central register and will be done as soon as possible after the event.

### 2.2 Forms of unreasonable behaviour:

We deem the following behaviour to be unacceptable when liaising with our staff:

- **Being unreasonably persistent** – for example, ringing frequently to raise points already addressed; sending voluminous repetitive or irrelevant emails or letters;

*(Note that there is no set period for being unreasonably persistent as the nature of the persistence will inevitably vary. However, depending on the circumstances, we will consider whether a person is being unreasonably persistent by assessing the frequency of persistence over a period of 3, 6 and 12 months).*

- **Rudeness** – swearing (generally or directed at a member of staff), persistent interruption, name calling or general discourtesy;
- **Aggressive behaviour** – threats of physical harm to person(s) or property; behaviour which indicates that physical harm to person(s) or property is imminent or actual physical aggression;



- **Insulting or disparaging remarks or comments** – especially on the grounds of an individual's sex, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, race, colour, national or ethnic origin, religion, belief or age;
- **Inflammatory remarks or personal remarks** directed at staff.

These are examples and not a definitive list of unreasonable behaviours. There are other behaviours not included in the above which may constitute unacceptable behaviour.

## 3. Our Approach

- 3.1 When we consider that a person's actions or behaviour are likely to have a negative effect, we will tell them why and we will give them the opportunity to modify their actions or behaviour. If the actions or behaviour continue, we will take steps to prevent or minimise the negative effects. Wherever possible, we will continue with our review of the person's complaint. We will try to ensure that any action we take is the minimum required to protect our staff and to ensure that they can work effectively.
- 3.2 We may choose to deal with unreasonable behaviour by any of the following means:
- **Call Termination** - Where a person behaves unreasonably during a telephone call to a member of staff, we will ask them to change their behaviour. If they persist in behaving unreasonably, we will warn them that we will terminate the call. If they persist further, we will follow that through. The staff member who terminates the call may report this to a senior figure within the company, and a written note of the telephone conversation will be made and logged. All calls are recorded for training and monitoring purposes and will be stored for a period of 24 hours.
  - **Limiting Contact** - Where a person is unreasonably persistent, for example by telephoning us several times a day for a number of days in succession, or by sending us voluminous or repetitive emails or letters, we will ask them to reduce their contact with the office to that which is absolutely essential. If our request is ignored, we will take steps to limit their contact with the office. Such steps might include insisting that contact is only made with specific staff member(s).
  - **Terminating Contact** - In exceptional circumstances, we may refuse to have further contact with individuals who are unreasonably persistent or abusive. This may involve in putting a restriction on blocking all future contact from that person. Where we put limitations on contact with the office, this will be sanctioned by a senior figure within the company.
  - **Informing the Authorities** - Where we receive threats against individual staff members or office property, immediate action may be taken including informing the police or other emergency services.



- 3.3 We will record any incidents which lead us to take action under this policy, and what action we have taken to address the issue.
- 3.4 Anyone who is unhappy with a decision we have made under this policy may submit a complaint to our **Conciliation Manager**, Sallie Catchpole, at [sallie@bvrla.co.uk](mailto:sallie@bvrla.co.uk).