



**Person of Interest Policy**

**September 2018**

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. Believe housing is committed to doing the right thing for our customers, people and business. We want to make sure that we treat all our customers fairly and transparently.
- 1.2. We believe in providing a great customer experience to people enabling them to feel listened to, understood and respected. We welcome feedback from customers which we can learn from to improve the customer experience.
- 1.3. However, we recognise that there are a small minority of customers that can behave in a way which is unacceptable or unreasonable and we need to make sure that we have a consistent and transparent way of dealing with these situations.

## 2. Purpose of the policy

- 2.1. It is recognised that there are some occasions where customers will behave in a way which is unreasonably persistent or unacceptable. Whilst this behaviour or situation is not a regular occurrence and we continue to be focussed on providing a positive customer experience, the purpose of this is to ensure that where this does happen, we take a consistent and fair approach.
- 2.2. This policy sets out the type of action we may take when dealing with unacceptable behaviour or persistent, unnecessary contact from customers or their representatives, residents and leaseholders.

## 3. Definition of actions considered unreasonable and/or unacceptable

- 3.1. **Aggressive, abusive or intimidating behaviour** – threats; physical violence; verbal abuse; derogatory remarks; rudeness; foul language (particularly when directed at individuals and made personal); anger directed at staff in the form of aggression; behaviour to make staff feel intimidated or scared.
- 3.2. **Unreasonable demands** - requesting or providing unreasonable amounts of information; expecting a service we cannot provide; demanding responses or actions within unreasonable timescales; insisting on speaking to a particular member of staff (not relevant to the issue or not at an appropriate level); continual volumes of contact; continually changing the reason for a complaint or raising unrelated issues through the course of a complaint investigation.
- 3.3. **Unreasonable persistence** – continual refusal to accept explanations and decisions; refusal to accept explanations about services provided or agreed policies and procedures where the process has been exhausted; continually pursuing a complaint/issue where a decision has

been made and a response given, without providing new information or valid reasons why the decision made is not being accepted; continually pursuing an issue where there is no clear action which can be taken to resolve it and the customer cannot suggest a reasonable course of action we should take.

3.4. The behaviours defined above could take place in person, on the telephone, through written or electronic methods including social media.

#### **4. Managing unacceptable actions or behaviour**

4.1. If a customer's behaviour or actions restrict staff from carrying out their work and providing services then we may manage this by restricting their access, however we will maintain at least one form of contact.

4.2. If our employees have been threatened, verbally abused or harassed we may restrict contact to written communication or allocate a point of contact. In this instance we will inform the customer in writing that they are on the person of interest register.

4.3. We may also take action for breach of tenancy and/or anti-social behaviour and will report incidents of violence to the Police.

4.4. We will not deal with written or electronic communications that are abusive or contain unsubstantiated allegations.

4.5. Staff will be empowered to end telephone calls that they consider to be abusive or aggressive. Staff will advise the caller that their behaviour is unacceptable and will end the call if the behaviour continues.

4.6. In the case where someone repeatedly contacts us by any method, including telephone calls, sending unrelated or duplicated paperwork or raises the same issues already considered closed then the decision may be taken to:

- Only take telephone calls from the customer or their representative at set times, on set days or a designated point of contact to deal with future calls and correspondence.
- Require the person to make an appointment before visiting the our offices or request that the customer contacts us in writing only.
- Return documents
- Take other action that we consider appropriate, including legal recourse

4.7. In the unlikely event that a customer or their representative has exhausted all internal and external review mechanisms and still dispute the our or the Ombudsman's final decision we will not accept any future communications about this issue. If the customer or their

representative continue to contact us about the same issue we will not respond unless new information is produced. We will, however, consider any new unrelated reports that the customer or their representative may raise in the future.

## **5. Restricting customer contact**

- 5.1. Wherever possible we will give a customer or their representative the opportunity to change their behaviour or actions before a decision to restrict contact is taken. Customers will be informed in writing why a decision has been made to restrict contact, details of arrangements and the length of time the restrictions will be in place.
- 5.2. Once a decision has been made to restrict contact the information will be highlighted to relevant staff. All decisions to restrict contact must be recorded on the QL system by the manager dealing with the customer and regular monitoring will take place to ensure that the decision is continually reviewed.

## **6. Monitoring and Review**

- 6.1. This policy will be reviewed every three years or sooner in line with changes to legislation or best practice.

## **7. Links to other Policies & Procedures**

Person of Interest Procedure  
Complaints, Compliments and Compensation Policy  
Health and Safety Policy  
Anti-Social Behaviour Policy