

**We do not
tolerate
violence,
threats or
offensive
behaviour**



Everyone must feel safe whilst working for Copenhagen Municipality

Copenhagen Municipality has therefore developed a policy concerning violence, threats and offensive behaviour, which it is important for all employees to know.

You can read about the policy here. We cover measures which help to prevent violence, threats and offensive behaviour, and what to do if you experience violence, threats or offensive behaviour at your workplace.

This folder is intended for employees, union representatives, health and safety representatives and management at Copenhagen Municipality.

Copenhagen Municipality 2020

A shared responsibility

Copenhagen Municipality does not tolerate violence, threats, harassment, bullying, discrimination nor any other type of offensive behaviour at the workplace.

Violence, threats and offensive behaviour are damaging, both for the individual employee and for the workplace. Violence, threats and offensive behaviour must therefore always be *identified, prevented and acted upon*, should they occur.

It is of no importance whether the offender's behaviour was intentional or not. It is the experience of the individual who perceived the offense which is central. It can vary from individual to individual when offense is taken.

Everyone has the responsibility to prevent violence, threats and offensive behaviour. This means that we are all responsible for drawing attention to occurrences of such behaviour. Likewise, we have a shared responsibility to ensure a decent and professional working environment at our workplace.

If you experience violence, threats or offensive behaviour at your workplace, you must contact your manager, another manager within the organisation, or alternatively a health and safety representative, a union representative or the workplace committee, in order to get help with how to deal with these incidents.

If you need independent advice, you can call Occupational Health & Safety, Copenhagen Municipality's (Arbejdsmiljø København) hotline for early intervention on tel. 3366 5766 (press '1')

What is violence, threats and offensive behaviour?

With offensive behaviour, there is a distinction between psychological violence and physical violence. Psychological violence can be threats, harassment, sexual harassment, bullying or discriminatory behaviour, whilst physical violence causes a physical injury.

Read more about what is covered within both categories in the section below.

Physical violence

Examples of physical violence include hitting, kicking, biting, tripping over, holding down, throwing objects, pinching, scratching, spitting, attempted strangling, and stabbing.

Psychological violence

Psychological violence covers threats, harassment, sexual harassment, bullying and any other behaviour which can result in psychological harm – see next page.

Threats

Threats can be verbal or physical, for example shaking a fist at someone. Threats can be causing harm to an employee, but can also be directed towards friends, family or property.

Harassment

Harassment can be humiliation, talking behind someone's back, casting suspicion or mocking. Harassment can also be, for example, a citizen stalking an employee.

Bullying

Bullying is defined as when one or more people regularly and over a period of time – or repeatedly and grievously – subject an employee to behaviour which is perceived to be offensive. The offensive behaviour becomes bullying when the employee is not able to defend themselves.

Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment is offensive behaviour of a sexual nature or unwanted sexual attention. Sexual harassment is characterized by a continuation beyond the point which the offended person deems acceptable.

Discriminatory behaviour

Discriminatory behaviour is when an employee is demeaned by others due to their age, sex, gender identity, sexual identity, ethnicity or religious beliefs.

Digital harassment

Digital harassment can be making private information publicly available on the internet. Examples include photos, phone numbers, addresses or sound recordings, which constitute an invasion of privacy for the employee.

When and with whom do we experience violence, threats and offensive behaviour?

Violence, threats and offensive behaviour can occur during contact with citizens or between close colleagues, management, or employees.

All occurrences are taken seriously. It is therefore important that all incidents of offensive behaviour are reported so that they can be dealt with. This ensures that the management at your workplace can proactively work towards preventing future occurrences.

Most contact with citizens is conducted within the bounds of reasonable behaviour, but employees can be exposed to violence, threats or offensive behaviour in person or digitally - for example through social media or via email. Both during work hours and outside the workplace.

How we avoid violence, threats and offensive behaviour

It is the responsibility of the workplace to ensure that measures are put in place to prevent violence, threats and offensive behaviour, both between employees and during contact with citizens.

Distinct norms and values for behaviour

The workplace must have distinct norms and values regarding decent behaviour. Management, employees, union representatives and health and safety representatives must all live up to these norms so that together, we can ensure job satisfaction, healthy cooperation and a respectful tone, thereby providing a safe and secure working environment.

Management responsibility

Managers are responsible for dealing with and following up on all incidents of violence, threats and offensive behaviour. It is also the responsibility of managers to include the relevant experts and all involved employees when following up on these incidents.

Clear responsibility and expectations

At the workplace, responsibilities and expectations for work must be clearly outlined for everyone. If there is a change in the way we are expected to work, for example, or if the distribution of work changes, the associated responsibilities must be made clear. Otherwise, there is an increased risk of conflict and misunderstanding.

Systematic prevention

The workplace must ensure that workplace assessments (APVs) are designed so that they work systematically and purposefully towards preventing violence, threats and offensive behaviour. It is, amongst other things, important that employees are familiar with security procedures and have received training in, for example, conflict management, should it be necessary. Additionally, work must be

If violence, threats or offensive behaviour occur nonetheless

All workplaces in Copenhagen Municipality are required to have local guidelines, covering what happens should there be incidents of violence, threats or offensive behaviour.

The guidelines must include clear agreements concerning who does what, and when – and who is responsible for following up and ensuring the correct help and support. The role of management should also be clearly described, so that there is no doubt about where responsibility lies. Finally, all employees involved in an incident must be offered professional help and advice.

If you would like to know more about how specific cases are dealt with at your particular workplace, contact your manager, union representative or health and safety representative.

If you need independent advice, you can call Occupational Health & Safety, Copenhagen Municipality's hotline for early intervention on tel. 3366 5766 (press '1')

If you or one of your colleagues experiences offensive behaviour, sexual harassment or discrimination, you can call Occupational Health & Safety, Copenhagen Municipality's 'Unit for anonymous reporting of sexual harassment and discrimination' on tel. 7370 8540

Don't give your name, if you wish to remain anonymous.

Read the entire policy here

'The policy and guidelines of Copenhagen Municipality concerning violence, threats, harassment, sexual harassment, bullying, etc. (offensive behaviour) at the workplace' can be found in Danish at medarbejder.kk.dk under the tab 'personalepolitikker'.

<https://medarbejder.kk.dk/artikel/vold-trusler-om-vold-mobning-og-chikane>

