



SOUL GUEST MANAGEMENT PLAN

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Introduction

SC provides a free meal service to the public including services for the vulnerable in the community such as the homeless, those with drug, alcohol and mental health issues. There is an element of risk attached to dealing with members of the public and those with mental health and substance abuse challenges.

SC is committed to ensuring all workers who interact with guest are aware of their responsibilities and are adequately supported in the event of unreasonable behaviour.

These guidelines provide practical guidance to SC workers on how to deal with Soul guests and members of the public when they demonstrate unreasonable behaviour involving threats, aggressive behaviour or actual violence to themselves or others.

Definitions

Soul Café (SC), Life shapers Family Services (Soul Café [SC]), located at 49 Hunter St, Newcastle 2300 (PO Box 686, Newcastle 2300).

Vulnerable Personal, any person who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness.

Worker, previously known as 'employee'. The term worker includes employees, contractors and sub-contractors and their employees, labour hire employees, outworkers, apprentices and trainees, work experience students and volunteers.

Guests, are those that attend Soul Café for the free meals and other services.

Floor Team Manager, is the worker responsible for the floor team operations and guest behavioural management. This person is responsible for liaising with the SC Mental Health Nurse for medical advice on the behavioural management of guests and for implementing the SC policies and procedures relating to guest behaviour management.

Floor Team, are SC volunteers who assist SC guests by chatting with them at meal times, helping them to connect with services and managing guest behaviours when their responses become elevated.

Attending Services, are persons representing external services such as Centrelink who come to SC during the lunch period to assist guests.

Aggressive Behaviour, unacceptably hostile behaviour towards other guests or workers that creates an intimidating, frightening or offensive situation and / or adversely affects the SC function.

Floor Team Manager

The Floor Team Manager, is the worker primarily responsible for the floor team and SC guest behavioural management. This person is responsible for liaising with the SC Mental Health Nurse for medical support for the behavioural management of guests and for implementing the SC policies and procedures relating to guest behaviour management. This includes,

- Managing or monitoring guest aggressive behaviour.
- Education, directing and supporting the Floor Team workers during an aggressive behavioural incident and debriefing afterwards.
- Inducting all new Floor Team workings.
- Making the decision to call and liaising with police or medical services attending during an incident.
- Making a Hazard / Incident / Complaint Report after an aggressive behaviour incident.
- Debriefing with workers post a guest behavioural incident.

Floor Team

Floor Team workers build relationships with guests, provide support and connect them to guest services. It is this team that is responsible for the management of guest behavior whilst they are in SC.

- Floor Team workers are responsible for following the direction of the Floor Team Manager
- Floor Team workers are responsible for ensuring that they are familiar with these guidelines and any related procedures and put them into practice.
- New Floor Team workers must complete a Floor Team Induction with the Floor Team Manager

Responding to Anger

These guidelines have been taken from the 'Model Guidelines for Managing and Responding to Threats, Aggressive Behaviour and Violence from Members of the Public, NSW Ombudsman.

Some SC guests may be frustrated, distressed or angry for a number of reasons. These factors can make it difficult for them to communicate effectively and for us to understand and communicate with them. It may be that they are legitimately angry due to circumstances beyond their control, however intimidation, threats, aggressive or violence behaviour towards any persons at SC is not to be tolerated.

To effectively manage anger, you should first allow the person to express their frustration (to 'let off steam'). This will often mean the person will calm down enough to facilitate a focus on the actual cause of that anger or other substantive cause of their concerns.

When the person has calmed down, ask for more details or clarify your understanding of their issue(s) of concern. Allow the person to tell you about their issue(s) in their own words and encourage them back to their point if they go off track. Repeat back to the person your understanding of their issue(s).

You should be direct and clear about what you can and can't do, how long it will take and what it will involve, ensuring that the person participates as fully as possible in deciding how best to deal with his or her concerns.

Strategies for workers responding to angry behaviours

Strategies include,

- remaining calm and respectful – greet the person and preferably get them to sit down
- using a low, calm tone of voice and a slow pace
- listening – don't intervene too quickly and allow them a chance to 'let off steam'
- showing you are open to their point of view and using active listening skills (eye contact, nodding of head, open body position)
- acknowledging their anger without diagnosis, encouragement or criticism – feelings are real, even if you believe they are inappropriate
- paraphrasing and summarising what they are saying, picking out any key points and saying them aloud
- apologising without accepting blame – if any apology is deserved for some act or omission that is our responsibility, give one. If you or SC is not at fault, you can still express sympathy with their feelings, eg 'I'm sorry to see that you are upset about what has happened'
- agreeing with the person – without assuming any blame, listen for things you can agree with and express this. For example:
 - 'I agree, it would be frustrating not to receive the information in time'
 - 'I accept that you are really disappointed with the service you received'
- not debating the facts while the person is still angry

Aggressive Behaviour

The following signs or information may provide clues about the potential for a guest to engage in aggressive behaviour or violence:

- appearance of intoxication or being under the influence of drugs
- bloodstained or dishevelled appearance
- pacing, agitation, tapping feet
- clenching of fists, jaws
- hostile facial expression
- increasing activity levels standing up frequently and entering off limit areas
- loud or slurred speech
- sarcasm, abusive swearing, threatening, caustic wit
- inflexibility
- irritable, anxious, short tempered, tense, distressed mood
- not in control of emotions

- a known history of violence.

Strategies for workers responding to Aggressive Behaviour

Strategies for staff to deal with threats and/or aggressive behaviour include:

- continually assess the possibility of the situation becoming violent – are the signs abating or becoming worse?
- you may need to walk away – find an excuse to do this (eg check if there is a take away meal for the guest)
- take a step back to create space if you see signs of physical aggression
- maintain normal eye contact – deliberate eye-balling can seem very aggressive
- provide alternatives to the aggression by making it clear that their aggression will not achieve their goal (eg go for a walk and come back, have a cup of tea and then talk more)
- maintain non-confrontational body language – nodding and turning your ear toward the speaker are appropriate signs that you are listening and not playing for power.
- Keep your hands in front of you at waist level.
- get something between you and them – a table or seat
- do not attempt to physically restrain any person or to physically intervene between other people who are behaving aggressively toward each other
- withdraw earlier rather than later and offer another time to talk
- don't be a hero
- Seek support from the Floor Team Manager and / or other Floor Team workers.

Intoxicated Guests

The factors maintaining substance use in those with mental disorders are complex. People may self-medicate for lots of reasons, including past abuse or trauma and major mental disorders (such as psychosis or depression). Substance abuse should be considered a comorbid issue for some people with a mental illness.

If a SC guest is demonstrating unreasonable signs of intoxication these persons are to be managed by Floor Team Manager along with other Floor Team members. The aim is to provide a safe environment for the person and ensure they remain free from injury and to ensure the safety of one's self, other guests and workers.

Strategies for Dealing with Intoxicated Guests

These include,

- A floor team member is to remain with a guest who is demonstrating intoxication behaviors that are becoming unreasonable, threatening or aggressive behavior until they leave SC.
- Hydrate them to help with nausea
- Feed them as soon as possible
- Accompany them from the café to street level as soon as possible
- The guest is not able to access other Soul Services such as the Medical Clinic due to intoxication

- If the floor team is uncertain about the level of intoxication and how to manage the guest, they are to seek the assistance of the SC Floor Team Manager and SC Mental Health Nurse.
- If the guest behavior elevates to actual violence, then a emergency call is to be placed immediately to the police as directed by Floor Team Manager or Team Leader.

Newcastle Police Station 4929 0999

AVO Guest Management

If there is an AVO and dispute going on between 2 guests who are both accessing Soul Services, the team is to work with the guests towards strategies that will assist both guests staying away from each other.

Strategies for Dealing with Guests who have an AVO*

These include,

- Staying on opposite sides of the café
- One guest coming earlier in the meal service time and the other later
- Being provided food packs and takeaways and avoiding being at the café
- Accessing service appointments outside of the meal service
- Service appointment can be on level 1 rather than being in the café providing a floor team member is available to support the guest during the appointment.

**Note: The above depends on conditions and type of AVO.*

Response to a Guest with a WEAPON:

- If a breakfast or weekend team leader becomes aware that there is a guest in the café carrying a weapon they are to immediately make a police report and follow the directions of the police.
- Do not approach the guest about the weapon as it could potentially trigger a behaviour.
- After the guest has left or the incident resolved the team leader should complete an incident report and send through to manager@soulcafe.org.au or leave in the team leader folder. The forms are available in the WH & S folder upstairs or on the Soul Café Website on the 'Volunteers Resources' page.

Newcastle Police Station 4929 0999

Guests who Request Opal Card Assistance

Guests who needs a phone or Opal card top up must be accompanied to Level 1 by a floor team member. If a floor team member is not available, the guest will be asked to wait until it is quieter. When the service is very busy the floor team volunteers are encouraged to not react to the urgency of guest but assure them they will be assisted as soon as the lunch period quietens down.

Attending Services

All new attending service persons are to be introduced to the team and complete the attending service induction.

Level 1 Admin Support for Guests

- Guests coming to Level 1 for assistance should be accompanied by a member of the Floor Team if they are agitated, suspected of being intoxicated or have a previous history of verbal abuse or poor impulse control.
- Guests who come to Level 1 of their own accord who are agitated, suspected of being intoxicated or have a previous history of verbal abuse or poor impulse control should be referred to Level 2 to the Floor Team in the café for assistance.
- If the Floor Team are occupied with other guests they need to wait until a Floor Team member is available to assist. No immediate response required.
- Access to funds to top up guest Opal cards will be facilitated by a member of the floor team. Maximum credit of \$10.00 available and a record of each guest's name will be noted on the petty cash register.
- Intoxicated guests will be managed by the Floor Team and if available the Mental Health Nurse.

Post Incident Follow Up

Following an incident that has involved unreasonable guest behaviour a 'Hazard/ Incident / complaint' form should be completed as soon as possible and within 24 hours. This will enable the incident to be reviewed to ensure appropriate follow up is provided for the guest and workers support.

Dealing with people who are very demanding, abusive aggressive and/or violent can be extremely stressful and, at times, distressing or even frightening. It is perfectly normal to get upset or experience stress when dealing with difficult situations. Everyone reacts differently to stressful events. Stress can be cumulative, often resulting in a strong reaction to a minor event which forms part of a chain of stressful events.

Signs of Stress

- Physical signs such as shock, nausea or fainting immediately after an event, or long term aches, pains and fatigue.
- Emotional responses such as anger, fear or depression – this is often reflected by crying or feeling tearful.
- Difficulty in thinking clearly, making decisions or concentrating on the job.
- Behavioural changes such as increased irritability, withdrawing from people, insomnia, nightmares
- Resorting to alcohol (or medications or drugs) more frequently or in greater quantities.

Recognising signs of stress in yourself and others is an important step in dealing with the problem. SC has a responsibility to support workers who may experience stress because of situations arising at SC. Be aware of your own feelings when caring for a person who is intoxicated or aggressive. Arrange for debriefing for yourself or for any colleague who may need support or assistance — this may occur with your Team Leader or the SC Mental Health Nurse. These conversations are confidential.

APPENDIX 1. FLOOR TEAM INDUCTION

- I have been shown where to sign on and off when leaving and entering the building.
- I have will alert the Floor Manager or Management Team Leader on duty of my arrival.
- I have been shown the location of exits
- I have been shown the location of the toilets
- I have been shown the location of fire extinguishers
- I have been provided a copy of the 'Emergency Evacuation Plan'
- I understand that in the case of an emergency I am to follow the direction of the Floor Manager or Team Leader on Duty
- I have been provided a copy of the 'Floor Team Procedures' and understand that it is my responsibility to read and put them into practise.
- I understand that if there is an incident I am to notify the Floor Team Manager or Team Leader on Duty and Complete a 'Soul Café Incident Form'
- I have been shown the location of the Soul Café Incident Forms
- I have been shown the location of the First Aid Kit/s
- I have been shown the location of the Defibrillator
- I have been shown where I can access Soul Café Policies
- I understand that Soul Café is a 'Child Safe Organisation' and have been provided with a copy of their 'Child Safe Code of Conduct'
- I understand all personnel providing outreach services are required to keep information about the persons that access Soul Café services confidential. Aside from, where personnel must disclose information in special situations, as required by law.
- I understand that I am not authorised to speak to the media on behalf of the Café.

NAME: _____

SIGNATURE: _____

INDUCTION DATE: _____

***Thank you for being a part of the Soul Team!
We look forward to working together with you to assist the vulnerable in our community.***

APPENDIX 2. ATTENDING SERVICE INDUCTION

Thank you for providing an outreach service to the guests at Soul Café. If you are unable to attend please notify admin@soulcafe.org.au If you have any concerns or questions, please do not hesitate to contact a member of the Management Team.

SOUL MANAGEMENT TEAM PHONE CONTACTS					
Soul CEO	Rick Prosser	0404 038 000	Kitchen Manager	Sue Prosser	0410 586 543
Admin. Manager	Maria Thomas	0421 973 925	Floor Manager	Matt Nichols	0432 338 992
Finance Manager	Tonya Huen	0401 011 670			

1. I have been shown where to sign on and off when leaving and entering the building.
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4. I have been shown the location of the toilets
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7. I understand that in the case of an emergency I am to follow the direction of the Floor Manager or Management Team Leader on Duty
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11. I have been shown the location of the Defibrillator
12. I have been shown where I can access Soul Café Policies
13. I understand that Soul Café is a 'Child Safe Organisation' and have been provided with a copy of their 'Child Safe Code of Conduct'.
14. I understand all personnel providing outreach services are required to keep information about the persons that access Soul Café services confidential. Aside from where personnel must disclose information in special situations, as required by law
15. Attending Services are not authorised to speak to the media on behalf of the Café. Please direct any enquiries to the Soul CEO Rick Prosser ceo@soulcafe.org.au

ATTENDING SERVICE ORGANISATION NAME: _____

ATTENDING SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE NAME: _____

REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE: _____

INDUCTION DATE: _____

APPENDIX 3. HAZARD / INCIDENT / COMPLAINT FORM

PART A: HAZARD/INJURY/INCIDENT REPORT *(to be completed by the involved worker or manager)*

What type of report is this *(select or circle the type)*?

HAZARD INJURY INCIDENT

Is this a 'Notifiable Incident' *(selector or circle)*?

YES NO

A notifiable incident means: the death of a person, or a serious injury or illness, or a dangerous incident. [MORE AT COMCARE](#)

DETAILS OF THE PERSON MAKING THE REPORT

SURNAME:		GIVEN NAME:	
POSITION:		DOB:	
MOBILE:		EMAIL:	

WITNESS / OTHER PARTIES INVOLVED - DETAILS

SURNAME:		GIVEN NAME:	
POSITION:		CONTACT DETAILS:	
SURNAME:		GIVEN NAME:	
POSITION:		CONTACT DETAILS:	

DETAILS OF INCIDENT

DATE OF INCIDENT:		TIME OF INCIDENT:		AM / PM
LOCATION OF INCIDENT:				
NAME OF PERSON INJURED <i>If applicable</i>				
NATURE OF INJURY <i>If applicable</i>				
PART OF BODY INJURED				

DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT

DESCRIBE EXACTLY WHAT OCCURRED AND ANY CONTRIBUTING FACTORS *(If more space is needed please use the back of this sheet):*

Treatment Outcome <small>(circle)</small>	Nil Required	First Aid	Medical GP	Hospital
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Signature of Person Making the Report	
Date of the Report	
Signature of Team Leader	

DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT Page 2.

DESCRIBE EXACTLY WHAT OCCURRED

PART B: HAZARD/INJURY/INCIDENT REPORT CORRECTIVE ACTIONS

To be completed by the Office Manager

WHAT NEEDS TO HAPPEN to ensure that similar incidents do not occur in the future or to minimise the risk?

BY WHEN

PERSON RESPONSIBLE

WHAT NEEDS TO HAPPEN to ensure that similar incidents do not occur in the future or to minimise the risk?	BY WHEN	PERSON RESPONSIBLE

PART C: HAZARD/INJURY/INCIDENT REPORT SIGN OFF *(to be completed by the Office Manager)*

Signature of Office Manager	
Date Closed	