



Managing Angry or Aggressive Clients Policy

Intent

This policy has been adopted by Nipissing First Nation to ensure that our employees are provided with a set of guidelines for managing hostile or violent person. Through the course of a career in public service, it is an unfortunate inevitability our employees may have to deal with a hostile or violent person. When dealing with a hostile person, there are effective methods for neutralizing the situation and providing peaceful resolutions. In the event that a Nipissing First Nation employee encounters a violent person, the employee is directed to follow the guidelines and procedures established within this policy.

Management of Clients

When dealing with an Angry or Aggressive person, follow these easy tips:

- Greet the person, using their first name in a friendly tone, and let them know that they are welcome at Nipissing First Nation offices.
- Give the person, your full attention, and use active listening skills to ensure that they know you are working with them. Try paraphrasing the questions / concerns of the customer to show them that you are actively engaged in providing them with assistance.
- Where their requests are unreasonable, try to reason with them and ensure that they understand the policy, and why that policy is in place. Ensure that they understand that we must treat each person fairly, and equally.
- Offer them the option of speaking to a manager. In the event that a reasonable solution to the situation is unavailable, or where the person, remains hostile, direct the client to speak with management, or contact administration office by sending a letter with their concerns.

Guidelines for Managing Hostile Customers

1. Avoid Engaging in Conflict - Although employees may be provoked, it is never a good idea to engage in a heated argument with a client. Doing so will only make the situation worse, and may put the employee and their employment at risk. Attempt to get the situation under control and return to work. Just remember: "Kill them with Kindness". By maintaining professionalism, the person, will be forced to react with a logical approach to their problem.
2. Determine the Source of Anger – Ask the person, how you can help. This simple gesture may incur their wrath, however, we need to remember that an angry person, may be hostile for a number of reasons, and may not actually be upset with the person providing them with services, however, as you are the person in front of them, they may feel the need to direct their anger at you. By working to assist them in solving the problem, and letting them know that you're on their side, the situation

will move in a positive manner towards a solution, and may decrease the levels of hostility/anger.

3. Determine the client Needs – When dealing with a hostile person, the root problem will generally speak to their need for the resolution of a problem. Determine what the initial issue is/was, what was or can be done, and offer them a solution, or offer to escalate the situation to a specialist or manager. Remember that sometimes it's not you, or even the First Nation. While we strive to offer services that will meet or exceed the expectations of our people, we need to understand that sometimes there will be external forces (e.g. issues at home, etc.) that create anger or hostility in person, and regardless of the actions that we take, we may be unable to make the person, happy. Try to determine what they need, and what it is that they want to tell you. Sometimes a person will simply want to vent their anger, and be heard. Be sure to acknowledge their anger, and where possible, attempt to alleviate the issue or be a part of the solution to the problem. In the event that we fail to acknowledge their anger by brushing it off or ignoring them, we run the risk of having an even angrier person that may become abusive.
4. Observe the person, on Approach – Be observant, and pay close attention that a person, is hostile, they will generally display visible characteristics like clenched fists, a red face, agitated behaviours, etc. In the event that you notice a person, exhibiting behaviours associated with hostility/anger, prepare yourself for a potential situation, and remain composed and professional.
5. Relate to the person – An angry person will generally decrease their hostility where they recognize that you are a person, and not just a part of the First Nation Administration. Try to speak with the person, in a way that shows them that you understand and can sympathize with the issue, while working with them to find an agreeable resolution.
6. Thank the person – Regardless of how hostile a person, is, we need to thank them for their patience and understanding in the attempt to fix the problem. Apologize for their inconvenience, and assure them that we will rectify the situation and ensure that it doesn't happen again.
7. Consider the Option of Ejection and/or Contacting the Authorities – In the event that a person, uses profane language, is verbally abusive, uses discriminatory language or otherwise acts in an excessively hostile manner towards a Nipissing First Nation staff member you should ask them to refrain from this form of activity, however, where the person, fails to improve their behaviour, you may inform them that you will refuse service if they cannot improve their behaviour. In the event that the behaviour continues, please inform the person, that they will be required to leave the premises, and that their failure to do so will result in the local authorities being contacted.
8. Harassment, Threats of Violence and Violence – In the event that any person, makes threatening remarks, acts violently, or harasses a staff member of Nipissing First Nation, the person, should be informed that the behaviour is unacceptable, and that the Anishinabek Police Service will be contacted.

Approved by Council this 21st day of June, 2011.