

CUSTOMER AGGRESSION CHECKLIST

For Frontline Staff

This personal safety checklist is designed to help you stay aware, prepared, and safe when dealing with difficult or aggressive customer behaviour.

1. BE AWARE OF YOUR ENVIRONMENT

- ☐ I know where the nearest exits are in case I need to leave quickly
- ☐ I am aware of safe retreat areas or staff-only zones I can move to if I feel unsafe
- ☐ I know where the duress/panic alarm is located (if installed) and how to use it
- ☐ I understand I should keep my personal safety in mind when serving or approaching customers
- ☐ I am able to avoid becoming physically cornered or blocked in when dealing with agitated customers

2. RECOGNISING AGGRESSIVE CUSTOMERS

- ☐ I have been trained to watch for early signs of escalation, such as raised voices, hostile body language, or refusal to listen
- ☐ I know techniques to remain calm and not react emotionally if a customer becomes demanding or upset
- ☐ I know the difference between frustration and aggression, and when to seek help

3. DE-ESCALATE WHEN SAFE TO DO SO

I HAVE BEEN TRAINED HOW TO

- ☐ Use a calm tone of voice and keep my body language neutral
- ☐ Give the customer space and avoid standing too close or blocking their way
- ☐ Listen actively, let the person speak, and don't interrupt
- ☐ Use respectful phrases like:
 - "I can see this is frustrating. Let's see what we can do."
 - "I'd like to help – can we talk this through together?"
- ☐ Disengage and seek help if the customer continues to escalate

4. KNOW WHEN (AND HOW) TO ESCALATE

- ☐ I know who to call for help (manager, supervisor, security)
- ☐ I know how to activate a duress alarm or use an internal code word
- ☐ I understand I am not expected to manage physical threats alone
- ☐ I understand I am able to walk away or remove myself from a threatening situation

5. AFTER AN INCIDENT

- ☐ I know how to report the incident (e.g. by lodging a formal incident report)
- ☐ I can debrief with a manager or trusted team member after difficult interactions
- ☐ I know how to access support services (EAP, HR contact, etc.) if I need help
- ☐ I reflect on what happened and what I could do next time – and I ask for further support if needed