



Abusive Callers

Established: January 25, 2017

ON1Call is committed to providing a work environment in which all individuals are treated with dignity and respect and has established comprehensive Violence and Harassment policies to support a healthy work environment. Harassing behaviour in the workplace is unacceptable from anyone. Therefore, this policy and protocol has been developed for employees to follow in the event they are confronted with an abusive caller.

Definitions

Abusive Caller: is defined as a caller that uses threatening or intimidating language. The use of obscenities, profanities, degrading comments, vulgar or sexist language, humiliating remarks, or racial slurs are considered abusive behaviour. An abusive call can be categorized as any derogatory verbal exchange that is aimed at the employee personally and which makes the employee feel uncomfortable.

An abusive caller exhibits behavior that may result in employees feeling intimidated. Further, it may interfere with the employee's work; making them feel threatened, and/or affecting their mental state, and their ability to comfortably perform their duties.

Abusive Caller vs. Frustrated Caller: Employees must acknowledge that there is a distinction between an upset/frustrated caller and an abusive caller. An upset/frustrated caller may raise their voice, swear, and ramble on about the situation they are facing. This type of caller will direct their negativity towards the situation and not directly at the employee. Conversely, a caller who is being abusive will direct their negativity directly at the employee with the intent of intimidating or demeaning them personally. The words "you" or "you people" are often used.

Application of This Policy

ON1Call feels that every employee should feel supported, knowing they are working in a non-threatening atmosphere.

Employees should be aware that the caller may be dealing with a great deal of pressure and/or frustration. Although the caller has no right to be abusive, some latitude of understanding and tolerance should be given by the employee from the onset of the call.

Steps to follow when handling difficult/abusive calls:

- 1) Remain calm, and polite. Try to stay in control of the situation and attempt to remain positive.
- 2) Allow them to speak. This will help to determine whether the caller is venting or being directly abusive.
- 3) Assure the caller that Ontario One Call is here to help.



- 4) Always keep in mind this is a phone exchange and the caller is unable to cause direct harm.
- 5) If the employee determines that the caller is behaving in an abusive manner the employee should politely ask the caller to refrain from using profanity, yelling or using derogatory language. Example: I understand you are upset, I will do my best to assist you in this matter, but I am finding this call distressing, kindly refrain from _____.
- 6) Callers should also be reminded that the phone call is being recorded.
- 7) If the caller continues to act in an abusive manner, inform them that the call will be escalated to a Team Lead/Supervisor. Example: I no longer feel comfortable with this conversation, therefore I will be transferring you to a Team Lead. Please Hold.
- 8) Escalate the call to a Team Lead/Supervisor, and explain the situation to them before they take the call. The Team Lead/Supervisor will complete the call if possible.

TIPS:

- Take notes. Write down who the caller is, their Contractor I.D., company name, ticket number, etc. This will assist Compliance in any future action that may take place. The phone number and time of day will help in retrieving the call for review.
- Remain composed enough to determine whether a caller is being abusive or whether they are simply frustrated with the situation.
- Remain professional and do not respond to the caller in the same manner. Do not slam the phone down on a caller.
- Take a deep breath and be assured that ON1Call supports you.

Consequences: Upon completion of the call:

- 1) The Team Lead/Supervisor will send the call recording to the Contact Centre Manager and Compliance.
- 2) Compliance will review the call and confer with the Contact Centre Manager.
- 3) Should a determination be made that the caller was abusive, Compliance will submit a formal complaint into the Compliance database. Compliance, with the assistance of the Contact Centre Manager, will determine if further restrictions will be placed upon the abusive caller (ex. banned from any future contact with ON1Call employees).
- 4) In the event it has been determined that the abusive caller is banned from calling in to the Contact Centre, Compliance will notify the caller and the company they work for of the restriction.
- 5) Follow up discussions will be held after each report of an abusive call with the employee.