



Zero tolerance of abusive, aggressive or inappropriate behaviour

The Office of the Public Advocate (OPA) is committed to a safe and respectful workplace. Abusive, aggressive, intimidating, threatening, or otherwise disrespectful behaviour towards OPA staff will not be tolerated.

Respectful behaviour

OPA staff, represented persons and interested parties all deserve to feel safe and to be treated with respect.

Most represented persons and interested parties behave respectfully when engaging with staff at the Office of the Public Advocate. However, in a small number of cases, people may behave in ways that are detrimental to staff safety or wellbeing. Where this occurs, OPA will take steps to protect staff safety. This may include referring matters to Victoria Police.

Disrespectful behaviour is any behaviour that raises health, safety, resource, or equity issues for the OPA, our staff, or other people involved in a matter.

Disrespectful behaviour includes:

- bullying or any form of psychological abuse, including making repeated demands via excessive phone calls or emails
- verbal abuse, shouting, or threatening language, either in person, over the phone or via email.
- physical violence or threats of violence
- sexual harassment, including any non-consensual or unwelcome sexual conduct that could be reasonably expected to make a person feel offended, humiliated or intimidated in the circumstances.

Please be aware:

- If you display any of these behaviours, we may ask you to leave our premises, end a visit or phone call with you or limit your contact with us.
- If you're violent or make a threat of violence, we will call the police.

What you can expect from us

All OPA staff and volunteers are responsible for modelling respectful and professional behaviour, and it is our commitment that they will communicate with you in this way.