

Isle of Wight Council
**ADVERSE WORK
ELEMENT**
May 2015

1 Document Information

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3 Overview

The Council recognises that some roles may operate in difficult working conditions and within extremes of physical or emotional and psychological environments.

Exposure to some element of difficult working condition is inherent in any job, and this is generally taken into account through the application of the Council's job evaluation scheme. Where those working conditions are deemed to be more difficult than reasonably expected in any job i.e. over and above the reasonable expectation for the job, a scheme of Adverse Work Element will apply and an allowance will be payable to staff who qualify.

The Adverse Work Element will apply to any post where the actual occurrence of the risk associated with adverse work element is present within the definitions.

The Council recognises that it has a duty of care to all employees and every employee has a responsibility for their own and others' health, safety and well-being at work. First and foremost, the Council and its staff must ensure that every reasonable step has been taken to remove or reduce the adverse work element and its risks. Managers and staff will work together to identify and assess risk, and to reduce or eliminate that risk. The presence of an Adverse Work Element allowance does not remove this prime duty of care responsibility from either the Council or from its employees.

4 Pre-Conditions for Adverse Work Element Allowance

Before an Adverse Work Element allowance is awarded to a post, there must be clear and demonstrable evidence that:

- a) a health and safety risk assessment has been carried out; and
- b) all control measures have been put in place to eliminate or reduce the exposure of the employee(s) to the adverse work element to as low as reasonably practicable.

4.1 Mitigation is expected to follow the principles of the hierarchy of controls in the following order of preference:

1. Elimination of hazard.
2. Substitution of hazard for a less dangerous one.
3. Physical controls to reduce exposure to the hazard.
4. Safe systems of work and supervision.
5. Personal protective equipment.

4.2 Some examples of controls are as follows:

- sufficient and adequate protective clothing has been provided;
- there is opportunity for the employee to shelter from adverse weather;
- suitable and sufficient training has been provided to carry out the task e.g. manual handling training;
- the employee and their manager operate properly the health and safety requirements when working with toxins or chemicals;
- the employee and their manager operate properly the Lone Working and Unacceptable Behaviour policies in cases of physical abuse;
- the employee is fully trained in handling difficult cases / situations;
- supervision is regular and frequent and is focused on the particular cases / situations;
- there is a counselling and well-being programme available at short notice to employees.

5 Definitions

Adverse Work Element will apply where there is present in a job at least two of the following elements:

5.1 Physical Strain

Where the employee has regular and frequent periods during which significant physical demands are placed on the jobholder's body. This includes climbing, carrying heavy objects, running and stooping.

5.2 Physical Environment

Where at times the employee is located in an unpleasant environment with frequent exposure to factors such as temperature variation extremes, fumes, moving machinery, humidity and unpleasant materials which cause daily periods of extreme discomfort or there is a regular need to wear uncomfortable / cumbersome protective equipment.

5.3 Hazards

Where the employee works in a job with materials or processes which represent serious hazards and risks which are not always predictable or controllable.

5.4 Emotional and Psychological Engagement

Where the work involves continual exposure to extremes of expression and / or enactments (e.g. cruelty, serious mental health issues, deprivation and / or death; and total commitment and psychological / emotional engagement of the individual to help others experiencing these to deal with them).

5.5 Verbal Abuse

The job is carried out in an environment where substantial abuse is the norm and of an unpredictable kind.

6 The Allowance

The allowance will equate to £100 per annum and may apply to individual posts or to groups as long as the conditions are met. The allowance will be reviewed annually.

7 The Assessment Process

Requests for the Adverse Working Element allowance may be made to Authorisation Panel by:

- Heads of Service
- Individual employees

Authorisation Panel will need to agree that the adverse work element should be awarded. If employees wish to appeal against the outcome of the Authorisation Panel, they can do so in writing within 20 working days of the outcome for the authorisation process using the re-evaluation and appeal protocol.

Health and Safety risk assessments must conform to corporate standards and the Health, Safety and Welfare Team in HR should be asked to advise. The risk assessment must be attached to the business case to show that this has been done and show which control elements have been applied.

The award of Adverse Working Element allowances will be reviewed annually by the Head of Service / HR.

8 Related Documents

- Corporate Plan <http://wightnet.iow.gov.uk/documentlibrary/view/corporate-plan>
- Safeguarding Adults – Multi-Agency Policy, Procedure and Guidance <http://wightnet.iow.gov.uk/documentlibrary/view/safeguarding-adults-multi-agency-policy-procedure-guidance>
- Local Safeguarding Children Boards www.4lscb.org.uk

