

Newtown Neighbourhood Centre

Section 5

Risk Management

Duress Alarm Policy and Procedure

Policy:	Duress Alarm Policy and Procedure
Section:	Risk Management
Status:	Operational
Approval date:	26 th August 2008
Approved By:	Management Committee
Review Date:	August 2011
Staff Training Date:	28 th August 2008

Please note that this policy has been edited for security and safety reasons in order to be displayed on www.newtowncentre.org

Policy

The Duress Alarm system is provided for NNC Board members, staff, volunteers and students on placement to activate or swiftly respond to an emergency or threatening situation.

Objectives

The Objectives of this Duress Alarm Policy and Procedure are to provide:

1. A working environment that is safe, and to reduce any perceived or actual risk of harm for Board members, staff, volunteers, students on placement, contractors, service users and others visiting NNC.
2. Information on the use of the portable and fixed Duress Alarms.
3. A process for managing an emergency or threatening situation.

Responsibility

It is the responsibility of all NNC Board members, staff, volunteers, students on placement and NNC contractors to adhere to this Policy.

Duress Alarm Usage Procedure

The Executive Officer, Managers and Project Coordinators will ensure that staff, volunteers and students on placement who they supervise:

- Are competent in the use of the Duress Alarm system
- Actively participate in annual test runs of the Duress Alarm system
- Attend annual training on the use and maintenance of the Duress Alarm system
- All appropriate Board members, staff, volunteers and students on placement will be provided with orientation and annual training on the use of the NNC Duress Alarms system

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- Both portable and fixed duress alarm systems are installed at NNC. Each portable Duress Alarm is numbered.
- Staff members and volunteers must be aware of the locations of all fixed Duress Alarm buttons, and must take a portable Duress Alarm when working in a meeting room, after hours or alone at NNC.
- The fixed Duress Alarm buttons are located in all offices.
- All portable Duress Alarms are to be signed out in the *Duress Alarm Register*, and signed back in on their return.
- Care must be taken at all times with the duress alarms as once activated it registers as an emergency alarm with Security. This could result in Police being dispatched to NNC.

1. Activating the Duress Alarm System

- The Duress Alarm is to be used whenever there is an Emergency or an individual feels unable to handle a threatening situation at the Centre.
- The Duress Alarm button should be pressed as soon as you feel in danger, so that the situation does not become worse before help arrives. In the event of an emergency press alarm and if possible call '000'.

After Duress Alarms (fixed and portable) have been activated:

- Please follow Duress Alarm procedure

If Duress Alarm is pressed accidentally:

If you know you have pressed the alarm accidentally you must notify Security immediately informing them of the location of the alarm pressed. Then inform staff from the main office, after this you must complete an incident report.

If you do not know you have pressed the duress alarm, once it has ascertained that you have, you will be asked to fill out an incident report.

2. Distress Code using the Internal Telephone System within NNC

- If you feel unsafe and cannot activate the Duress Alarm, **call any extension number** in the Centre and state XXXX
- The staff member receiving this call will know that there is an incident occurring that requires immediate attention and will follow the Duress Alarm procedure.

3. Maintenance

- The Centre Administrator is responsible for the ongoing maintenance of the Duress Alarm system.
- All Portable Duress Alarms and the *Duress Alarm Register* are to be checked by the Centre Administrator regularly to ensure the correct

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number of portable Duress Alarms are available for use. This is to be recorded in the *Register*.

- All batteries for the portable Duress Alarms need to be replaced annually by Security.
- The Portable and Fixed Duress Alarm system will be reviewed annually to ensure effectiveness and suitability for NNC.

4. Testing of the Duress Alarm System

- The Executive Officer through the Centre Administrator is responsible for the **annual** test run of the Duress Alarm system.
- All Board members, staff, volunteers, students on placement and contractors on site at the time of the test run are to actively participate.
- Security are to be informed prior to a test run, and advised when the test run has been completed.
- A record of each Duress Alarm system test run is to be kept in the *OH&S Register*.

Breach of the Duress Alarm Policy and Procedure

A Breach of the NNC *Duress Alarm* Policy and Procedures may lead to disciplinary action or dismissal for Board members, staff, volunteers or students on placement.

Documents Relating to the Policy and Procedure:

NNC Duress Alarm Register
NNC Location of Duress Alarms
NNC Code of Conduct
NNC Staff Orientation Kit
NNC OH&S Policies and Procedures
NNC Contractors Policy and Procedure
NNC Evacuation Emergency Procedures
NSW Occupational Health & Safety Regulation 2001, Workcover NSW
Health and Safety Regulation

I have read, and understood, the above Duress Alarm Policy and Procedure. I agree to abide by its contents and I understand that there are consequences for any breaches of the Duress Alarm Policy.

Name: _____ Signature: _____

Witness: _____ Signature: _____

Dated: _____

