**Zero Tolerance policy**

**Bird and Co Solicitors LLP partners and employees treat our clients and customers with courtesy and respect and ask for the same in return.**

Our staff have the right to carry out their work without violence, abuse or harassment. Any behaviour verbal or physical, which causes staff to feel uncomfortable, embarrassed or threatened, is totally unacceptable.

The Zero Tolerance policy includes aggression or threats made in person, over the telephone or in written communication.

Bird and Co Solicitors LLP consider threatening behaviour to be:

* Attempted, threats of or actual aggressive threatening physical actions made towards any member of staff.
* The use of offensive, aggressive, threatening or abusive language, (including raising of the voice, swearing and cursing, shouting) which threatens or intimidates staff.
* The use of racist or sexual language
* Rudeness or the making of inflammatory statements
* The raising of unsubstantiated allegations

Unreasonable demands and communication may include:

* requesting responses within unreasonable timescales
* insisting on speaking with certain members of staff, or
* adopting a “capture-all” approach by contacting many staff members and third parties.

**How will we manage unreasonable behaviour?**

All staff have the authority to manage unreasonable behaviour. This may include politely informing the client that the phone call will be terminated.

We have a zero-tolerance position on violence and threats against our staff and this behaviour will always be reported to the police if appropriate.

In all other cases, we may inform the client that their behaviour is unreasonable and ask them to modify their behaviour. We will explain what action will be taken if the warning is ignored.

If the client does not modify their behaviour, we will take steps to restrict communications with them. If we decide a restriction is appropriate, we will consider which of the options open to us best fits the circumstances. The level of restriction that we apply will be proportionate, taking into account the nature, extent and impact of the behaviour on our ability to do our work.

This may include:

* blocking emails/calls from the client,
* terminating our retainer,
* limiting who within Bird and Co Solicitors LLP is able to speak to that client etc.

Any decision to limit our contact with the client will be made by a partner and will be communicated to the client in writing. If the client objects, they may ask, within 7 days of the original decision to limit our contact with the client, for the decision to be reviewed by another partner.

This policy applies throughout the company. It also applies to any employee or partner away from the business premises but only in so far as it relates to the business of the practice.

Bird and Co Solicitors LLP reserve the right to remove any client or customer details from their systems and cease to correspond with or do business with them.