

Open Letter
June 2025

T: 0207 260 2620
enquiries@icsmail.co.uk
instituteofcustomerservice.com
[@instituteofcs](https://www.instagram.com/instituteofcs)

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Ensuring the Crime and Policing Bill protects all public-facing workers from assault and hostility

We welcome the Crime and Policing Bill currently moving through Parliament, and in particular Clause 14: Assault of retail worker.

However, as it currently stands, the proposed legislation provides only a partial solution to an endemic and preventable issue, which has been consistently documented and evidenced. With a small change, the Government has the chance to act decisively to protect public-facing workers across *all sectors* from abuse in their workplaces.

Around 60% of the UK's workforce are in some form of customer-facing role, from high street retail and hospitality workers to call centre agents and financial services staff, through to transport workers and infrastructure installers.

The Institute of Customer Service, the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Customer Service and other supporters (now totalling over 330 organisations and cross-party Parliamentarians) have been campaigning since 2020 via our Service with Respect campaign to protect public-facing workers from hostility, abuse and assault at work.

We have been tracking customer abuse across all sectors for the last five years, with 15,000 responses to date. Our latest results (January 25) show that 42% of customer service staff across every sector experienced abuse in the previous six months, up 19% from March 24. This impacts the workers themselves and hits economic growth: over a third (37%) say they have considered leaving their role due to hostility, and a quarter (25.7%) have taken sick leave as a result.

We successfully pushed for an amendment to the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022, which created an aggravated offence against a person providing a public service, performing a public duty, or providing services to the public.

Despite this, we are still seeing a high level of public-facing workers report abuse, hostility and assault and a low level of incident reporting, suggesting a stronger deterrent is needed.

We are therefore calling for an amendment to the Crime and Policing bill to include all those in public-facing roles, not only those working in retail. This is the same definition as section 68A, subsection 4 of the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022.

The Government must act now to enshrine vital protections for all our service workers; without action now to create a strong deterrent, this problem will continue to grow. These professionals form the bedrock of our society and economy. They are essential to community building, social cohesion, and economic growth – let's seize this moment to protect all public-facing workers.

Yours faithfully,

Jo Causon, CEO, Institute of Customer Service

Co-signatories:

Andy Morris, CEO, Cirencester Friendly Society
Ruth Jefferson, CEO, Wessex Water
James Walder, CEO, North Star
Ant Middle, CEO, Ageas
Chris Pitt, CEO, first direct
Chris Norbury, CEO, Eon
David Wood, CEO, Wickes
Graham Edwards, CEO, Wales and West Utilities
Heidi Mottram, CEO, Northumbrian Water
Jacqueline Starr, CEO, Rail Delivery Group
Jonathan Cowie, CEO, Plymouth Community Homes
Lawrence Gosden, CEO, Southern Water
Lindsey Rix, CEO, Canada Life
Liv Garfield, CEO, Severn Trent
Pat McDonagh, CEO, Clarity
Rosemary Du Rose, CEO, Beyond Housing
Paul Crawford, CEO, Livewest
Heidi Fraser, CEO, Jisc
Tara Waite, CEO, PCL
Phillippa Cardno, CEO, Newbury
Elaine Kerr, CEO, DPD
James Walder, CEO, North Star
Greg Reed, CEO, Places for People
Eva, Eisenschimmel, CEO DACH, Lowell Group
Nick Atkin, CEO, Yorkshire Housing Association
Richard Parry, CEO, Canal & River Trust
Graham Vidler, CEO, CPT
Fiona Brown, CEO, OpenContact
Andrew Miller, CEO, Motability Operations
David Landen, CEO, Julian Hodge Bank Limited
Shashi Shesandri, CEO, Skewb
Basil Scarsella, CEO, UK Power Networks
Dame Irene Hays, CEO, Hays Travel
Louise Beardmore, CEO, United Utilities
Sarah Turner, MD, Nottingham Trams
Jeremy Hyams, Chairman, Claims Consortium Group
David MacLeod OBE, Co-Founder, EFS
Shirley Fell, COO, Cirencester Friendly Society
Caroline Dibbs, COO, Canada Life
Jonathan Shawcross, Chief Growth Officer, Concentrix
Mike Gauterin, Chief Customer and Technology Officer, United Utilities
Carla Thomas, Customer Experience Director, Openreach
David Bird, Customer Experience Director, Thames Water
Peter Carter, Independent Healthcare Consultant
Liz Jackson MBE, Director, Initium Corporate Finance
Jo Marshall, Executive Director, YPO
Eric Leenders, MD, UK Finance
Maryam Eslamdoust, General Secretary, TSSA
Mary Sithole, Treasurer, TSSA
Andy Green, Chair, Lowell
Peter Cross, Independent Consultant
Sir Charles Bowman, Alderman of the City of London
Lauren Lewis, COO, OVO



Rachel Crownshaw, Group Managing Director Communities, Places for People
Kathryn O'Brien, Customer Experience Director, Avanti West Coast
Steve Holliday, Chairman, CityFibre