

Community Connections Lone Worker Policy

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1. Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that there are adequate systems in place to ensure the health, safety and welfare of lone workers in order to reduce the risks of lone working as far as is reasonably possible and practicable.

2. Definitions

Lone Worker:

A lone worker is anyone who works in isolation from their colleagues without close or direct supervision.

Examples include:

- Community development workers who are out in the community
- Befriending Coordinators visiting people on a 1:1 basis
- Volunteers out in the community i.e. befriending.

People in fixed establishments:

- People who work from home
- People working separately from others, e.g. in offices (outreach work), some research and training establishments, Community centres
- People working outside normal hours, e.g. Co-ordinators.
- Development Workers, Volunteers, cleaners and security staff.
- Maintenance or repair staff

Mobile workers working away from their fixed base:

- Workers or Volunteers involved in home visits, Community activities/ events, drivers,
- Outreach workers i.e. based at satellite offices in the community.
- Development Officers, coordinators or similar professionals visiting domestic and commercial premises as well as meetings.



Personal responsibility:

Employees and Volunteers are required to take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and of other persons who may be affected by their acts at work.

This policy and supporting training should ensure that such persons do not take short cuts or employ dangerous practices but that they are instructed to consider and identify potential hazards and to implement a form of risk assessment to ensure the safety of themselves and any other persons they may be working with.

Working outside normal hours:

Where a person is required or requests to work after normal working hours and alone, it is necessary to identify the degree of risk in assessing whether or not this is a safe practice. Employers must make a “suitable and sufficient” assessment of any risks to the health and safety of their employees and Volunteers. Any such risks identified are likely to be greater for lone workers. These findings must be recorded on the risk assessment documents.

5. Policy Aims

The aim of this policy is to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that staff and Volunteers who work alone are not exposed to risks to their Health and Safety and to outline the steps to reduce and improve personal safety to staff and Volunteers who work alone.

The policy also aims through it’s rollout to raise awareness of safety issues relating to lone working.

6. Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to ensure:

1. Lone workers are identified.
2. That risks inherent in lone worker situations are assessed and suitable precautionary measures taken
3. There is a local safe system of work which:



- records the whereabouts of lone workers
- tracks the movement of lone workers
- follows an agreed system for locating staff who deviate from their expected movement pattern
- identifies when lone working is no longer appropriate

Risk Assessment:

Risk assessment is the overall process of performing a systematic written risk analysis and risk evaluation in order to identify methods to control the severity of the risk.

Risks to be assessed during the process include:

- Violence and Aggression.
- Isolated areas.
- Sudden illness
- Building condition
- Substances Hazardous to Health
- Animals
- Vehicle breakdowns
- Weather hazards

This list is not exhaustive and other risks may be identified during the assessment process.

Safe System of Work:

This is a method of working which addresses risks that cannot be controlled in any other way. Safe systems of work are dynamic systems, which mean they should be constantly monitored to identify weakness and improve methods of controlling the risk. Localised protocols such as a “buddy system” for safe working should be considered and encouraged.

Systems of work should be designed to reduce the need for lone working where possible. If this is not possible, safe work practices should be implemented, in line with the findings of a general risk assessment, to avoid or minimise the possibility of abuse. Personal alarms, mobile phones and physical barriers should only be used in conjunction with safe practice.



7. Organisational responsibilities

Responsibilities for the health and safety of lone workers are allocated as follows:

Senior Management

Director:

1. Ensure the management of Lone Working within the Organisation is adhered to under the Health and Safety Policy.
2. Maintain a log of the locations of employees considered to be lone workers
3. Maintain contact with staff who work alone, both internally and externally.
4. Implement systems to identify those staff who do not report or return at the expected time.
5. Ensure systems are in place to take action to contact / locate staff who have failed to make contact or return at the expected time.
6. Raise the appropriate level of alert / alarm if staff cannot be contacted / located within **2 hour period** after the expected time of contact or return.
7. If staff cannot be located, then contacting the police.
8. Monitoring feedback from the organisation on lone worker risk and seeking to improve processes.
9. Monitor and update this policy as appropriate.

Project Manager:

1. To identify all staff likely to work regularly in isolation from their colleagues.
2. To assess the risks that such lone working presents.
3. Having assessed the risks, to decide whether lone working is reasonable or not in these situations.



4. To report to the line Manager any situation where the risks cannot be controlled.
5. If lone working is considered reasonable, then the manager must ensure that suitable precautions are in place, such as:
 - Mobile telephones
 - Team working
 - Giving information on known risks
 - Reporting in procedures
 - Personal alarms
 - Recording identified risks on the local risk register.
6. To ensure all staff and Volunteers that work alone are made aware of this policy.
7. To support staff who are victims of violence and aggression in line with the organisational policy.

Employees & Volunteers:

1. Identify any activity carried out by them which will involve them working alone
2. Comply with any precautionary measures including guidelines laid down by managers such as a “buddy system”.
3. Provide any of the following information that may be needed to set up a safe system of work:
 - Working alone at the beginning and end of the normal working hours
 - Daily out of base work place i.e. Diary sheets
 - Detail of the make, model, colour and registration number of the vehicle being used.
 - Notifying any changes to the daily out of base work plan on the Diary sheet (i.e. ad-hoc or “spur of the moment” visits).
 - Informing key person (“buddy”) on return to base.



4. Report to their managers any unsafe or potentially unsafe situations, and to report incidents in which violence or aggression or threats using the incident reporting procedure.
5. Take reasonable care for their own safety and not expose themselves to unnecessary risk.
6. To attend any training provided.

8. *References to other policies within the Organisation*

- Health and Safety Policy
- Staff Welfare policy
- Disclosure of Information policy
- Vulnerable Adults policy

