

LIVE WELL IN BRAUNTON

Lone workers Policy for employees and volunteers

1. Introduction

Lone working covers all work undertaken alone where the risk to the individual lone worker may be increased either by the work itself or by the lack of on-hand support. This can occur within the normal workplace or in a variety of settings including travel and home visits. It is important however that these risks are not exaggerated as this can have a detrimental effect both on the lone worker and the achievement of our working aims.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 The Management Committee is to ensure:

- risk to a person's safety is adequately controlled
- appropriate risk assessments and safe systems of working are in place
- adherence to the policy by workers, and
- resources are available for effective implementation.

2.2 The Management Committee and Managers are to ensure adequate cover is available and when it is foreseen an incident might occur put in place control measures to reduce the risk to an acceptable level.

2.3 Workers are to cooperate to enable the Management Committee and Managers to meet their obligations, to organise their lone working in such a way as to minimise risk, to be vigilant and ensure that any known or identified risks are immediately reported to their line manager, to report any incident and attend any training.

3. Risk Assessment

3.1 Low Risk: Work in the office. It is good practice for the worker to ensure a second person is aware of their location. The worker should have access to a means of communication. A risk assessment of the work area will ensure hazards for lone working have been identified and provision for emergencies is in place. The worker will have been given induction training and Health and Safety information. The worker should be aware of the need to report incidents to their line manager as soon as practicable and is encouraged to report both actual and 'near miss' incidents.

3.2 Medium Risk: Work with members of the public, handling money, working in areas difficult to reach in an emergency. In addition to the Low Risk items:

- any room used for confidential interviews should ideally be equipped with a hidden alarm and if not the worker should have their phone at hand to text an alarm; and the worker should sit between the interviewee and the door to facilitate escape if necessary
- appropriate communication should be maintained with the lone worker
- it should be remembered that a lone worker suffering from illness might increase the risk and provision should then be made, and
- additional control measures should be considered in specific situations.

3.3 High Risk: Where there is to be contact with potentially violent or aggressive individuals lone working is not permitted.

3.4 Home Visits: Prior to a home visit to an individual not previously known to the lone worker they should obtain such information as is needed to enable them to assess the risk of the visit and in case of any doubt should discuss the proposed visit with their line manager to agree a risk assessment.

3.5 Summary: Lone working can bring additional risks. The most important matters of which to be certain are as follows:

- the worker is confident of their ability to undertake the work on their own
- the worker has full knowledge of the hazards and risks to which they are exposed
- a colleague or line manager knows their whereabouts and what the worker is doing
- the lone worker knows what to do if something goes wrong.

Managing the risks is primarily the responsibility of the lone worker in particular situations as it is the lone worker who will be aware of the full circumstances. If at any stage the lone worker feels unsafe, they should remove themselves from the situation immediately and report this to their line manager.

They should never give out personal information to members of the public.

Following an incident or 'near miss' incident the line manager should provide emotional support to the lone worker, establish the details of the incident and review the measures in place to minimise risk.

Appendix: Home Visits

- Before making a home visit to a new individual alone ensure that you are aware of any issues that might arise and you are satisfied it is safe for you to visit on your own
- At the door always show your I.D. and identify yourself
- Check the identity of the person you are visiting by asking a question which requires them to tell you who they are
- Ensure that you are comfortable with any pets there may be in the home and if appropriate ask that any pet be properly secured
- Do not enter if anything gives you cause for concern
- Always be aware of where you are in the home and comfortable in your ability to leave at any point without problem.

Appendix: Travelling

- Keep your car maintained and topped up with fuel. Keep a torch in the car.
- Know where you are going and allow plenty of time
- If you feel safe by so doing keep your doors locked while in the car
- Hide bags, telephones and equipment as much as possible
- Park as near to the premises as possible in a well lit area preferably facing the direction you will need to leave in and giving you a safe route to walk to the premises
- Be aware of the nearest place of safety and before unlocking on leaving glance around
- When leaving the premises have your car keys in your hand

Appendix: Breakdown of vehicle/Accidents

- If your car breaks down stop the vehicle where it is safe to do so
- Turn on your hazard warning lights
- Always take care of your own safety
- Call for assistance; keep your doors locked and if your windows are open do so no more than 4 cms.

- If you leave your car lock it and note its location. If you have a personal attack alarm take it and keep it in your hand. If it is dark, or will soon be dark, take a torch
- Contact your line manager. Contact your client to inform them of any delay
- If there is an accident you are legally required to stop if you collide with another person, car, property or livestock. If anyone requires medical attention, summon help immediately.

Appendix: What to do if a serious incident occurs

- Remove yourself to a safe place and seek help
- Phone 999 if necessary
- Inform your line manager and if not available another appropriate person in order that immediate action can be taken
- They should remove you from the work environment to a quiet place or arrange for you to be taken home
- If not already done and if appropriate they will contact the police and secure the scene for gathering evidence
- They will cancel appointments or arrange for another worker to fulfil them
- They will arrange to gather preliminary information on the incident