



<b>Policy No:</b> JSD/HR/05	<b>Authorised by:</b> Davina Powell	<b>Review Date:</b> 28th October 2023
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<b>LONE WORKING</b>		

### 1. Policy

Where the conditions of service delivery or its associated tasks require staff to work alone, both the individual staff member and their line Manager have a duty to assess and reduce the risks which lone working presents.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Health & Safety and Safeguarding policies and is designed to alert staff to the risks presented by lone working, to identify the responsibilities each person has in this situation, and to describe procedures which will minimise such risks. It is not intended to raise anxiety unnecessarily, but to give staff a framework for managing potentially risky situations.

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to all staff who may be working alone, at any time, in any of the situations described in the definition below. Volunteers would not normally be expected to work alone and so should be outside the scope of this policy.

Occasionally staffs work outside hours and/or alone due to flexible working patterns and/or to undertake their job role. Our principles for supporting lone workers include:

- That staff should avoid working alone if unnecessary.
- Where possible the final two people at any site should leave together.
- A commitment to supporting staff and managers both in establishing and maintaining safe working practices.
- Recognising and reducing risk.
- A commitment to the provision of appropriate support for staff.
- A clear understanding of responsibilities.
- The priority placed on the safety of the individual over property.
- A commitment to providing appropriate training for staff.
- Equipment such as mobile phones will be made available as appropriate.
- Staff should ensure someone is always aware of their movements.

### 3. Definitions

Within this document, 'lone working' refers to situations where staff in the course of their duties work alone or are physically isolated from colleagues and without access to immediate assistance. This last situation may also arise where there are other staff in the building but the nature of the building itself may essentially create isolated areas.

#### **Unit Managers and their employees must ensure that:**

- All appropriate steps are taken to control access to the building and that emergency exits are accessible.

- Alarm systems are tested regularly- both fire and intruder.
- When working alone they are familiar with exits and alarms.
- There is access to a telephone and first aid kit.
- If there is any indication that the building has been broken into, they call for assistance before entering.
- External doors are locked to avoid unwanted visitors if working alone.

#### **4. Assessment of Risk**

Before working alone, an assessment of the risks involved should be made in conjunction with the Line Manager. In drawing up and recording an assessment of risk the following issues should be considered, as appropriate to the circumstances:

- The environment- Location, Security, Access.
- The context - nature of the task, any special circumstances.
- The individuals concerned - indicators of potential or actual risk.
- History - any previous incidents in similar situations
- Any other special circumstances.

All available information should be taken into account and checked or updated, as necessary. Where there is any reasonable doubt about the safety of a lone worker in a given situation, priority should be given to sending a second worker or making other arrangements to complete the task.

#### **5. Reducing Risks**

Where staff work alone for extended periods and/or on a regular basis, managers must make provision for regular contact, both to monitor the situation and to counter the effects of working in isolation. Staff working away from the office should ensure that they always have access to a mobile phone. Staffs are responsible for checking that the mobile phone is charged, in working order and with sufficient credit remaining with the relevant provider.

#### **Staff Working at Home**

Staffs working from their own homes should:

- Take every reasonable precaution to ensure that their address and telephone number remain confidential.
- Be in regular contact with their Line Manager or other designated person if working at home for extended periods.

#### **Working alone at another Professional Location**

Unit Managers and their employees must ensure that:

- All appropriate steps are taken to control access to the building/room and that emergency exits are accessible.
- They are familiar with the fire and, if applicable, intruder alarm procedure and know the location of both exits and alarms.
- They are familiar with and adhere to Health & Safety guidance for the site that they are visiting.
- When arranging to visit a property, checking that there will be somebody else present in the building and that this person can be contacted in the event of an emergency.
- There is access to a telephone and first aid kit.

#### **Visiting Residential Homes**

When visiting homes, Unit Managers and their employees must ensure that:

- They have made every attempt to arrange a colleague to accompany them
- They notify a colleague of their whereabouts and the estimated time of return.
- They obtain as much background information as possible about the child/family being visited.
- Report any incidents or situations where they may have felt 'uncomfortable'.

## **6. Personal Safety**

Lone workers should ensure that:

- If there is any indication that a building has been broken into, they call for assistance before entering.
- Whenever possible that they park in a well-lit and busy area.
- They adhere to sign in and sign out procedures are followed.
- They must not assume that having a mobile phone and a back-up plan is a sufficient safeguard in itself.
- They take all reasonable precautions to ensure their own safety, as they would in any other circumstances.
- They inform their Unit Manager or other identified person when they will be working alone, giving accurate details of their location, and following an agreed plan to inform that person when the task is completed. This includes occasions when a staff member expects to go home following an external commitment rather than returning to their base.
- They inform their Line Manager if they deviate from an agreed programme. If a member of staff does not report in as expected an agreed plan should be put into operation, initially to check on the situation and then to respond as appropriate using emergency contact information if necessary.

## **7. Practical Guidance**

Personal Safety 'Reasonable precautions' might include:

- Checking directions for the destination.
- Ensuring your car, if used, is road-worthy and has break-down cover.
- Ensuring someone knows where you are and when is expected home.
- Avoiding where possible poorly lit or deserted areas.
- Taking care when entering or leaving empty buildings, especially at night.
- Ensuring that items such as laptops or mobile phones are carried discreetly.

## **8. Monitoring and Review**

Any member of staff with a concern regarding lone working issues should ensure that it is discussed with their manager.