



ENABLE

**The Voluntary and Community Sector
Learning and Skills Consortium**

Lone Workers Policy

Change History

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Person Responsible for Policy:		Enable CEO		
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04/06/2018	Standards Officer	Changes to job titles to reflect new organisational restructure. Small changes to wording and referencing	Operations Manager	23 July 2018
23/07/2018	Standards Officer	No changes	CEO	23/07/2019
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Enable is committed to achieving and maintaining high standards of safety for all staff, visitors and others. Enable recognises that although some tasks may be covered by specific law on lone working, there is no general legal prohibition on working alone.

However, Enable recognises that there are general duties under the Health & Safety at Work Act, and requirements to assess and control risks in the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

Risk Assessments undertaken in line with the Health & Safety Policy and the requirements of the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999 will help to identify the hazards associated with lone working. The risks involved can then be assessed and safe working arrangements devised and implemented to ensure that risks are either eliminated or adequately controlled.

Lone workers face particular problems, and a suitable risk assessment will need to consider the following issues when planning safe working arrangements, together with any specific risks associated with the work:

Can the risks be adequately controlled by one person?

Precautions should take account of normal work and foreseeable emergencies, eg fire, equipment failure, illness and accidents. Managers are responsible for identifying situations where people work alone and asking questions such as;

- does the workplace present a special risk to the lone worker?
- is there a safe way in and out for one person?
- can any temporary access equipment which is necessary, such as portable ladders, be safely handled by one person?
- can all the equipment and materials involved in the work be safely handled by one person?
- consider whether the work involves lifting objects too large for one person or whether more than one person is needed to operate essential controls for the safe running of equipment.
- will cash be handled, and will there be a risk of violence?

Is the person medically fit and suitable to work alone?

Check that lone workers have no medical conditions which make them unsuitable for lone working. Seek medical advice if necessary. Consider both routine work and foreseeable emergencies which may impose additional physical and mental burdens on the individual.

What training is required to ensure competency in safety matters?

Training is particularly important where there is limited supervision to control, guide and help in situations of uncertainty. Training may be critical to avoid panic reactions in unusual situations. Lone workers need to be sufficiently experienced and to understand the risks and precautions fully.

Line managers should set the limits to what can and cannot be done whilst working alone. They should ensure that employees are competent to deal with circumstances which are new, unusual or beyond the scope of training, e.g. when to stop work and seek advice.

How will the person be supervised?

Although lone workers cannot be subject to constant supervision, it is still a Line Manager's duty to ensure their health and safety at work. Line Managers can help ensure that employees understand the risks associated with their work and the necessary safety precautions are carried out. Line Managers can also provide guidance in situations of uncertainty. Supervision of health and safety can often be carried out when checking the progress/quality of work; it may take the form of periodic site visits combined with discussions in which health and safety issues are raised. Supervision complements information, instruction and training and helps to ensure that employees understand the risks associated with their work and the necessary safety precautions are carried out.

The extent of supervision required depends on the risks involved and the ability of the lone worker to identify and handle health and safety issues. Employees new to a job, undergoing training, doing a job which presents special risks, or dealing with new situations may need to be accompanied at first. The higher the risk, the greater the level of supervision required. It should not be left to individuals to decide whether they require assistance.

Procedures will need to be put in place to monitor lone workers to ensure that they remain safe. These may include supervisors periodically visiting and observing people working alone, regular contact between the lone worker and supervision using either a telephone or radio, checks that a lone worker has returned to their base or home on completion of a task.

What happens if a person becomes ill, has an accident or there is an emergency?

Lone workers should be capable of responding to emergencies. Risk assessment should identify foreseeable events. Emergency procedures should be established and employees trained in them.

Lone workers should be issued with a mobile phone for emergency use.

As with all risk assessments, the findings should be reviewed at reasonable intervals, and in the light of experience.

GENERAL ADVICE

Travelling Safely

WALKING

Anyone who is on foot should develop a sensible level of awareness to danger that is relevant to the circumstances. The use of a few sensible precautions should minimise risks: -

1) Walking Safely

Avoid short cuts through dimly lit or enclosed areas

After dark keep away from bushes, doorways and alleyways

Tell your Line Manager your precise destination and expected time of return.

Walk facing oncoming traffic, this avoids a vehicle coasting quietly upon you from behind

Walk confidently and purposefully, avoid sending out signals of fear and vulnerability

Do not wear a personal stereo, it will reduce awareness of your surroundings

Wear sensible footwear, do not wear footwear which may impede your actions if alarmed

If you think you are being followed, cross the street. If they continue to follow, move to the nearest place with people and call the Police using your mobile phone.

Keep your distance if asked for directions

2) Carrying Money and Valuables Safely

Do not carry more cash than absolutely necessary

Keep wallets/purses in inside pockets

Carry handbags close to the body on the side away from the kerb

Make sure the fastening on the bag is secure

If someone grabs your bag or wallet, let it go. Personal safety is paramount.

3) Be on guard with Strangers

Be cautious in conversation; do not give away any personal details

Trust your instincts and avoid crowds or groups which may appear threatening

Be wary of stationary vehicles with engines running and people sitting in them

If a car stops and you are threatened, move away quickly in the opposite direction and use your mobile phone to call for assistance.

BY VEHICLE

If you drive, a few sensible precautions will help minimise risks and help to make you more confident: -

1) Before you set off

Make sure your vehicle is regularly serviced and check oil and tyres etc. regularly

Ensure you have adequate fuel for the journey

Plan your route

Tell your department your precise destination and expected time of return.

2) On the Road

Keep bags and other valuables out of sight - even during the journey

Keep doors locked, windows and sunroof closed as much as possible, especially in stop/go traffic

Do not pick-up hitch hikers

If followed, drive to the nearest police station or concentration of people and call for assistance using your mobile phone.

3) Leaving the Vehicle

Always lock your vehicle and put anything of value out of sight

After dark, park in well lit places, as near to your destination as possible

In a multi storey car park, reverse your vehicle into a parking space and leave it as close to the exit as you can, near ground level and away from pillars

Have your keys ready when you return to your vehicle; check the interior for intruders before getting in.

4) If you break down

Pull off the road as far as you can and if necessary switch on your hazard warning lights

If someone offers help and you feel uncertain about them, stay in your vehicle with the doors locked and use your mobile phone to summon assistance. Do not get into a car with a stranger or try to hitch a lift. Summon assistance using your mobile phone and give precise details of your location.

5) If you feel threatened

If you are being followed, drive to a busy place

If the occupants of a car beside you at traffic lights or road junction etc try to attract your attention for any reason, simply ignore them

If a car travels alongside you at the same speed, slow down and let them pass. If the driver persists, drive to a busy place and call the police.

If a car pulls up in front of you, forcing you to stop, leave the engine running, activate your hazard warning lights and sound your horn continuously. If the driver gets out and approaches you, reverse and get away.

Making Home Visits

When interviewing or visiting people in their own homes it must always be recognised that staff are far more vulnerable than in other situations due to a number of factors. For example; you are on their territory, you will be less familiar with the surroundings, prior to entering you will not know who is in the property etc.

When carrying out home visits the following advice must be taken into consideration:-

Wherever possible get to know the client in advance - check the client's computer and paper file, speak to other staff who may have visited the client. If in any doubt, discuss the visit with your manager, and if necessary go with another member of staff.

Always tell someone and record where you are going, when you are going and your expected time of return.

Take a mobile phone with you and ensure that it is switched on at all times, unless you are driving, when the phone should be switched to Voicemail. Ensure your department has a record of your mobile telephone number.

If you are meeting someone unknown to you, check their authenticity before leaving for your appointment. If possible arrange an initial meeting to take place at the office to give the opportunity to assess the person.

If you think there may be a risk of danger report to your manager for further advice. During visits always ensure that your exit is never impeded. Do not enter a property if the person you expect to see is not there.

Be alert at all times to the signs that a situation is getting out of hand. If you feel that this is happening, make your excuses and leave immediately.

Be aware that people may have dogs in their home which may be used to intimidate you. If this happens, ask the client to control the dog or move it to another room. If they refuse, make your excuses and leave.

If there has been any conflict during meeting in client's dwellings, whether created by people or the presence of a dog, arrange for further meetings to take place at the office. Always stay calm and do not return aggression as this may aggravate the situation. Trust your instincts and act on them.

If you are aware of previous problems at an address / venue either to you personally or to a colleague, report to your manager/supervisor for advice prior to attending at the property.

If on arrival at a property a situation leads you to have reasonable fears for your safety, leave and report to your manager/supervisor for advice.

If there has been conflict during the course of your visit, report the incident to your manager/supervisor.

REPORTING INCIDENTS

Enables official form 'Report of Violence/Abuse (including verbal) to Staff' must be completed by all employees involved as soon as possible following an incident which has resulted in an act of violence, threats or abuse against them by a member of public or other member of staff.

On completion the form should be returned to your immediate supervisor who will forward it to the Chief Executive Officer.

The purpose of the reporting procedure is to monitor the type and regularity of incidents that employees are subject to during the course of their duties in order to plan strategies to ensure the safety of all employees.

Duties of Managers & Supervisors

To comply fully with the requirements of the Risk Assessment.

To ensure that a safe system of work is introduced where identified under a risk assessment.

To ensure that suitable information, training and supervision is provided for all employees engaged in lone working, and that the training is recorded, monitored, evaluated and reviewed

Duties of Employees

To follow the safe system of work designed and introduced by management and not deviate from this without good reason.

To report all accidents and dangerous occurrences which either caused, or could have caused injury.

To report all incidents which have resulted in an act of violence, threats or abuse against them by member of public or other member of staff.

Covid-19

Keeping our employees safe while they work at home is of paramount importance and something we take very seriously, as they are now lone workers. We have an open dialogue with our employees so that they can raise any concerns about risks they may be facing, whilst

we maintain a culture that prioritises workplace personal safety, to reassure our employees that they have our full support. Enable will provide employees with support and training and will keep in contact with all staff members.

As of 5th November 2020, England will enter into a 2nd national lockdown. Keeping in touch with all staff is of paramount importance and we will continue to have a weekly meeting to ensure all staff have regular contact with management and the rest of the team.

We will review all policies in line with government guidance, through-out the Coronavirus pandemic.