



LONE WORKING

Policy no:

Together We Make a Difference will reduce and prevent the risks involved in members of the team and volunteers undertaking lone working as part of their work.

Policy Basis

We recognise that the nature of our work necessitates occasions when lone working cannot be avoided. The purpose of this policy and its guidelines is to seek to reduce and prevent the risks involved in members of the team and volunteers undertaking lone working as part of their work for Together We Make a Difference. The policy provides that action will be taken by us to identify, manage and reduce the risk to the above involved in lone working.

Key Principles

Good risk assessment processes for managers and volunteers.

Clear and robust management procedures that put in place measures to address, identify any potential risks and to deal with incidents when they occur.

Managers and volunteers accepting responsibility for, and supporting the need to operate systems, procedures and technology provided for their enhanced protection.

Sharing of information from within and outside the organisation whilst recognising the right to confidentiality, on identified and potential risks.

The provision of good quality training, whether that is to help Together We Make a difference and volunteers to prevent and manage difficult situations, or to use procedures, systems or devices provided for their security and safety, to their best effect.

Definition

In operating this policy Together, We Make a Difference defines "Lone Working" as - "any situation or location in which someone works without a colleague nearby; or when someone is working out of sight or earshot of another colleague."

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The following is a list (although not an exhaustive one) of the examples of Together We Make a Difference and volunteers who may be involved in “Lone Working” .

The team and volunteers undertaking tasks at community events.
The team and volunteers who deliver individual sessions, meetings etc.
The team and volunteers involved in the provision an out-of-hours' work in the community.
The team and volunteers who open and close buildings either early in the morning or late at night

Creating a Pro-Security Culture

Together We Make a Difference recognises the importance of ensuring that there is communication with all of the team and volunteers to ensure that everyone is aware of their roles and responsibilities in relation to lone working procedures.

Such communication will include written procedures and guidance sheets, induction programmes, awareness-raising sessions, training and team briefings.

Instructions to everyone will make it clear that they should not enter into lone working situations, where they feel that their safety or the safety of their colleagues could be compromised.

Together We Make a Difference will ensure lone working procedures are included in induction programmes, which are specific to their working environment.

Together We Make a Difference recognises the particular responsibility of managers in communicating on this issue and ensuring that a pro-security culture exists within the organisation.

Reporting, investigation, analysis of incidents, risk assessment, learning from experience and preventative action

Effective incident reporting is essential to identifying causes of incidents, identifying risks, preventing re- occurrence, as well as in detection and the taking of action in individual cases.

All incidents must be reported to managers arising from lone working situations as well as all situations where they identify the potential for

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incidents to occur. Together We Make a Difference have a responsibility to ensure that relevant information is recorded.

The purpose and importance of effective reporting is to gather information to identify any problem and assess and manage the risk

Develop solutions, identify remedial action

To allow reporting, where appropriate to the Police or the HSE

To provide information, which could provide a basis for any sanctions to be taken.

The Directors shall be responsible for considering all reports and deciding on whether an investigation is necessary and whether appropriate remedial action is necessary.

Arising from an investigation into any reported risk or incident the identified manager may also conduct a risk assessment to help make decisions on how to manage any risks, and to identify any future remedial or preventative action that may be necessary.

The key to preventative action is a reflective understanding of how and why incidents occur in lone working situations, and to learn from that understanding. In order to achieve this, the following factors will be taken into consideration –

Type of incident(s) (for example, physical assault, theft of property or equipment)

Severity of incident(s)

Cost (human and financial)

The individuals involved

Weaknesses or failures that have allowed these incidents to take place

- for example, procedural, systems or technological

Training needs analysis of the team and volunteers, in relation to the prevention and management of violence, the correct use and operation of lone worker protection technology or other relevant training, such as first aid

Review of measures in place to manage risk

The technology in place to aid the protection of lone workers.

If any reported lone working incident involves physical assault or non-physical assault on a member of staff then the incident shall be notified to the Directors, who will have responsibility for deciding whether the matter should be reported to the police.

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Where any reported incident involves physical assault or non-physical assault on a member of the team or volunteers a decision will be made regarding the need and appropriateness of Together We Make a Difference initiating any remedial action or sanctions against the individual involved.

Together We Make a Difference shall also consider whether it is necessary and appropriate for the incident to be reported to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 2013 Regulations.

Prevention – Measures

Changes will consider appropriate and relevant measures aimed at preventing or reducing the risk of incidents relating to lone working. The measures identified and agreed will be based on the consideration of reports/analyses and the factors identified in the paragraph above, and the risk assessment factors identified.

The measures involved will include –

1. Physical Measures 2. Procedural Measures 3. Relational Measures

1. Physical Measures - includes, devices or pieces of technology which be considered, both as a deterrent and/or to enable a response to a lone working incident. This could include, for example a mobile phone to act as a means of communication and contacting emergency contacts.

2. Procedural Measures - Appropriate or relevant procedural measures, which could be operated to support or reduce the risk involved in Lone Working will include –

3. Exercising positive reporting practices regarding appointments and movements

The operation of a “Buddy System”

The undertaking of a pre-visit Risk Assessment

Procedures to be used during visits

Procedures for lone workers

Implementation and operation of a "Buddy System"

It is essential that lone workers keep in contact with colleagues, and ensure that they make another colleague aware of their movements. Implementing various management procedures, such as the 'Buddy System', can do this. To operate the 'Buddy System', a lone worker must nominate a 'buddy'. This is a person who is their nominated contact for

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the period in which they will be working alone. The nominated 'buddy' will:

- Be fully aware of the movements of the lone worker,
- Have all necessary contact details for the lone worker, including personal contact details, such as next of kin. A copy of this information will be kept on an individual's personnel file
- Have details of the lone worker's known breaks or rest periods
- Attempt to contact the lone worker, if they do not contact the 'buddy' as agreed

Follow the agreed local escalation procedures for alerting their senior manager or the Police, if the lone worker cannot be contacted, or if they fail to contact their 'buddy' within agreed and reasonable timescales.

Essential to the effective operation of the 'Buddy System' are also the following factors:

- The 'buddy' must be made aware that they have been nominated and what the procedures and requirements for this role are

- Contingency arrangements should be in place for someone else to take over the role of the 'buddy' in case the nominated person is called away

There must be procedures in place to allow someone else to take over the role of the 'buddy', if the lone working situation extends past the end of the nominated person's normal working day.

The Buddy System is designed to benefit you and your colleagues in promoting a safe and secure work environment.

Full cooperation of the team and volunteers is mandatory.

Guidance on Risk Assessment related to Lone Working

Together We Make a Difference will ensure that adequate arrangements are in place to assess risk to the team and volunteers. This risk assessment will be carried out to identify the risks and any others who may be affected by their work or conduct. The assessment should identify how the risks arise, and how they impact on those affected.

This information is needed to make decisions on how to manage those risks, so that the decisions are made in an informed, rational and structured manner, and the action taken is proportionate.

The risk assessment may be undertaken by a relevant manager in relation to the individual.

The risk assessment should consider -

- The identification of the lone worker exposed to risk

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The assessment of working conditions -normal/abnormal, for example hazardous conditions, such as dangerous steps, unhygienic conditions, poor lighting.

The assessment of particular work activities that might present a risk to lone workers

Whether the volunteers have received suitable and sufficient training to defuse potential situations.

The evaluation of physical capability of the staff member to carry out lone working, such as being pregnant, disabled or inexperienced.

An estimation and assessment of "emergency" equipment that may be required, such as a torch, map of the local area, telephone numbers for emergencies, including local police and the ambulance service, a first aid kit or mobile phone chargers

Exercise positive reporting practices regarding appointments and movements

Lone workers should always ensure that someone else (a manager or appropriate colleague) is aware of their movements. This includes providing them with the full address of where they will be working, the details of persons with whom they will be working or visiting, telephone numbers if known and

Indications of how long they expect to be at those locations (both arrival and departure times)

Details of vehicles used by lone workers should also be left with a colleague, for example registration number, make, model and colour

Procedures should also be in place to ensure that the lone worker is in regular contact with their manager or relevant colleague, particularly if they are delayed or have to cancel an appointment

Where there is genuine concern, as a result of a lone worker failing to attend a visit or an arranged meeting within an agreed time, the manager should utilise the information provided to track the team member or volunteer and ascertain whether or not they turned up for the appointment that day. Depending on the circumstances, and whether contact through normal means (mobile phone, pager and so on) can or cannot be made, the manager or colleague should involve the police, if necessary. It is important that matters are dealt with quickly, in consideration of all the available facts, where it is thought that the lone worker may be at risk. If police involvement is needed, they should be given full access to information held and personnel who may hold it, if that information contains data that might help trace the

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lone worker or provide a fuller assessment of any risks they may be facing

It is important that contact and appointment arrangements, once in place, are adhered to. Many procedures, such as this, fail simply because staff forget to make the necessary call. The result is chaos and unnecessary escalation and expense, which undermines the integrity of the process.

Undertaking a risk assessment prior to a visit

If there are known risks with a particular location, lone workers and their manager should reschedule this visit to a particular time, place or location where they can be accompanied

It is essential that lone workers remain alert throughout the work that they are undertaking, ensuring that they are aware of entrances and exits in the event of an emergency. If a violent situation develops then staff should immediately terminate the visit and leave the location.

Lone workers should be prepared, and a risk assessment completed ahead of their visits.

Lone Working – A Checklist for Managers

Are the team and volunteers -
Aware of the need to maintain contact with colleagues?
Aware of how to obtain support and advice from management in and outside normal working hours?
Appreciate their responsibilities for their own safety?
Understand the provisions for support by Together We Make a Difference and the mechanism to access such support?
Appreciate the requirements for reporting and recording incidents of aggression and violence?

Signed by: Marvin Molloy, Trevor Molloy (Directors)

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