



LONE WORKER PROCEDURES AND GUIDANCE 2021

Lone Working: Policy, Procedures and Guidance

1. Policy Statement

East Cowes Town Council (ECTC) has a duty of care toward all employees. Where the conditions of service delivery or its associated tasks require staff to work alone, both the individual staff member and ECTC have a duty to assess and reduce the risks which lone working presents.

2. Purpose

This policy 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.

3. 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.

4. Context

Lone workers face the same risks as anyone else, as well as those directly related to their work. Within ECTC overall policies relating to safer working practices, support for lone workers is an essential part, and the same principles apply, particularly:

- a commitment to supporting employees both in establishing and maintaining safe working practices
- recognising and reducing risk
- a commitment to the provision of appropriate support for staff to ensure 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, personal alarms and torches will be made available as appropriate.

5. Definitions

A lone worker is an employee who performs an activity that is carried out in isolation from other workers without close or direct supervision. Such staff may be exposed to risk because there is no-one to assist them and so a risk assessment may be required.

6. Mandatory Procedures

Personal Safety

- Staff must not assume that having a mobile phone and a back-up plan is a sufficient safeguard in itself. The first priority is to plan for a reduction of risk.
- Staff should take all reasonable precautions to ensure their own safety, as they would in any other circumstances.
- Before working alone, an assessment of the risks involved should be made in conjunction with the line manager

- Staff must inform their line 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 rather than returning to their base.
- Managers must ensure that there is a robust system in place for staff advising on starting and finishing, and that staff use it.
- Staff who work to a pre-planned programme, must inform their line manager if they deviate from the 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.
- Arrangements for contacts and response should be tailored to the needs and nature of the team. Issues to consider include:
 - ❖ staffing levels and availability
 - ❖ the identified risks
 - ❖ measures in place to reduce those 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.
- Personal alarms will be provided. Staff working in the community may be issued with a mobile phone if required; they are responsible for checking that it is charged, in working order, and with sufficient credit remaining with the relevant provider.

Assessment of risk

- 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 considered and checked or updated as necessary
- Where there is any reasonable doubt about the safety of a lone worker in a given situation, consideration should be given to sending a second worker or making other arrangements to complete the task.
- While resource implications cannot be ignored, safety must be the prime concern.

Planning

- Staff should be fully briefed in relation to risk as well as the task itself.
- Communication, checking-in and fall-back arrangements must be in place.
- The team manager is responsible for agreeing and facilitating these arrangements, which should be tailored to the operating conditions affecting the team.

Reporting

- Should an incident occur, the reporting and de-briefing should follow the procedure set down by the Line Manager.
- The Line Manager should undertake a debrief as soon as possible.

Lone worker devices

- It is the line manager's duty to ensure that each member of the team is issued with a lone worker device, if appropriate.
- The line manager should ensure that device users receive adequate training and are competent in the use of their devices.
- Employees are responsible for keeping their devices in good working order, reporting any problems with devices and for ensuring that device batteries are fully charged before working alone.

7. Known Risks and Procedures - Work related violence toward Staff

- *Undesirable persons may be present when locking and unlocking toilets or patrolling parks. In this case retreat and advise Line Manager.*
- *If approached by anyone and a danger to self is sensed, use personal alarm to attract attention, retreat and advise Line Manager.*
- *If drug paraphernalia is found, dispose of in the manner you have been trained in and advise Line Manager*
- *If you have an accident use your mobile phone for medical assistance and/or your personal alarm to attract attention*
- *If a person is found in a toilet or park who is clearly unwell for some reason, call an ambulance. Do not put yourself at risk at any time.*

8. Monitoring and Review

- The ongoing implementation of the Lone Working Policy will be monitored through the supervision process.
- Lone working and risk assessment will be regular agenda items for team meetings.
- Any member of staff with a concern regarding these issues should ensure that it is discussed with their supervisor or with the whole team, as appropriate.
- The policy will be reviewed as part of the regular cycle of reviews, unless changing circumstances require an earlier review.

9. Support – Internal and External

Your Line Manager can be contacted at any time if you consider yourself in danger.

Health and Safety Executive (HSE)

The HSE has published a range of guidance and support materials to help employers manage the risk of work-related violence to staff. This includes a set of case studies demonstrating good practice in managing the risks to Lone Workers. These are all available on the HSE website at:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/violence>