

# Lone Working

Supplement to  
[WCC Lone Working Guidance & Personal Safety - WCC Intranet](#)  
specific to  
Targeted Support for Young People

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# 1. About this document

This document should be used when employees work by themselves without close/direct supervision

The guidance is for:

- Youth Workers
- Targeted Support for Young People Managers

# 2. What is the subject?

Lone workers may include: people working outside normal office hours; the first or last person on the premises; receptionists; drivers; people working from home; people working totally alone in a building; people working separately in large premises; people involved in securing a building; and those making home or site visits.

There is no general prohibition on working alone, the broad duties of the [Health & Safety at Work Act 1974](#) and [The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999](#) still apply. Managers should identify whether the activity can be safely undertaken while working alone.

New staff and students will require additional support and some people may have a medical condition, which may make it unsuitable for them to work alone.

# 3. Responsibilities of managers

It is the County Council's policy, through managers, to undertake risk assessments, which involves identifying hazards, assessing the risks and implementing adequate control measures to eliminate or reduce the risks to the lowest practicable level.

Although working alone may not introduce any new hazards, the level of risk could increase significantly when a task is carried out unaccompanied. This may require additional risk-control measures to be implemented to ensure that staff are not exposed to greater risks than those who work together. Managers must ensure that staff who are considered lone workers and all relevant support staff are aware of the arrangements in place to manage the risk. These arrangements must be in writing.

## 4. Responsibilities of employees

- Take reasonable care of yourself and others
- Co-operate with managers in identifying foreseeable risks and following procedures and practices whether written or verbal, designed to protect your safety
- Familiarise yourself with policies and risk assessments
- If you encounter any new hazards during the course of your work that have not been considered previously or circumstances have changed, speak with your manager or supervisor
- Never knowingly compromise your safety and if you feel uneasy, report any concerns to your manager
- Participate in any training designed to improve your safety at work
- Share information with colleagues and record if necessary
- Report any accidents and incidents of verbal and physical abuse including near misses, whether injury is sustained or not, to your manager or supervisor as soon as possible after an incident has occurred

## 5. Risk assessment

The process of conducting a risk assessment for lone working is no different to that followed when assessing any other activity. The risk assessment must be signed and dated, kept up-to-date and reviewed at least annually or in line with local procedures. If developments suggest that the current risk assessment is no longer valid, or that it can be improved, the assessment must be amended.

Reviews should take place after an incident as soon as is reasonably practicable or within 10 working days, to see whether there is a need to change working procedures, implement new working practices, make changes to the working environment or provide additional training.

Model assessments may be created for guidance rather than develop a risk assessment for every task by every person and then must be tailored to different environments. The important point is to carry out the assessment systematically, considering the following:

- Identify the hazards associated with the work that is carried out unaccompanied and the environment
- Assess the risks associated with the work, prior to staff working alone, ensuring they are involved in the process and decide on the safe working measures and arrangements to control the risk, including the physical controls, training, supervision and monitoring and contact arrangements
- The limits on what staff can and cannot do whilst working alone
- The risk assessment must be signed and dated, kept up-to-date and reviewed at least annually.
- If developments suggest that the lone working arrangements are no longer viable, the assessment must be amended.
- Reviews should take place after an incident to see whether there is a need to change working procedures, implement new working practices
- Implement safe working procedures and arrangements
- Ensure that the information is shared with all relevant parties
- Staff should be encouraged to report any accidents/incidents or near misses which could affect their safety, to allow a proper review of the adequacy of the working arrangements

Risk assessments must consider the following factors:

- The length of time the person may be working alone
- The time of day or night when a person may work alone
- Methods of communication to ensure that staff can be traced
- The location and type of workplace and if travel is involved
- The nature of the work, also considering the equipment to be used and whether it can be carried safely by one person
- The risk of violence to employees, verbal and physical
- Whether particular groups of staff e.g. new and inexperienced staff may be at more risk
- The knowledge of a medical condition of the lone worker, which may increase the risks of working alone, further OH advice may be needed
- Ensure staff know who to contact and what action to take in an emergency
- Precautions should take account of normal work and foreseeable emergencies such as a fire, equipment failure, illness or accident/incident
- Controlling the risks associated with lone working will also include the relevant training, information, instruction, supervision and possible protective equipment etc.

# Extract from Targeted Support for Young People (TS4YP) - Professional Guidelines

Your employer has a duty of care regarding ensuring that whilst at work and carrying out the duties associated with your job/role, all reasonable efforts have been taken to ensure that you do so in the safest possible way. However this is not a one way street and you as an employee are also charged to ensure that you follow a good working practice in line with WCC H&S protocols when carrying out your duties.

To this extent when working as a lone worker or in a one-to-one situation, you should ensure the following is carried out:

- Ensure an appropriate risk assessment is in place
- Ensure that your electronic calendar is up to date with initials of mentee and address of where one-to-one meeting is taking place
- Ensure home visits log is completed before leaving base
- Text nominated overseer (could be line manager) at start of session
- Text nominated overseer when session is completed
- You should also have in place a risk assessment for driving as part of your job. This should also include assessment regarding carrying young people in your car. When transporting a young person in your car, you should ensure the 'transporting young people' consent form is completed and signed by legal guardian.
- (You need to be clear about who the legal guardian is or who has the responsibility of signing the document).

## **6. Documents and further reference**

### **6.1. Documents**

[Health & Safety at Work Act](#)

[Personal Safety - WCC Intranet](#)

### **6.2. Further reference**

Targeted Support for Young People Professional Guidelines