



Lone Working Policy

This policy applies to all companies within the Relyon Group.

Introduction

This lone working policy is designed to outline to our employees the risks presented by Lone Working, as well as to identify the responsibilities each person has when Lone Working.

Many of the same health and safety risks affect both Lone Workers and other employees, there are some other possible risks which could affect Lone Workers more. All risks should be taken into consideration by all members of staff prior to lone working and they must ensure that they follow all procedures and guidelines which have been put in place to ensure that potential risks are mitigated as far as is reasonably practical. This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure it remains compliant with current legislation.

Scope

Lone working refers to situations where an employee is working alone during the course of their duties. This could involve working alone in public, in client premises, in their own homes or being the only employee present in the office.

This policy applies to all staff who work alone, at any time.

Potential Hazards Lone Workers could be exposed to

There are a variety of hazards which lone workers may encounter. These include:

- Accidents or emergencies occurring from the work they are undertaking.
- Illness
- Inadequate provision of rest, hygiene and welfare facilities
- Physical violence from clients, members of the public or intruders

Control measures implemented to minimise the risk to lone workers.

The risk assessment given should propose control measures to be applied to minimise these identified risks. Control measures include:

- Communication.
- Controlled checks using Ezitracker or Smart Task check call systems.
- Training and understanding of procedures.
- Use of PPE.
- First-aid kits and training.
- Automatic warning devices for example, panic alarms or distress message systems.
- Implementing Standard Operating Procedures (SOP's).

Responsibilities for managers and employees

Senior Management:

The Senior Management have the overall responsibility for Health and Safety for all employees, workers, volunteers and trustees and for ensuring all mechanisms are in place for the overall implementation, monitoring and revision of this policy.

Senior Management are responsible for ensuring up-to-date policy and procedure following changes in law or procedures.

Line Managers:

It is the responsibility of line managers to make sure:

- This policy is brought to the attention of all new members of staff in their inductions and reiterated to staff under their supervision through team meetings and one to ones.
- Their staff undertake training on health and safety, lone-working and risk management as appropriate.
- That their staff are aware of their own responsibilities with regards to lone working.
- A risk assessment is completed for each lone worker situation.
- All assessment and safety measures identified are recorded.
- If an incident is recorded by a lone worker, an investigation is carried out and recommendations made to prevent a recurrence.
- If a risk cannot be made safe, two workers must carry out the task, or if this is not practical to do so, the service should be withdrawn.
- To ensure that appropriate training is arranged at the request of the line manager.
- To ensure that training records for each member of staff is kept up-to-date.
- To ensure that the Lone Working Policy are covered in a new starter's induction and are included in the new starters documentation.

Employees:

All lone workers have a responsibility to:

- Read and comply with the Lone Worker Policy and Risk Assessment and follow all safe working procedures as set out.
- Attend relevant training at the request of their line manager.
- Follow all procedures introduced for Lone Workers, particularly check calls through the relevant system.
- Inform your line manager of each off-site visit and record full address and postcode details of the location of these and keep them recorded. This should also include the client or contact's telephone number.
- Must avoid, where possible, situations where there is significant risk and ensure to take care of their own and other people's safety.
- Report any incident as soon as possible.
- Ensure your line manager approves any hours worked outside of your standard working hour or the core business hours of the organisation before they are worked.

Risk Assessments

An important element in ensuring the safety of any lone worker is by conducting a risk assessment.

The main aims of the risk assessment are to find out:

- If the work can be done safely by a lone worker.
- That the lone worker is not put at any greater risk than those who would do the job with another person.
- If any job is too difficult or dangerous for a lone worker to carry out.

Conducting a risk assessment allows both line managers and lone workers to establish the correct level of supervision and control measures which are required.

Off-site Lone Working

There are many factors to consider before you allow an employee to become a lone worker, such as the implementation of a check call system and what to do in an emergency.

Check Call System

Before commencing duties, your shift pattern and expected working hours are logged into Smart Task. At the start of each shift, you should log into the system to advise the Control Room that you have commenced working. During your shift, you should complete regular check calls. If check calls are missed the Control Room will follow escalation procedures accordingly.

What to do in an emergency

Lone workers should have the knowledge and training to correctly respond to an emergency. Using a risk assessment will help to identify potential events. Information about the emergency procedures in place should be given to lone workers before starting their job / role. Employees can escalate problems immediately by contacting the company Control Room.

Factors to be Considered when Lone Working

- The length of time the work should take and how frequently the worker should report in.
- If the worker has a safe means of travel to and from the location.
- If there is access to sufficient rest, hygiene, first aid, refreshment and welfare.
- Are emergency services able to approach the location?

Office Lone Working

Lone working also occurs if employees are based in offices and also work alone. Employers should encourage, where possible, standardised working hours and patterns to try and avoid employees locking/unlocking the office alone.

If this is not possible, the below steps could be taken:

- Line managers should be informed if a lone employee is planning to stay late or working a different working pattern.
- You should advise remaining staff when you leave the office.
- Do not let anyone into the building whilst you are lone working, unless you are satisfied that there is no risk posed to you.
- Ensure that the office is secure, and that no one else can enter the building. However, when doing this, please ensure that this does not affect evacuation in the event of an emergency.
- If you have a buddy system in place, you should contact them when you leave the building, so they are aware that you are on your way home. If this is not a system in place, tell a family member or friend instead.
- Be sure to remain alert when travelling to and from the workplace.

Guidance for Lone Workers

The following points contain advice for workers who work alone and different circumstances they come across:

- Ensure your employees have read this lone working policy.
- As much as possible, keep to a schedule of work and if there are any delays or issues, let your workplace know.
- Make sure to have the emergency phone numbers close to hand.

During a lone working visit:

- Ensure you have the correct address for the location you are visiting.
- Ensure you have any work ID with you and that your telephone or communication equipment is within easy reach.
- Report into your local office or to your buddy after the visit.
- Be aware of all exit routes in case of an emergency.
- Always be shown the way during a visit, do not try and show yourself around.
- If you reach a location and don't feel safe, or uneasy, do not enter the property.

Travelling to an off-site location:

- Secure your vehicle when you leave it, making sure to remove all personal belongings.
- Ensure your mobile phone is charged and present.
- Keep any valuables in your car out of sight.
- Avoid, where possible, parking in a deserted area, or where the lighting is poor.
- Make sure to let your office / buddy know if there are any delays, such as traffic, rail delays etc, so they know to expect you back a little later.



