

Pioneering Care Partnership Lone Worker Policy



Aim of the Policy

The aim of this policy is to reduce the risks, so far as is reasonably practicable, for employees when working alone. Lone workers should not be more at risk than other employees and additional control measures may be necessary to take account of normal and foreseeable emergencies.

Purpose

PCP is committed to caring for the health and safety of their employees. PCP has a legal responsibility to provide a safe and secure working environment for employees. Employers have a duty under section 2 (1) of the Health & Safety at Work Act (1974) to take steps so far as is reasonably practicable, to safeguard the safety of their employees. These requirements are applicable to all work situations and in particular where employees are working alone, outside normal working hours or off-site.

There is no general legal prohibition on working alone, the broad duties of the Health & Safety at Work Act and the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations apply. These require identifying hazards, assessing the risks and putting measures in place to avoid or control the risks.

Within PCP there are many instances where employees and volunteers work alone. Some employees and volunteers may work in the evenings or at weekends. Some work off site and some individuals might prefer to work at quiet times having work deadlines to meet. The majority of times they do so without significant risk, e.g. persons working alone in offices are unlikely to be at a significant risk provided appropriate precautions are in place. However, there are occasions when this is not so.

Working alone can introduce or accentuate hazards, e.g., lack of assistance if needed, inadequate provision of first aid, sudden illness, violence from others, emergencies, etc.

Community work is an integral part of PCP's function. Community working cannot be eliminated and so to ensure the safety, health and well-being of all employees PCP will, so far as is reasonably practicable, manage the lone working element of community work.

Risks from violence and abuse are a particular hazard for lone workers, therefore this policy should be read in conjunction with the Violence in the Workplace Policy.

Definitions

Lone Workers, as defined by the Health and Safety Executive 1998, include those employees who work by themselves without close or direct supervision.

Examples of lone working are;

- a) Employees working alone in an office
- b) Employees working in the community
- c) Employees travelling alone, to meetings etc.
- d) Employees working from home

Policy

PCP aims to;

- a) Ensure that this policy and the information contained within is available and communicated to all employees.

- b) Ensure that training based on this policy is offered to all employees as part of the policy induction programme.
- c) Undertake a thorough risk assessment to identify any potential hazards associated with lone working situations.
- d) Ensure that employees are aware of and comply with the control measures implemented to minimise risk.

PCP aims to assist employees to:

- a) Be alert to potential risk situations whilst working alone
- b) Minimise risk situations
- c) Know who to inform about their whereabouts
- d) Understand how to report incidents

This policy applies to all employees of PCP who are expected as part of their role to work alone.

Risk Assessment of Lone Workers

The process of conducting a risk assessment for lone working situations is no different to that when assessing other activities. The main precaution is to ensure that lone workers do not undertake tasks which would normally require the assistance of a second person.

All lone workers must complete a lone worker risk assessment using the PCP template. The lone worker risk assessment must be reviewed every 12 months or sooner if an incident relating to lone working occurs.

Potential Hazards

Employees working alone face the same hazards in their daily work as other workers. However, for lone workers the risk of harm is often greater. Hazards facing lone workers include:

- a) fire - it may be more difficult for an isolated worker to vacate a building when the fire alarm activates;
- b) violence and personal safety hazards - may be directly proportional to the proximity of other employees;
- c) manual handling - lifting and handling tasks may pose more risks to an individual employee.

Additional Considerations

Other factors to consider when risk assessing a lone working situation include:

- a) The employee's personal health and suitability to work alone
- b) The level of training undertaken by the lone worker
- c) Supervision of the lone worker
- d) Contact between the lone worker and PCP/Line Manager

Information and Training

PCP will provide sufficient information and training to enable Line Managers to undertake lone workers risk assessments. This will include:

- a) Access to the Policy
- b) Training on the implementation of the Policy and Risk Assessments
- c) All employees must undertake lone worker training every 2 years.
- d) Support from Operations Manager where required.

In addition, all employees will be trained in the operation of the Lone Workers Policy, this includes the use of safety equipment, e.g. personal alarms, emergency procedures and the reporting/supervision requirements of lone workers.

Maintaining Safe Working Practices

In order to maintain safe working practices for lone workers PCP will:

- a) Have clear procedures in place for lone workers
- b) Issue personal attack alarms to all employees and maintain these alarms.
- c) Require all outreach employees to keep outlook diaries up to date
- d) Regularly review lone working situations and re-assess potential risks
- e) Provide lone worker training
- f) provide a lone worker risk assessment template
- g) Ensure mobile telephone contacts are held for all lone workers
- h) Request all lone workers utilise the buddy system
- i) Encourage employees to work in pairs where possible and when appropriate.
- j) Encourage employees to report concerns to their Line Manager
- k) Request PCP do not attend home visits unless prior authorisation has been sought from SLT and a home visit risk assessment is in place
- l) Investigate any incidents and implement control measures as a result of any finding

Breaches of Lone Worker Policy

The safety and security of all employees is of the utmost importance. Breaches of the Lone Worker's Policy will be taken very seriously and be dealt with through the Disciplinary Policy.

Line Managers should check that the policy is being used during supervision meetings.

Responsibilities

Employees are responsible for adhering to each aspect of this policy and ensuring they undertake necessary risk assessments.

Line Managers are responsible for ensuring all employees working alone have undertaken the necessary training and have completed the relevant risk assessment. They are also responsible for managing and monitoring lone working arrangements.

Other Relevant Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- a) Health & Safety Policy
- b) Risk Assessment Policy
- c) Violence in the Workplace Policy

Communication

PCP will ensure that:

- All employees are aware of the policy and associated action plans at induction;
- The policy is available on PCP's intranet;
- Generic training will include examples or reference to this policy;
- This policy is easily accessible by all members of the organisation;

- Employees are empowered to actively contribute and provide feedback; and
- Employees are notified of all changes to this policy in a timely manner.

Monitoring and Review

This Policy will be reviewed by Operations Manager annually to ensure that it remains compliant. A full formal review will also take place every 3 years by Senior Leadership Team as part of the Policy Review Cycle.

September 2023

Policy Document Tracking

Action	Date(s)
Draft to SMT:	25 August 202
Approved Procedure circulated to SMT:	1 September 2023
Approved Procedure uploaded to shared:	15 September 2023
Approved Procedure circulated to staff:	15 September 2023
Interim Review Date:	August 2024
Main Review Date:	August 2026
SMT Lead for Review	Operations Manager