



Lone Worker Policy and Procedure

Policy Statement

This policy sets out the way the Church will comply with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the relevant statutory provisions for a Lone Worker.

A Lone Worker is someone who works by themselves without close or direct supervision. Employees are also considered to be working alone if they have neither visual nor audible communication in the event of an incident. The church is committed to ensuring as far as is reasonably practicable, the personal safety of its employees. It should be clearly understood by all concerned that in any situation, the reduction of risk and avoidance of untoward incidents is of paramount importance.

Responsibilities

Overall Responsibility for Health and Safety in the Church rests with the Minister and Eldership/Trustees of the church who will ensure that arrangements are in place to satisfy health and safety regulations and appropriate Codes of Practice in line with Charity Commission Guidelines. The Church has given specific responsibilities in the fulfilment of its health and safety obligations to its nominated Health and Safety Officer. The Eldership will ensure that a suitably experienced Health and Safety Office holder is in post, ensure that adequate funds and resources are made available for carrying out this Policy and that the eldership receive suitable reports on health and safety matters.

This policy will be reviewed in the light of any changes in working practice and/or changes in statutory legislation and /or an incident occurs that requires improvement and/or the fire risk assessments identifies significant risks that are not already addressed. The Elders will work with staff/volunteers to investigate any incident of violence or security breach, to identify ways to reduce the risk and shall periodically review the lone workers risk assessment to ensure they meet the needs of the individual on health and safety matters such as security arrangements, supervision and first aid. The Minister and Elders will ensure this policy is implemented adequately amongst their teams. Employees and Volunteers will consider the potential risks associated with lone working and are required to follow any specified procedures laid down and shall report to the Elders or Minister any problems whilst working alone. Employees and Volunteers shall take reasonable care of

themselves and other people affected by their work and shall be personally accountable for their actions and responsible for ensuring they comply with the agreed procedure.

Procedure

Where there is a situation where members of staff and Volunteers are in a lone working scenario, they should where possible ensure most/all of the following items is adhered to:

- Ensure that you have control of the access to the building/room.
- Only give access to others if you are sure that you know who they are/ or have appropriate identification.
- Arrange for someone to ring you at a predetermined time to check that you are alright.
- Check on means of escape from the building in an emergency, e.g. fire doors.
- Ensure your telephone is charged before you commence a journey; check your access to a telephone.
- Try to plan appointments etc. so that other people are in the building with you.
- Keep valuables – handbags, cases, equipment etc. out of sight.
- If you are assaulted or threatened contact the Police immediately by phoning 999
- If you are verbally abused or receive indecent telephone calls report the matter immediately.
- Call to let someone from within the organisation know that you have safely left the building.

Where there is a situation where members of staff and volunteers are in a lone working scenario undertaking home visits or travelling, they should adhere to the following as far as practically possible:

- Plan your route so that you avoid having to stop to check maps etc.
- Try to visit in daylight or with someone else. If you are visiting alone, arrange with someone from the organisation to telephone when visit is over.
- Telephone the person you are visiting prior to the visit to confirm your visit and to ensure that they will be there.
- If on arrival, you meet a situation that you did not expect to which gives you concern, leave and make other arrangements.
- You should never enter a house if you are suspicious.
- If a visit takes significantly longer than planned, make contact with base to update them on your revised plan and timetable.
- Domestic pets and other animals can present problems. If you feel unsure or unsafe ask the person to remove them to another room/place.
- Keep doors locked when travelling (If you were unfortunate enough to be involved in the accident, the emergency services will have no problem opening your car to rescue you).

- Keep valuables etc. out of sight in the car; these should be locked in the boot.
- Park in open, well-lit places
- If someone approaches you when you are stopped lock all doors. Open your window a fraction to allow conversation. Only offer to help if you are sure the situation is genuine.
- When returning to your car, have the key ready and enter quickly. Lock the doors as a routine.
- Avoid walking in isolated or poorly lit places or in subways whenever possible.

Policy Owner

Any queries regarding this policy should be addressed to the Church Secretary.

Policy Approved by

This policy was approved by elders on 5 June 2024.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed after 36 months or sooner if legislation changes.