

Health & Safety Policy

HSP 10

Lone Working

Key Document details:

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Date: **May 2019**

Ratified: **July 2019**

Approver: **Nick Capstick**

Version No.: **1.3**

Next review date: **May 2021**

Title:	HSP 10 – Lone Working
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Date:	May 2019
Review date:	May 2021
Application:	This policy applies equally to all The White Horse Federation (TWHF) employees including agency or casual staff, and to all premises where TWHF is either the ‘employer’ or is in control of the premises.

Definitions	For the purpose of this policy, the following definitions apply;	
	Lone Working	The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) describes a lone worker as “someone who works by themselves without close or direct supervision”. People may work alone because: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They need to work in a separate part of the premises or at a remote site with no visual or verbal interaction with colleagues • Their work is out of hours • The workforce is very small • They are mobile, i.e. travelling alone for work such as salespeople, delivery staff and care workers.
	Out of Hours	Anytime outside of the normal working hours for TWHF.
Policy Aims	TWHF aims to reduce the risk associated with lone working by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing and formulating arrangements that minimise the risks of lone working • To identify the responsibilities each person has in this situation • To alert staff to the risks presented by lone working It is intended to give staff a framework for managing potentially at risk situations.	
Policy	TWHF is committed to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of its employees and this includes a duty of care to reduce, as far as is reasonably practicable, the risks associated with lone working within the workplace.	
Risk	Employees engaged in activities which places them in a situation without direct contact with other staff, or without direct supervision, during an activity that places that person at significant risk of exposure to a hazard or number of hazards as a result of lone working.	
Responsibility	This responsibility must be discharged primarily at the line management/operational level.	
	Roles & Responsibilities	
I.	Roles and responsibilities are defined in HSP2 Organisation. Any specific actions are detailed in the arrangements section below.	
	Arrangements	

<p>I.</p>	<p>Lone Working Risk Assessment</p> <p>All lone working or work activities, as defined, must be subjected to a risk assessment to consider the risks. The assessment should be carried out by a line manager or supervisor with the employee. The risk assessment should help decide the right level of supervision. There are some high-risk activities where at least one other person may need to be present.</p> <p>The assessment of the risks to which a lone worker may be exposed must take account of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The individual’s ability to carry out their activities safely on their own in their environment • The potential for the individual to be subject to violence and aggression • The individual’s ability to request assistance or to withdraw safely from a dangerous situation • The individual’s fitness to carry out the work alone • Sudden illness or emergencies • Effects of social isolation • Risks related to driving • Fire safety • Any existing precautionary measures and emergency arrangements <p>The above list is not exhaustive, each situation is different and individual hazards for those situations must be considered.</p> <p>Examples of control measures are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention of lone working wherever possible • Suitable training • Suitable emergency equipment and emergency arrangements • Adequate supervision • Defined work activities including written safe systems of work
<p>2.</p>	<p>Classification of Lone Workers</p> <p>To assist in determining the level of risk, examples are outlined below in the following categories:</p> <p>I. <u>Very Low Risk Situations</u> Working alone in a secure environment where other workers are close by and there is no interface with the public.</p> <p>II. <u>Low Risk Situations</u> Staff working alone during normal hours (Monday to Friday 9am – 5pm) in an office, school building or similar, where the risk assessment indicates minimal risk. E.g., Staff who travel alone for business purposes.</p> <p>III. <u>Medium Risk Situations</u> Where the lone working risk assessment for a particular task or activity indicates that a risk of violence, aggression or a dangerous situations is reasonably foreseeable, and where colleagues/volunteers/members cannot be readily called on by the lone worker in the event of an adverse situation arising. E.g., Staff who travel alone for business purposes whilst carrying substances or valuable equipment e.g. laptops.</p>

	<p>IV. <u>High Risk Situations</u> Visiting domestic or commercial premises where a risk of violence, aggression or a dangerous situation is reasonably foreseeable. E.g., Working alone out of hours. Visiting domestic premises. Working alone with hazardous plant, tools, equipment or chemicals.</p> <p>V. <u>Unacceptable Risk</u> Working alone with a client with a history of violence and/or aggression. Working alone on a high-risk activity, e.g. confined space area.</p>
3.	<p>Home Visits Alone</p> <p>Systems and procedures need to be in place to enable employees to undertaking home visits with a service user or member of the public, to undertake appropriate checks on the name and address of the person and any history of violence or aggression. If there are any known events then risk assessments need to be revised to take this into consideration, and appropriate measures introduced to reduce the risk, which could include additional staff support, enhanced means of communication, personal alarms etc.</p> <p>Local recording of such information should be maintained and employees must be made aware of the need to access information and to add to it as appropriate.</p>
4.	<p>Working in Remote Locations</p> <p>Appropriate systems need to be in place for logging in and out and employees need to inform managers of the location and nature of their work away from their normal workplace. Proper planning needs to be made of such work and assessment of the remoteness and terrain to be visited and coverage in relation to means of communications.</p> <p>All employees must be accounted for throughout and at the end of each working period. To achieve this, a system needs to be in place that is capable of recording itineraries for all employees undertaking work alone.</p> <p>Simple office based systems could utilise paper based diaries, whiteboards, electronic diaries and arrangements for regular contact at pre-agreed times via mobile phones. In other more fluid and hazardous lone working scenarios, more sophisticated methods of logging the whereabouts of employees and the means to communicate with them may be necessary.</p> <p>In either instance everyone must have a clear understanding of the agreed protocol and the escalation procedures to be followed in the event of a deviation from the expected and employees becoming overdue, unaccounted for and non-contactable.</p> <p>The escalation procedure should consider colleagues, line management, family and the emergency services in order of precedence.</p> <p>Managers must carefully consider the most appropriate communication and tracking methods for their respective teams. A 'one size fits all' approach across the board may not be the most effective way of managing the risk and therefore arrangements must be maintained and reviewed as appropriate.</p>



	<p>Whatever communication system is being considered, it must be borne in mind that adequate coverage needs to be assessed, and staff trained and competent in their use. Periodic monitoring and testing will be required to ensure that the systems are still fully operational and effective.</p>
5.	<p>Working from Home Alone</p> <p>Risk assessments need to take into account any relevant issues of lone working, which may arise as a consequence of home working, and consideration as to whether additional measures may be needed to keep the employee safe and healthy. These measures could include means of communication, the security of the home e.g. keeping doors locked when alone, not giving out home addresses or phone numbers for business use.</p>
6.	<p>Training and Supervision</p> <p>Training</p> <p>Where lone working has been identified as a risk, training is particularly important:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where there is limited supervision to control, guide and help in uncertain situations. • To enable people to cope in unexpected circumstances and with potential exposure to violence and aggression. <p>Lone workers are unable to ask more experienced colleagues for help, so extra training may be appropriate. They need to be sufficiently experienced and fully understand the risks and precautions involved in their work and the location that they work in. Managers should set the limits to what can and cannot be done while working alone. They should ensure workers are competent to deal with the requirements of the job and are able to recognise when to seek advice from elsewhere.</p> <p>Any specific training, including Conflict Management, Solution Techniques including Personal Safety, and Managing Safety, may be provided to enhance the competency and awareness of staff in relation Lone Working.</p> <p>Supervision</p> <p>The level of supervision needed is a management decision, which should be based on the findings of a risk assessment, i.e. the higher the risk, the greater the level of supervision required. It should not be left to employees to decide whether they need assistance.</p> <p>Where a worker is new to a job, undergoing training, doing a job that presents specific risks, or dealing with new situations, it may be advisable for them to be accompanied when they first begin work.</p>
7.	<p>Monitoring Lone Workers</p> <p>Managers must ensure that there are procedures in place to monitor lone workers and ensure effective means of communication is maintained. These may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisors periodically visiting and observing people working alone; • Pre-agreed intervals of regular contact between the lone worker and supervisor, using phones, radios or email, bearing in mind the worker's understanding of English; • Manually operated or automatic warning devices which trigger if specific signals are not received periodically from the lone worker, e.g. staff security systems; • Implementing systems to ensure a lone worker has returned to their base or home once their task is completed.

	<p>Specific useful examples of these may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Periodic telephone contact with lone workers • Periodic site visits to lone workers • Regular contact, e.g., telephone, radio, etc. • Automatic warning devices, e.g., motion sensors, etc. • Manual warning devices, e.g., panic alarms, etc. • End of task/shift contact e.g., returning keys.
8.	<p>Emergency Situations</p> <p>Managers must ensure that emergency situations are addressed via the risk assessment. Staff should be trained in how to deal with foreseeable events in connection with lone working.</p> <p>Information regarding emergency procedures should be given to lone workers. For example, the risk assessment may indicate that mobile workers should carry first-aid kits and/or that lone workers need first-aid training and should also have access to adequate first-aid facilities.</p> <p>If personal safety is compromised, TWHF would expect employees to consider their own safety and do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove themselves from the situation • Summon help • Call the police <p>An effective procedure for summoning emergency assistance should be implemented. This should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How and when to raise the alarm, both within normal office hours and out of hours • The actions expected of staff receiving an emergency alert • A list of officers to be notified if an alert is received, such as managers or directors. • How to use and maintain any equipment such as personal alarms, mobile phones, radios or pagers.
9.	<p>Limitations of this Policy</p> <p>The policy cannot anticipate all eventualities; therefore professional judgement should be used to identify the appropriate course of action needed to protect those who are vulnerable and/or at risk. This judgement should derive from multi-disciplinary team discussion rather than any one individual where possible.</p>
10.	<p>Appendices</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. HSG 10.1 Lone Working Do's & Don'ts 2. HSF 10.1 Lone Working Risk Assessment Template