



# Lone Working Policy

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Community Connex recognises that some staff (paid and unpaid) have jobs that require them to work alone or in isolated situations. This policy is for such staff where there are no others who could reasonably be expected to come to their immediate aid or instantly contact help on their behalf in the event of an incident or emergency.

## **2. ACTIVITIES THAT CARRY POTENTIAL RISK**

The following are examples of some of the activities carried out by lone workers that could expose them to risk:

- Working alone in buildings
- Domiciliary care visits
- Live-in care
- Travelling or working alone with people known to display threatening or violent behaviour
- Called out after hours to deal with emergency situations e.g. on call staff
- Handling and carrying cash (inside or outside e.g. shopping/bank)
- Undertaking 'home' or hospital visits
- Attendance at meetings or working shifts which terminate late in the evening and/or after dark
- Areas lacking good public transport
- Parking restrictions which prevent parking close to intended destinations or parking in dark areas
- Working alone with potentially hazardous equipment.

The risks associated with working alone or in an isolated situation will vary considerably between the various jobs to be done and may vary from project to project and service to service therefore, it is not possible for Community Connex to offer a single blueprint for the approach to be taken.

### **3. RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **Employer**

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 places a duty on Community Connex as an employer to make a suitable and sufficient assessment of the health and safety risks to which their employees and others not in their employment may be subjected.

Where risk is identified the employer needs to provide the following to ensure the risk is minimised:

- Staff training
- Equipment e.g. mobile phone
- Relevant policies and procedures that are readily available and accessible
- Review of policies on a regular basis.

#### **Line Managers**

Line Managers are required to:

- Identify any risks associated with lone working activities and ensure the risks are eliminated or adequately controlled via support and training. Where it is not possible to devise arrangements for the work to be done safely by one person, alternative arrangements providing help or back-up have to be devised in liaison with the Senior Management as appropriate
- Undertake continuous risk assessment
- Address and act on any risks that are brought to their attention and communicate these across the organisation
- Ensure that staff have read, understood and continue to observe policies and procedures
- Monitor that good practice is carried out
- Contribute to review process of policies.

## **Individuals**

Staff who work alone should continuously assess their ways of working. Many people do their jobs without thinking about whether they are putting themselves at unnecessary risks. It is recommended that staff should therefore regularly discuss such issues in supervision and team meetings.

Individual responsibilities of staff include:

- Being aware of emergency systems and use them
- Following policies, procedures and relevant guidelines
- Bringing to line managers attention concerns or potential risks
- Using and maintaining equipment provided to ensure safety
- A personal responsibility to ensure their own safety
- Never putting themselves at serious and imminent risk.
- Being aware of the individual's risk assessment and triggers for any behavior

## **4. RISK ASSESSMENTS**

Line Managers, in liaison with their manager, should undertake risk assessments as follows:

- Identify potential hazards for lone workers
- Evaluate the risk, the severity of the possible outcomes and likelihood of each outcome
- Research preventative measures, deciding whether existing precautions are adequate
- Create local codes of practice and put them into effect
- Check and monitor that such measures are effective, review and revise if necessary.

Issues when identifying possible risks to staff are:

- Does anyone know where they are?
- Can they be contacted?

- Do they check/vet people they are going to meet alone?
- Is there a check-in system and do they use it?
- Do they use the quickest and safest route?
- Is the parking safe?
- Do they carry money or valuables (mobiles)?
- Do they have an alarm?
- Is it safe for them to use a particular item of equipment alone?
- Has their induction procedure or training covered lone areas of working?
- Are they currently medically fit to work alone?

## **5. GUIDANCE FOR STAFF**

### **Visits:**

- Visit during daylight and working hours wherever possible
- Make sure that other staff know where you are and estimated time of completing visit
- Avoid walking in poorly lit areas
- Make sure that you carry a mobile phone and that other staff have your contact number and that your phone is fully charged and has voice minutes to call
- If you change plans, appointments or time/length of visit you should make arrangements to let the relevant office/staff know
- If in any doubt or feel uneasy when making a visit do not enter the property or room. If you become uncomfortable during the visit exit the premises
- Do not peer through letterboxes
- When you enter a property ensure that the exit is clear and that you are not backed into a corner
- At all times act as a visitor in the persons home and be aware of their personal space so as not to make them feel threatened

- If necessary ask that dogs and other pets be put in a separate room
- If a violent incident occurs you should take reasonable steps to protect yourself and call the police
- If necessary make a first visit with another member of staff
- Staff should find out as much information before a first visit as possible.
- If you have gained access to the premises by means of a key safe , do not leave the key in the safe when you go in

### **Recording movements:**

It is imperative that all staff keep a record of appointments, visits and movements in the appropriate office diary (outreach rota) so that other staff have these details in case of an emergency. The record should include the name of the person to be visited, venue, address, times of visit and contact telephone number.

### **Safety**

Staff should carry mobile phones at all times and ensure that they have emergency on call numbers with them.

### **Handling money and valuables**

The following should be considered:

- The need to double up on staff who are required to handle cash and valuables
- The security of the environment in which cash is received and handled
- Varying days and times of banking and shopping
- Alternate banking systems that negate the need for staff to handle or carry money
- Safe travelling arrangements when handling money or valuables.

### **Working alone in offices**

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- Staff should use a communication book to share information e.g. expected visitors etc.
- Staff should take reasonable steps to secure their working environment
- Colleagues should notify each other if or when they are to be left alone in the office
- Staff should use emergency services if necessary and report anything suspicious.

### **Outreach Support (Community Solutions)**

- Staff must have received a thorough service induction
- Staff should work in accordance with individuals care/support plans
- All shifts must be booked and logged through the project/service manager
- Where risks assessment has been carried out Live-in carers must notify office if leaving client at property for short period of time. (Needs to be mutually agreed with client and office) to ensure necessary safeguards are in place.

This policy should also be read in conjunction with other relevant policies including:

- a. On Call Policy
- b. Emergency Procedures for projects
- c. Managing Violence Policy
- d. Risk Assessment Procedures
- e. Health and Safety Policy

### **Other Related Policies and Procedures**

- Health and Safety Policy and Procedure
- Hybrid Working Policy and Procedure
- Employee Wellbeing Policy and Procedure

<b>Policy reviewed</b>	January 2017 February 2013 June 2017 June 2021 <b>November 2021</b>
<b>Next review date</b>	<b>November 2023</b>
<b>Name or position of person responsible for this policy</b>	Business Manager HR and Group Business Services