



LONE WORKER POLICY (& RISK ASSESSMENT)

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February 2023	Chair of Trustees	Policy Review Group	21 March 2023
February 2023	Interim Operations Manager		

LONE WORKER POLICY (& RISK ASSESSMENT)

1. **Policy Statement** Triple C (Liverpool), hereafter referred to as Triple C, acknowledges that there may be an increased risk to health and safety of its employees, and others when working alone. Risk assessments should be undertaken to identify risk to lone worker and measures introduced to minimise risks wherever reasonably practicable.
2. **Purpose** This policy is designed to alert staff to the risks presented by lone working, to identify the responsibilities each person has in this situation and to describe procedures which will minimise such risks. Lone workers could be volunteers or employees.
3. **Scope and definition** A lone worker is an employee or volunteer who performs an activity that is carried out in isolation from other employees without close or direct supervision. Such employees may be exposed to risk because there is no-one to assist them and so a risk assessment may be required. This policy applies to all employees (and volunteers) who may be working alone, at any time.
4. **Context** Lone workers face the same risks as anyone else, as well as those directly related to their work. Within the Triple C ethos relating to safer working practices, support for lone workers is an essential part and key principles apply, particularly:
 - A commitment to supporting employees and volunteers both in establishing and maintaining safe working practices
 - Recognizing and reducing risk
 - A commitment to the provision of appropriate support for employees and volunteers
 - A clear understanding of responsibilities
 - The priority placed on the safety of the employee or volunteer over property
 - A commitment to providing appropriate training for staff
 - Equipment such as mobile phones, personal alarms and torches to be made available as appropriate
5. **Introduction** Many project workers find themselves working alone in their workplace (or elsewhere) for some or all of their working day. It is important that such lone workers make adequate arrangements to ensure that they are safe at all times, especially when they visit clients or when clients visit them.
 - All lone workers are asked to consider how their working arrangements could be more secure. Do their own risk assessment and follow up on action that needs to be taken.
 - All lone workers must not assume that having a mobile phone and a back-up plan is a sufficient safeguard in itself. The first priority is to plan for a reduction of risk.
 - All lone workers should take all reasonable precautions to ensure their own safety, as they would in any other circumstances.

- 6. Risk Assessment** As part of this policy, a Triple C risk assessment will be carried out with staff focussing on the known risks to lone workers in our projects. Recommendations to eliminate or reduce any identified risk will be identified and it will be the responsibility of all at Triple C to ensure they are implemented wherever possible. A written record of the current risk assessment is included as an appendix to this document.

Risk assessments will be maintained and regularly reviewed as part of policy review. Nevertheless, as introduced in point 5, all employees and volunteers are charged with being risk aware and in particular taking responsibility for their own assessment of risk, especially given new circumstances. Factors that will be considered as appropriate to the circumstances are:

- The environment – location, security, access
- The context – nature of the task, any special circumstances
- The individuals concern – indicators of potential or actual risk
- History – any previous incidents in similar situations
- Any special circumstances

Where there is any reasonable doubt about the safety of a lone worker, consideration will be given to sending two employees/volunteers or making other arrangements to undertake the task.

- 7. Training** Triple C will seek to provide appropriate training for employees and volunteers to raise awareness of the risk of lone working and give appropriate strategies for dealing with difficult situations. Employees and volunteers will also be supported in accessing relevant and appropriate training.

APPENDIX - LONE WORKING RISK ASSESSMENT

When working inside often used public building eg. in churches, community buildings.

At Christ Church Centre

- The front door has a connected alarm sounder which alerts those inside that somebody has entered.
- If a key holder enters, they are encouraged to shout 'hello' and identify themselves to anybody working in the building.
- When alone in the building, always keep the front door locked.
- A sign on the door highlights that at times it is not possible for the door to be opened and encourages visitors to phone to arrange a time to access the centre.
- If somebody calls to the centre you can:-
 - Check the CCTV in the office to see who it is and to inform your decision whether to go to the door
 - Look through the window in the door and then make a decision whether it is safe to open the door.
- Always use your discretion and if appropriate, do not open the door. At night time, we advise additional caution; do not open the door to unexpected visitors or people you do not recognise.
- CCTV, telephones and security lighting are installed to allow protection and for use in an emergency.

At Christ Church Cabin

- Ensure that the door is always locked, check through the window before opening the door.
 - Alternatively, padlock the gate in the railings at the front of the cabin to ensure nobody can enter the grounds.

At St Christopher's Church

- Ensure that the door is always locked, if buzzer rings, check through the window or intercom before opening the door.
- Do not let strangers in unless they can specify an appropriate reason to be there. If you are unsure do not let them into the building.
- If somebody calls who wants to be directed to another area of the building or to see somebody else who is on site, ask them to make their way to another door or if safe and reasonable to do so, ask the person they wish to see to come to the door to deal with their enquiry.
- Whenever possible, open and lock up the building in the presence of a second person.

At Graeme Bryson Court

- Ensure that the door is always locked, if buzzer rings, check through the window or intercom before opening the door.
- Don't let strangers in unless they can specify an appropriate reason to be there - e.g attending the Café. If you are unsure do not let them in the building.
- If somebody calls who wants to be directed to another area in the building ask them to wait outside and bring a member of the Graeme Bryson staff to the door to deal with their enquiry.
- Whenever possible open and lock up the building in the presence of a second person.

At The Church of the Good Shepherd

- When alone in the building, always keep the front door locked.
- Only open the door to people you have pre-arranged to meet. Worker to encourage the person you are meeting to ring their mobile on arrival.
- Security lighting has been installed at the front entrance.
- The front door has a connected alarm sounder that can be switched on to alert those inside that somebody has entered.
- Whenever possible, open and lock up the building in the presence of a second person.

Working alone away from the office – in other known public buildings

- Think about where you will be going and what you will be doing: consider whether there are particular risks relating to that location or activity. If there are, discuss them with your supervisor before setting off.
- Take a mobile phone, check it is fully charged and has sufficient credit and leave switched on.
- If appropriate take a panic alarm with you.
- Inform a colleague or use online diary with details of where you plan to go, approximate times when you expect to be there, details of any meetings you have arranged, including the name of the person you are meeting.
 - Contact the office, or other person, to tell them about any delays or changes to your schedule.
 - Make contact by telephone at specified times, if you agreed to do this.
 - Return to or contact your supervisor or other person agreed when you have safely completed your activity.

When working from home:-

- Take reasonable precautions to ensure that your personal address and telephone numbers remain confidential.
- All phone numbers including ex-directory and mobile numbers can show up on caller display and retrieved on 1471. To avoid access to landline numbers, dial 141 before dialling the number. To avoid mobile numbers being available please check the mobile phone's instruction manual.

- Remain in regular contact with your supervisor if working from home for a prolonged period (the defining periods and nature of contact to be agreed with the supervision team at operational supervision meetings).

Safety whilst travelling:-

Travelling by car

- Only use a mobile phone when it is safe and legal to do so.
- Plan your route and take appropriate maps if going somewhere unfamiliar.
- Ensure that the vehicle is in good order and you have sufficient fuel.
- Ensure all doors are locked if you feel at risk.
- Keep valuables out of sight, female employees should not leave obvious signs that the driver is female (handbags, coats etc.) on the seats.
- Park in well-lit areas, if possible with the car facing in the direction of exit, when returning to the vehicle, check the back seat.
- Carry a mobile phone, check it is fully charged and has sufficient credit.
- If you see an incident, do not stop unless it is safe to do so, it may be safer to drive on and summon help.
- If you are forced to stop, keep your engine running and lock the windows and doors, leave sufficient space in front of the vehicle to be able to pull out and drive away, drive off if you feel threatened.

Road Rage

If at any time you are confronted by this situation, it is important that you do nothing to escalate it further.

- Do not stop to confront the third party.
- If a car pulls in front of you and you are approached, stay in your vehicle with the doors locked and windows closed, keep the engine running and drive away as soon as possible.
- If you cannot get away, make as much noise and fuss as you can, sound your horn, flash your lights etc. to gain others' attention.
- If you think you are being followed or feel threatened, raise the alarm by using hazard lights and horn, if possible drive on until you reach a busy area such as a 24-hour garage.
- If you are stationary and have a mobile phone, ring the emergency services.

If you break down on a motorway or dual carriageway

- Park as near as possible to an emergency phone.
- Leave the car by the passenger door.
- When making an emergency call, face oncoming traffic, so you can see if another vehicle is approaching.
- Tell the operator if you are a lone female.
- Never cross a carriageway.
- Wait behind the barrier, beside your vehicle if this is safe.

Travelling by public transport

- Plan your route in advance.
- If travelling to a venue that is different to your normal work practices eg. on a course – include outline arrangements for travel in your online shared diary or with a colleague.
- Take a mobile phone, check it is fully charged and has sufficient credit and leave switched on.
- Try to avoid travelling alone at night.
- Wait in busy, well-lit areas if possible, be aware of the location of exits.

- Have your fare/ticket ready and separate from other valuables.
- Try to keep one hand free, sit downstairs on a double decker bus and avoid falling asleep.

Travelling on foot

- Think ahead, be alert and aware of your surroundings.
- Take a mobile phone, check it is fully charged and has sufficient credit and leave switched on.
- Keep one hand free if possible.
- Avoid short cuts, underpasses or poorly lit areas.
- Walk facing on-coming traffic.
- Do not hitchhike or accept lifts from strangers.
- Keep valuables out of site and avoid areas where groups may gather e.g. pubs, clubs etc.
- Avoid wearing headphones and if carrying a personal alarm, ensure that it is working and you can quickly access it.

Dog Attack

- Do not enter premises where an unfamiliar dog is loose.
- If, when talking to someone, their dog causes you to feel uncomfortable, politely ask them to remove it.

Tasks and activities that involve being ‘out and about’ in the community

Throughout this section there are various references to staff members notifying another person of their planned movements. Clarification of the most appropriate person/persons for each member of staff will be discussed and agreed at operational supervision. This information will then be shared with key relevant people.

Visiting people in their own home

- Never go to see someone for the first time on your own, always make an appointment and set a time.
- Take a mobile phone, check it is fully charged and has sufficient credit and leave switched on.
- Trust your own instincts, if it does not feel right do not go in, give your apologies, suggest alternative meeting arrangements and leave.
- Ensure you tell a colleague or make a note on your on-line diary that you are doing a home visit, giving the person’s name and address.
 - Contact the office, or other person, to tell them about any delays or changes to your schedule.
 - Make contact by telephone at specified times, if you agreed to do this.
 - Return to or contact your supervisor or other person agreed when you have safely completed your activity.
- Discuss with your supervisor any incidents which arose during the meeting.
- Keep a written record if you have significant concerns and take safeguarding action if this is necessary.

Risk from pets in the home

- Assess the risk when pets are present in a home that you are visiting.
- If you feel uneasy, ask the owner to remove the pet from your presence. If they are unwilling, politely draw your visit to a close and suggest meeting somewhere ‘pet free’ at another time.

Meeting people away from the office

- Think about where you will be going and what you will be doing: consider whether there are particular risks relating to that location or activity. If there are, discuss them with your supervisor before setting off.

- Arrange the meeting to take place in a public place such as a café.
- Take a mobile phone, check it is fully charged and has sufficient credit and leave switched on.
 - Leave details with a colleague or on-line diary of where you plan to go, approximate times of when you expect to be there, details of the meetings you have arranged, including the name of the person you are meeting. Contact the office, or other person, to tell them about any delays or changes to your schedule.
 - Make contact by telephone at specified times, if you agreed to do this.
 - Return to or contact your supervisor or other person agreed when you have safely completed your activity.
- Discuss with your supervisor any incidents which arose during the meeting.
- Keep a written record if you have significant concerns and take safeguarding action if this is necessary.

Collecting and banking money

- Follow the Triple C financial controls policy. Remember:-
 - When money is collected from a site it is to be returned to the office and stored ASAP in the safe until it can be banked.
 - If banking more than £500 then go with another person.
 - Ensure that the money is in an unmarked bag.
 - If you are confronted by someone who threatens you for the money, give it to them, your safety is more important.

Dealing with difficult people and situations.... Anywhere!

- Remain calm and take steps to calm the situation.
 - Ask them what you can do to resolve the situation.
 - Try not to get angry yourself.
 - Stay **calm**, speak slowly, and use non-threatening body language.
 - A **calm**, rational response can go a long way toward **calming** angry **people** down.
- Consider your safety and move away from the person if you feel you are at risk.
- If the aggression is on the phone, if possible put it on speaker so that someone else can hear. Politely end the phone call if necessary.
- Consider the safety of others and protect yourself before protecting the property of Triple C.
- Contact your supervisor immediately after the incident, if they are not available then contact the chair of Triple C or one of the trustees.
- Take opportunities for training to provide guidance in best practice in such situations.

Procedure for alerting to personal danger

For extreme situations, establish a 'trigger phrase' for use when calling into the office. This would then alert the office without alarming the antagonist. It is essential that all employees and volunteers are familiar with this phrase.

The 'trigger phrase' that we will be using is '**BLUE FILE**'.

In the event of the trigger phrase being used or a 'home safe' call not being made when expected, checks should be made by the agreed office contact to establish the well-being of the employee or volunteer. If an employee or volunteer finds themselves in danger and unable to speak freely, they should emphasise to the antagonist that they are expected to call the office/supervisor at a pre-determined time and that if they don't, the alarm will be raised.

On telephoning, they should say something like....

*"Hello, this is, I am just ringing to let you know I'm still at my visit, can you do me a favour and leave the '**BLUE FILE**' on my desk please."*

- An innocuous message including the trigger phrase.

This is the signal that all is not well, the office/supervisor will immediately call the police and direct them to where the employee or volunteer has indicated in their schedule they have gone.