

Title	LWETB Policy and Procedure for the Management of Lone Working
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Noted By	LWETB Board

LWETB Policy and Procedure for the Management of Lone Working

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1. Policy statement

It is policy so far as is reasonably practicable to eliminate the hazards that give rise to safety, health and welfare (SH&W) risks for employees who are lone working and those who may be affected by their activities. Where this is not possible, implement control measures that will manage the hazards and risks that may arise, so as to prevent injuries at work.

It is policy to protect employees who may be affected from or by the hazards and risks associated with lone working.

2. Purpose

To provide guidance and a series of actions, on how to prevent injury and/or ill-health associated with lone working in the workplace and to mandate all employees to demonstrate compliance with all applicable legislation in respect of the management of lone working.

3. Scope

Applicable to all employees who may be lone working and those who manage lone working.

4. Legislation, codes of practice, standards and guidance documents

- Safety, Health & Welfare at Work Act 2005.
- Safety, Health & Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations 2013.
- Safety, Health & Welfare at Work (General Application) Regulations 2007- 2016.
- HSA Lone Workers Policy.
- Circular Letters (Specific) DES.
- Education & Training Board Act 2013.

5. Objectives

- Demonstrate compliance with legislation.
- Document roles and responsibilities.
- Provide evidence of required record keeping.
- Develop a risk assessment for the management of lone working.
- Implement the control measures.
- Provide appropriate training.
- Encourage full reporting and recording of all adverse incidents relating to lone working.

6. Definition

Lone workers are those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision.

7. Key hazards

- Accidents or emergencies involving lone workers.
- Potential physical violence and aggression against lone workers from members of the public and or intruders.
- Lone working can increase the risks associated with the hazards that already exist in the work location and / or that are related to the work activity.
- Interaction with unsupervised children or vulnerable adults.
- Sudden Illnesses e.g. heart attack.

8. Roles and responsibilities

The following roles and responsibilities are specific to this policy and procedure and are in addition to the other roles and responsibilities assigned to the post-holder.

The Chief Executive shall:

- Ensure the objectives specified in section 5 of this policy and procedure are delivered.

The Directors, Heads of Administrative Departments, Principals, Co-ordinators and Managers shall:

- Identify work activities where lone working is not permitted.
- Ensure that employees are aware of the activities where lone working is not permitted.
- Identify work activities which involve lone working.
- Undertake risk assessment on the lone working activity, develop and implement in association with the identified employees a safe system of work and emergency procedures.
- Identify employees who are involved in lone working.
- Ensure that individuals involved in lone working are medically fit and suitable for the lone working activity.
- Ensure that the lone working measures detailed in the risk assessment are implemented.
- Ensure that a suitable system of communication is in place and that employees have access to appropriate equipment and resources.
- Ensure that any concerns reported by employees are documented, investigated and corrective actions undertaken.
- Carry out inspections on lone workers.
- Ensure that employees are aware of the incident reporting system and that all incidents are reported to their supervisor/line manager and are communicated to the Health and Safety Coordinator.
- Review the effectiveness of the controls.
- Respond to lone worker alarms (where provided).

Health and Safety Coordinator shall:

- Coordinate the safety management system.
- Advise on the implementation of this policy and procedure.
- Undertake inspections of this policy and procedure.
- Undertake audits of this policy and procedure.

Lone workers / employees shall:

- Ensure that they are familiar with and comply with the requirements of this policy and procedure.
- Wear and or carry assigned pieces of PPE including mobile phones and/or alarms where assigned.
- Inform the line manager of any medical conditions / circumstance that may affect the employee's suitability for lone working.
- Inform the Line Manager of the work itinerary and expected time schedules.
- Report all lone working incidents to the Line Manager.
- Respond to lone worker alarms (where provided).
- Be aware of responsibilities in respect of safeguarding children.

9. Procedure

- Identify work activities where lone working is not permitted.
- Inform employees of the activities where lone working is not permitted.
- Identify and document work activities which involve lone working.
- Identify work activities where the risks associated with the hazards of that activity are increased by virtue of working alone.
- Document a risk assessment for each lone working activity to include:
 - Lone working in isolated locations.
 - Work where the risks associated with the hazards of that activity are increased by virtue of working alone.
- Implement the control measures identified in the risk assessment.
- Identify employees who are involved in lone working.
- Seek assurance that individuals involved in lone working are medically fit and suitable for the lone working activity.
- Establish a suitable system for the management of lone working including:
 - Lone worker monitoring for low risk activities in populated areas.
 - Establishing a lone worker alarm system for high risk activities and for all lone working in isolated locations.
- Establish a communication system.
- Establish a system for responding to lone worker alarms.
- All lone worker incidents shall be reported, documented and investigated.

- Where corrective actions are identified they shall be communicated and implemented.
- Management of lone workers will be subject to inspections.
- Undertake audits of the lone worker management system.
- Identify and avoid circumstances where there may be interaction with unsupervised children, and include this in relevant training and induction.

10. Emergency preparedness

Implement a procedure for the activation of, and response to lone worker alarms.

11. Training

Appropriate training on this policy and procedure shall be provided to all relevant employees.

12. Monitoring and Audit

- Monitoring of this policy and procedure will be undertaken on a regular basis by line management to ensure compliance; the monitoring shall be documented.
- Audit of compliance with the policy and procedure shall be undertaken as part of the safety management system audit and as part of the LWETB audit of processes.

13. Responsibilities

Owner	Responsibilities
Director of Organisation Support and Development	Revisions and updates to the Policy
LWETB Senior Leadership Team	Review of the Policy
LWETB Chief Executive	Approval of the Policy
LWETB Board	Noting of the Policy

Appendix 1

1. Lone Working Risk Assessment Process

The purpose of a lone working risk assessment is to establish:

- Whether the work can be done safely by an unaccompanied employee and
- The arrangements necessary to ensure that a lone worker is not exposed to a greater risk
- Some of the 'key' questions to be answered in order to undertake a suitable and sufficient 'risk assessment' to establish whether the risks can be adequately controlled by one person are in Appendix 2.

Does the lone worker fall into a vulnerable risk group?:

- New and expectant mothers
 - LWETB's duty of care extends to the unborn child as well as the mother. Risk assessments must include risks to the unborn child or the child of a woman who is still breast-feeding – not just risks to the mother herself.
 - Impaired mobility (especially in the later stages of pregnancy) may make them more prone to slips, trips and falls. Also, their ability to carry out physically strenuous work will be impaired
 - Increased likelihood of back injuries
 - Entitlement to more rest breaks
 - Risk of early labour or miscarriage
- Young people (age under 18)
 - Lack of experience and immaturity
 - Inability to concentrate for long periods
 - Entitled to more frequent rest breaks
- Disabled people
 - Mobility problems and visual impairment may make evacuation/escape difficult without assistance
 - Potential difficulties in raising the alarm when assistance is required
 - Unable to hear alarms

The outcomes of the risk assessment process must detail:

- The conditions under which lone working would be permitted.
- The scope of the work permitted and the arrangements necessary to ensure the safety of the lone worker.

2. List of Potential Controls

Measures to be considered for dealing with lone working hazards:

- Panic alarms may be provided to certain high risk employees. Manual alarms which work by pressing a switch or button to summon assistance. Alarms should only be used as a last resort and in combination with a series of procedures designed to eliminate or minimise the risk. In certain situations an alarm with a motion detector

might be appropriate, in this case the alarm would activate in the event of an employee collapsing.

- Lone workers may require immediate access to communications to summon assistance whether by mobile, alarm system etc. The risk assessment process should identify the form of communication, given the nature of the environment and the potential hazards that may arise.
- A procedure based system may be appropriate in certain circumstances, such as carrying out site inspections. The procedure details the exact protocol to be followed and details where additional assistance may be required. Examples of what may be included in a procedure are detailed below:
 - Arrangements for situations outside of normal working hours.
 - Reporting in mechanisms at the end of the day.
 - How to deal with threats.
 - How to park on site.
 - Details of what information should be left in the office regarding the inspection.
- A reporting in system may be appropriate in certain situations where employees do not return to a central base at the end of the day. For high risk lone workers it may be appropriate for such employees to report in on a regular basis throughout the day. This reporting in system can be operated via:
 - Line Managers calling to check up on employees.
 - Employees reporting into Line Managers / Designated Person or the office via phone on a scheduled basis.
 - A buddy system, where employees have an assigned co-worker who they check in with on a scheduled basis throughout the day.
 - For low risk lone workers, the use of a reporting in mechanism may not be appropriate. Alternative arrangements local management may pursue include documentation of all site visits detailing the expected time an employee is due back in the office. This is to be recorded in the office using a diary or notice board system.
 - The system should ensure that the return of the worker or a call from them is actively expected and waited for and that action is taken to contact them if they do not return or the call is not made.
- Lone workers should be provided with appropriate equipment to deal with likely hazards that may arise during their work and the appropriate training in its use. Examples of such equipment include: fire extinguishers, first aid equipment lifting equipment such as trolleys or hoists, PPE and lone worker protection devices if available.
- Lone workers are by definition not under constant supervision. However Line Managers can ensure that the employees understand the risks associated with the works and the relevant safety procedures. They can put into place arrangements for the individual to contact a Line Manager if they need additional guidance. Occasional site visits may be appropriate, particularly for high risk activities. Employees new to a job or undergoing training may need to be accompanied initially.

Appendix 2

Lone Working Risk Assessment Checklist

	Yes	No
Does the workplace present a special risk to a lone worker? (e.g. due to the environment, location, contents, unfamiliarity...).		
Does the work activity present a special risk to a lone worker? (Equipment, process, substance, location, time, members of public, handling cash...).		
Can the equipment in use be adequately controlled, handled by one person?		
Can all goods, substances and materials in use be safely handled by one person?		
Does the lone worker have, or have access to first aid facilities?		
Does the lone worker have access to a suitable means of communication, or other means of summoning assistance, should this be required? (telephone, mobile, radio, inactivity alarm...).		
Is there a risk of violence associated with the work activity and/or location?		
Is the lone worker more at risk due to gender or inexperience?		
Has the employee received sufficient information, instruction and training to enable the work to be undertaken safely whilst alone?		
Has the employee received specific training in how to respond to foreseeable emergencies which may arise?		
Is the lone worker medically fit to undertake the work alone?		
Are there arrangements in place to provide adequate levels of supervision, which are commensurate with the risk? e.g. periodic visits, use of 'local' security staff, signing in/out, periodic contact arrangements, open diaries, CCTV, inactivity alarms or 'Permits to Work'.		
Are there contingency plans in place should an alert/alarm be raised by a lone worker? Are these plans well known and rehearsed?		
Does the lone worker fall into a vulnerable risk group? e.g. New and expectant mothers, Impaired mobility, Young people (age under 18), disabled persons		

Appendix 3

Lone working is prohibited in the following specific circumstances

- Where it is identified within the risk assessment.
- Working in a confined space.
- Working with a live electrical circuit.
- Persons undergoing specified machinery training who require constant supervision from a competent person.
- Working with high risk machinery or equipment e.g. chainsaws.
- Any work where the risk of falling into water has not been eliminated by the implementation of appropriate control measures.
- Any work where the use of a safety harness is required.

Appendix 4

Lone Worker Medical Assessment Sheet

The purpose of this sheet is to highlight to LWETB any medical conditions that you may have that could influence your suitability to carry out Lone Working.

This sheet is confidential. It must be completed and returned to your direct line manager in a sealed envelope with your name written on the outside and marked Confidential for the attention of the HR Department.

Do you suffer from any of the following medical conditions?	Yes	No
Heart condition		
Diabetes		
Epilepsy		
Any other medical condition that you consider could affect your safety when working alone (please provide details)		

You must ALWAYS report to your supervisor immediately if you are prescribed any medications that could cause you to become drowsy or any medication where the patient information sheet advises that you should not operate machinery whilst taking the medication.

You must ALWAYS report to your supervisor immediately if you are diagnosed with any condition that may impact on your safety in a Lone Working situation.

Name (in block capitals): _____

Section / Area (in block capitals): _____

Name of Line Manager (in block capitals): _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____