Chelmsford County High School For Girls

Lone Working Policy

2022-2024

Approved by the Governing Body: ~~7th October 2020~~

Change Log

Version	Changes	Author	Change Date	Approval Date
0.1 - Draft	First draft – modelled on Southend Borough Council policy	Melissa Mulgrew	18th September 2019	

Chelmsford County High School for Girls
Lone Working Policy

1.0 Lone Working Activities

The Health and Safety Executive defines lone workers as 'those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision'. Staff do not have to be working out in the community to be alone, they may be working in an isolated part of an office, establishment or in a service user's room. Many staff work alone, for all or part of their time, in situations where colleagues are not within hearing distance. The following are examples of lone working:

People in fixed establishments where:

- Only one person works at the premises, e.g. first person in/last person out.
- People work separately from others, e.g. in isolated areas of a site.
- Working from home.
- People work outside normal hours, e.g. maintenance staff, cleaners, night staff.

Mobile, or peripatetic workers operating away from their fixed base:

- 'Service' workers, e.g. Specialist support teachers; school staff making home visits, Approved Social Workers.
- Visitors to other workplaces, e.g. staff attending meetings, on construction or maintenance activities

2.0 Lone Working Risk Assessment

Although there is no general legal prohibition on working alone, a risk assessment of lone working tasks must be carried out.

Lone working issues may be considered as part of an overall risk assessment of a job role or activity. However, where lone working has not been considered as part of other risk assessments, a specific risk assessment must be carried out. The CCHS Lone Working Risk Assessment Form is at Annex A.

The main principle to be applied when assessing the risk of lone working is one of 'foreseeability' i.e. that it is possible, based on knowledge and experience, to predict the nature of risks that an employee could be subjected to. It follows that, it is therefore possible to consider what arrangements could successfully eliminate, or where this is not possible, reduce the risk to an acceptable level. The knowledge of the job that and of the potential risks to which staff may be exposed will assist to make the assessment.

Although it is possible to establish some generic type rules and arrangements that will help to control the risks of working alone in most cases there is still a need to also consider each set of circumstances separately.

3.0 Identifying Lone Working Tasks and Activities

The first stage in the risk assessment process is to identify known and foreseeable lone working tasks and activities.

It is recognised that the hazards presented by a particular lone working task may vary, e.g. meeting members of the public compared to meeting members of the public with a known history of violence. The factors that could make a task more hazardous should be identified when listing lone working activities (e.g. home visit – client with no history of violence, home visit – client has a known history of violence).

Where lone working has the potential to lead to violence and aggression it is essential to identify the causes in order to prevent it. It is recommended that the following areas are considered in the risk assessment:

- **The client** – anything the client brings to the situation that could contribute towards violence, e.g. previous history/lack of history.

- **The employee** – factors which may increase or decrease the chances of violence occurring, e.g. level of appropriate training and experience, representing authority.

- **What the work involves** – the interaction which takes place between employee and client, for example, enforcing rules, carrying out inspections.

- **Working environment** – this involves looking at the physical setting in which the work is carried out, for example, a home visit, rural areas.

4.0 Identifying the Hazards

The second phase of the risk assessment is to identify the potential hazards. This can be achieved by considering the various factors involved in any given work situation, for example:

An assessment should consider the following:

Time and Place

- The degree of isolation
- Safe access and egress
- Whether the workplace is in a known 'high risk' area
- Type an effectiveness of any communication systems
- Condition of building/work space, ie. State of repair, lighting, etc
- Increased risk times, i.e. time of day or day of the week
- Travel arrangements, including vehicle breakdown whilst driving alone
- Environmental conditions, i.e. weather conditions, temperature, sunlight, pollution, levels of light, etc.

The Task

- Risks whilst travelling/driving/travel on foot
- Risk of violence/aggression
- Visiting client's homes
- Manual Handling tasks, can they be done safely by a lone worker?
- Can all potentially hazardous substances, (chemicals, biological agents) be safely used?
- Can all plant and equipment to be used be safely handled and used by a lone worker?
- Does the task involve the handling of money or valuables?
- Does the task involve the use of statutory powers?
- Does the task involve breaking bad news, changing/withdrawing a service?
- Client factors, both group generic and person specific
- Does the task involve working with electrical equipment and appliances?
- Working at heights, below ground or on uneven ground such as construction sites
- Risk from hot work processes
- Confined Spaces

Fitness and Competence

- Does the lone worker have any medical condition, ie. Disability, pregnancy, injury?
- Is the lone worker sufficiently competent for the task, including for emergencies, (young workers are specifically at risk due to their lack of experience)?
- Gender, physical ability, age
- Is the lone worker provided with information about the risks involved with the tasks?
- Are there any arrangements for contact between the lone worker and colleagues/managers?

Tasks that are Unsafe to be Carried Out by a Lone Worker

In circumstances where, even with all the controls in place, the risk assessment identifies that it is not possible for a task to be carried out safely by a lone worker, then it should only be done by two people.

5.0 Controls

There are a number of controls that can help to reduce risk when working alone. It is always advisable to avoid working alone if to do so increases the risk of harm. Where this is not practical, or necessary, appropriate controls should be agreed and implemented to ensure that the risks of working alone are reduced to acceptable levels.

Where there is no regular supervision, to control and guide in situations of uncertainty, lone workers need to fully understand the risks involved and the necessary precautions.

Procedures for emergencies should be agreed and employees must be competent to implement them correctly and appropriately. The Advisory Team can advise managers further on any of the examples set out below, but generally Emergency arrangements should include Management consideration of:

- Security of site and buildings, for example, one way closing, entry-phone system, etc.
- Call in arrangements or employee contact after a specified period of no contact.
- Suitable means to respond to any distress call or failure to communicate when one is expected
- Access to a telephone to call emergency services, preferably mobile or radio.
- Contact points in the event of an emergency, including key personnel.
- Clear and easy access to a first aid box or emergency first aid.
- Panic Alarms/Personal alarms
- Lone Working Devices (see appendix a)
- Personal Safety Training

When out and about alone, staff should remember:

- Trust your intuition. If you feel concerned do not ignore the feeling, act immediately.
- Always be alert, keep your head up when out walking and look confident.
- Avoid unlit areas, short cuts and unfamiliar territory
- Always know where you are going and how to get there.
- Walk facing traffic if forced to use the road
- Keep away from obstructions that could provide cover for would be assailants.
- Always inform the office/manager if you change your arrangements

ANNEX A

The Chelmsford County High School for Girls

RISK ASSESSMENT – LONE WORKING

Assessment of risk for - ***Site Staff - lone working at CCHS***

Assessment date: 16/01/2022 Signed: Richard Free

HAZARD **(Risks)**	***WHO IS AFFECTED***	**EXISTING CONTROL MEASURES**	**ADDITIONAL CONTROLS**
Members of the Site Team that are lone working in the buildings and grounds are more vulnerable to: 1. **Accidents** 2. **Ill Health** 3. **Violence** **Lone working will typically happen when covering lettings and locking up at evenings and weekends.**	**The Site Team**	Site Team members must adhere to the adopted Lone Working Policy from Handsam. Policy number S09 – Location: R:\Staff\Support\Premises H&S\Lone Working Whenever practicable, two members of staff will work together. A school mobile phone is carried at all times. Managers must be aware that personnel are working in the building outside of normal hours. Parking is close to the building. External security lighting is in operation around the buildings. Where the work involves lifting objects too large for one person, more than one person is assigned to the task and manual handling procedures are adhered to.	Site Staff have agreed to provide their home number for their colleagues. If a lone worker does not return home by 22:00 when on a night shift then the lone workers nominated person can contact the next key holder to investigate. Manual handling risk assessments in place where appropriate.

		The lone worker will inform their manager of any medical condition which may make them unsuitable for lone working. The Lone worker must fully identify any risk involved in the work and will only perform this work if sufficiently experienced. If the Lone Worker is unsure of what tasks can and cannot be done while working alone then the worker should cease work immediately and seek advice from a manager. All workers are able to respond correctly in emergency situations. Emergency procedures are established and the workers are trained to implement them. Lone workers have access to a first aid provision. The site team are not to use the lifts while lone working in the school. A CCTV system is installed at the school. COSHH risk assessments in place at the school.	A lone worker has a duty to report any known medical condition that may impact their safety. Working at height is forbidden when working alone. See working at heights R/A. <u>N.B</u> There is a leased property on site. As a last resort the school employee who resides at 118 Broomfield Road can be alerted for assistance.