

## Churches and Industry Group Birmingham and Solihull

### LONE WORKER GUIDELINES

The purpose of these guidelines is to help those chaplains who are 'lone workers' with the practical steps to be taken to keep safe, while noting that all people have a duty to take reasonable care of themselves.

#### 1. When is a worker a lone worker?

A 'Lone Worker' is any person whose work involves either a regular or a large portion of their time in situations where there is no close, frequent or regular involvement with other contactable workers or supervision.

#### 2. Be aware

- a. Everyone should remember that their own personal safety should be a priority; and be aware of their own health needs. People should not get involved in any situation that is escalating or where there are concerns that it might result in danger.
- b. Be aware of the environment: Know local hazards, alarm systems and procedures, exits and entrances, location of first aid help. Be cautious in isolated places.
- c. Be aware of yourself. Think about what you are wearing. In any anxious encounter think about your body language, tone of voice and choice of words. Be aware of things that may trigger your anger or upset you.
- d. Be aware of other people: take note of their non-verbal signals, allow people space.

#### 3. Carry out a Risk Assessment and take precautions

- a. identify the hazards
- b. decide who can be harmed and how
- c. evaluate the risks and decide on precautions
- d. record your findings and implement them; monitor and update them as necessary.

##### a. The Hazards (things with the potential to cause harm)

Whilst the hazards are similar to everyday working situations they may be exacerbated by the fact that a person is alone and perhaps not in the immediate vicinity of aid and assistance, e.g:

- abusive clients or animal attacks
- defective vehicles
- fire or noise
- remoteness or isolation
- slips, trips or falls
- sudden illness rendering the person unable to summon help

##### b. Who can be harmed?

Lone-working volunteers and other employees/members of public

##### c. Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions

You may need to consider new precautions, safe practices or carry personal protective equipment, eg:

- access to communications – eg make sure you carry a fully-charged mobile phone.
- first aid equipment & training
- safe general working practices – eg make sure you sign in / out
- carry some identification or Next of Kin contact information.
- using a “buddy system” (eg notifying a colleague when you arrive/leave) or personal alarm.
- maintenance checks on equipment and vehicle.

**d. Record your findings and implement them; monitor and update.**

Keep records of the significant findings of your risk assessments. Ensure team leaders and managers are informed of the results and any new safe working practices. Risk assessments and the outcomes to be monitored as often as required to ensure they remain effective. They should be reviewed or updated when there are major changes to the organisation, work practice or working environment. Should an accident or incident occur which indicates a failure of the precautions that have been developed then they should be reviewed immediately.

**4. High risk situations**

Where a risk assessment identifies that lone working poses a high risk to a lone worker, lone working should be avoided, or arrangements for providing assistance and support put in place.

**5. Home visits or out of office visits**

Chaplains should avoid visiting people in their own homes or in isolated situations. However, if this is necessary it should be discussed with the relevant team leader/colleague.

If necessary, details of your expected movements should be recorded with them, and after finishing a visit the chaplain should instigate a contact procedure, eg mobile phone call to their colleague. If there is no contact when expected the colleague should go directly to the last known address or alert the police.

**6. Communications**

Mobile phones of Lone Workers should always be kept fully charged. However, phones should not be relied on as the only protective measure. They provide a degree of comfort and support to those working alone in the community, but chaplains should also ensure they use other relevant precautions.

**7. Incident**

Where people are involved in an incident where they felt threatened or intimidated, they should complete an accident/occurrence report and report it to their Team Leader and CIGB Development Director.

**8. Supervisory meetings**

Lone workers should have regular supervisory meetings with Team Leaders and/or colleagues to review hazard precautions and experience.