

Lone Working Policy 2018

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1.0 Introduction

WE ARE THRIVE seeks to protect those individuals and contractors who work alone and undertakes to, as far as reasonably practicable, minimise the risks to the health and safety of its contractors and those who may be affected by their activities.

There are many different situations individuals find themselves in with regard to lone working, and it would be impractical to address each situation individually.

WE ARE THRIVE acknowledges its duty to make sufficient provision for the management of health and safety in the workplace and to fully implement the requirements of the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations by providing the policies, procedures and resources for a suitable and sufficient management system.

This policy sets out the commitments and arrangements of WE ARE THRIVE for minimising the risk of physical and non-physical assaults against individuals, risk of injury and improving overall personal safety and arrangements for lone working.

1.1 Definition - Physical and Non-physical Assault

Physical assaults – General Baseline Definition:

“The intentional application of force to the persons of another, without legal justification, resulting in physical injury or personal discomfort.”

Physical assaults include being shoved, pushed, punched, kicked, head-butted, but this is not an exhaustive list.

Non-physical assault – General Baseline Definition:

“The use of inappropriate words or behaviour causing distress and/or constituting harassment.”

It is very difficult to provide a comprehensive description of all types of incidents that are covered under this definition; however, the following examples would be consistent:

- Offensive language, verbal abuse and swearing which prevents individuals from doing their job or makes them feel unsafe
- Negative, malicious or stereotypical comments
- Invasion of personal space
- Brandishing of objects or weapons
- Near misses i.e. unsuccessful physical assaults
- Threats or risk of serious injury to a member of individuals, or visitors
- Bullying*, victimisation or intimidation
- Stalking
- Spitting
- Alcohol or drug fuelled
- Unreasonable behaviour and non-cooperation
- Any of the above linked to destruction of or damage to property

This is not an exhaustive list

*Individuals on individuals bullying does not fall within the context of this policy. Any such issues should be dealt with in accordance with WE ARE THRIVE’s Safeguarding and Whistleblowing Policies.

1.2 Definition – Lone Working

Lone working is intended to cover all work proposed to be undertaken alone where the risk to the individual lone worker may be increased either by work itself, or by the lack of on-hand support should something go wrong. However, it is important that these risks are not over-exaggerated, as this can have a detrimental effect, by endangering an unnecessary perception of fear amongst individuals that is disproportionate to reality.

Lone working can occur:

- During normal working hours at an isolated location within the normal workplace or on site

Or

- When working outside normal working hours

Under both these circumstances, WE ARE THRIVE's guidance on lone working will apply.

Individuals may find themselves undertaking lone working in a variety of settings, which include:

- Clients homes
- Work alone in any given situation without direct access to other colleagues
- Sheltered housing
- Contractors or Contractors own homes
- Travel alone using own vehicle, public transport and / or to and from any place of work
- Working alone at WE ARE THRIVE premises 'after hours'

2.0 Policy Statement

WE ARE THRIVE acknowledges that there maybe an increased risk to health and safety of its contractors 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.

Operational management shall ensure lone working situations are identified, appropriate risk assessments undertaken, control measures introduced and contractors are provided with the necessary information, instruction and training.

3.0 Roles and Responsibilities

The Directors has overall responsibility for managing all aspects of health and safety. They will ensure mechanisms are in place:

- To ensure any risk to a person's safety is adequately controlled, and reduced to the lowest level; which is reasonably practicable.
- To ensure, where necessary, that appropriate risk assessments and safe systems of work are in place
- To ensure that this policy is adhered to by individuals and that resources are available to ensure effective implementation

3.1 Managers Responsibilities

- Promote and support the aims and objectives of this policy
- Maintain individualising levels and adequate cover when dealing with work related to violence and aggression. When there is the likelihood of an incident occurring, to put into place immediate control measures to reduce the risk to the lowest level which is reasonably practicable.

3.2 Contractor Responsibilities

All contractors have a general duty to take reasonable care of their own safety and that of others who may be affected by their actions.

All contractors must further ensure that they will:

- Cooperate with WE ARE THRIVE to enable it to meet its obligations in respect of the prevention of physical and non-physical assaults and the reduction of risks related to lone working.
- Be vigilant and ensure that any known or identified risks are immediately reported to their line manager as a minimum requirement.
- To be aware of out of hours arrangements and the details of the on-call rota for senior managers and directors so that immediate contact can be made in the event of an emergency (see Appendix 2)
- Report any accident or incident in accordance with the provisions of the incident reporting procedure.
- Attend health and safety related training

4.0 **Risk Assessment and Control**

The policy for dealing with lone working is no different from other activities in that it involves risk assessment for the lone working activity.

The objective of the risk assessment is to ensure that satisfactory control measures are in place for such activities.

To simplify the procedures this guidance proposes that lone working can be arranged into three risk categories, namely low, medium and high and examples of these are given in tables 1, 2 and 3 respectively...but please note that these are not exhaustive lists and Divisions need to identify and organise their lone working activities into these categories.

Table 1 – Low Risk Activity

Risk Level	Activities	Control Measures
Low	People engaged in tasks they would normally undertake in an office or their own working premises.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lone work is permitted, but it is good practice to ensure that a second person is aware of the first person's location and they have access to means of communication. • Inspections/risk assessments of the work area should be undertaken by the to ensure hazards have been identified, risk controlled and provisions for emergencies are in place e.g. escape routes open, fire fighting equipment, first aid, etc. • Individuals and contractors are aware of the correct incident reporting procedures and are encouraged to report actual and near miss incidents.

Table 2 – Medium Risk Activities

Risk Level	Activities	Control Measures
Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with members of the public (interviews, 	<u>Essential requirement</u> Follow low risk control measures and in addition

	consultation). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handling money. • Working in areas that are difficult to locate and reach in an emergency. 	consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rooms used for confidential work should be equipped with alarm system/procedure. • Individuals and contractors are aware of the correct incident reporting procedures and are encouraged to report actual and near miss incidents.
Risk Level	Activities	Control Measures
Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lone worker or client suffering from illness that might increase risks of the job. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public access to the working office should be restricted • Appropriate communication should be maintained with the lone worker. The lone worker equipped by means of 2-way communication, a pager, mobile phone or personal alarm. A system should be in place detailing what to do if an alarm is activated. • Inform operational management when work is finished.

Table 3 – High Risk Activities

Risk Level	Activities	Control Measures
High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with individuals that may have reason to react violently or otherwise. 	<u>LONE WORKING IS NOT PERMITTED</u>

4.1 Selection and Consideration of Control Measures

Clearly, the types of control measures for a lone working activity will vary depending on the type of work, location, experience of worker and local conditions. The questions that need to be asked are:

1. Whether the risk of the work can be adequately controlled by one person, or are more people necessary?
2. Does the workplace present a special risk to the lone worker?
3. Is there a safe access and exit for that person?
4. Is the lighting and ventilation sufficient?
5. Do lone workers fully understand the risk involved in the work?
6. Are limits set as to what can and cannot be done whilst working alone, when to stop and seek advice?
7. What is the appropriate level of supervision for the task?
8. Are there contingency plans in place should an alert/alarm be raised by the lone worker? Are these plans and procedures well known by individuals, contractors, volunteers and trainees?
9. Have arrangements been made for illness, accidents and emergencies?
10. Have contractors received information, instruction and training?

5.0 Summary Policy Statement

Working alone is not illegal but it can bring additional risks to a work activity. WE ARE THRIVE has developed policies and procedures to control risks and protect contractors, and contractors should follow them. Apart from contractors being sure that they are capable of doing the job on their own, the three most important things to be certain of are that:

- a. The lone worker has full knowledge of the hazards and risks to which he or she is being exposed.
- b. A colleague or supervisor knows the whereabouts of a lone worker and what he or she is doing at specific working times.
- c. The lone worker knows what to do if something goes wrong.

The activities within this guidance are not exhaustive, consequent risks should be effectively identified and managed by management.

The 'lone worker' is obligated to follow the outcomes of the risk assessment and consequent agreed procedures.

This guidance sets out the law, WE ARE THRIVE's and individual responsibility.

The policy will be reviewed at least annually or when it is considered appropriate to do so.

6.0 Information Sharing

It is important that individuals, volunteers and contractors have access to good quality information regarding contacts and locations so that they can do their job efficiently and safely.

It is within the law to supply/obtain information such as where there are grounds to believe than a contractor may be at risk from coming into contact with a particular person on entering a particular premise.

Individuals, volunteers and contractors must also be aware that if, at any stage during a visit / while working on site, they feel unsafe, they should be reporting this to the manager who should update the information as necessary.

7.0 Personal Information

Where possible, detailed personal information should not be shared with individuals.

8.0 Supporting Individuals After an Incident

Debriefing will take place after serious incidents have occurred affecting personal safety, to establish the details of what happened and to provide emotional help to the individuals, volunteers or contractors involved. Managers will be involved in these debriefing sessions and, where appropriate, confidential counselling by an external person if necessary, will be offered.

9.0 Control Points

One of the most important arrangements of this policy is the requirement for operational management to know where the individuals, volunteers and contractors are, so that their movements can be traced if necessary.

These issues make it necessary for management to provide a Control Point.

The Control Point could be any one of, or a mixture of, the following:

- A** An answerphone checked regularly
- B** Nominated person with mobile phone

The Control Point would be the person or persons who should know the movements of all contractors when the contractor has expressed concern and which their movements to be monitored.

The Control Point would also have the details about the contractor so that appropriate steps could be taken in the unlikely event of a contractor failing to make contact at the end of a visit.

10.0 Notification of Visits

As previously mentioned it is the requirement of the management of health and safety at work regulations that operational management are aware of their contractors or volunteers movements, so far as is reasonably practicable, but without it being too onerous.

The method of notifying visits must be by mutual agreement between operational management and contractors, volunteers or contractors.

10.1 Notification of Changes to Visits

Planned visits can sometimes be missed out for a variety of reasons. Whilst this does not cause a problem, there may be occasions where the contractor feels that the control point should be notified of the change to itinerary.

The control point facility should cater for these occasions.

10.2 Notification to End visit

Is it equally important that WE ARE THRIVE know where and when an contractor has finished work. The system employed must enable individuals, volunteers or contractors to call in at the end of the day.

If alternative arrangements – an additional control point – is employed for a period of time due to holiday, etc., all individuals, volunteers and contractors should be informed of this.

11.0 Training

Individuals, volunteers and contractors working alone should know that their safety comes first. They should not be in situations that make them feel unsafe.

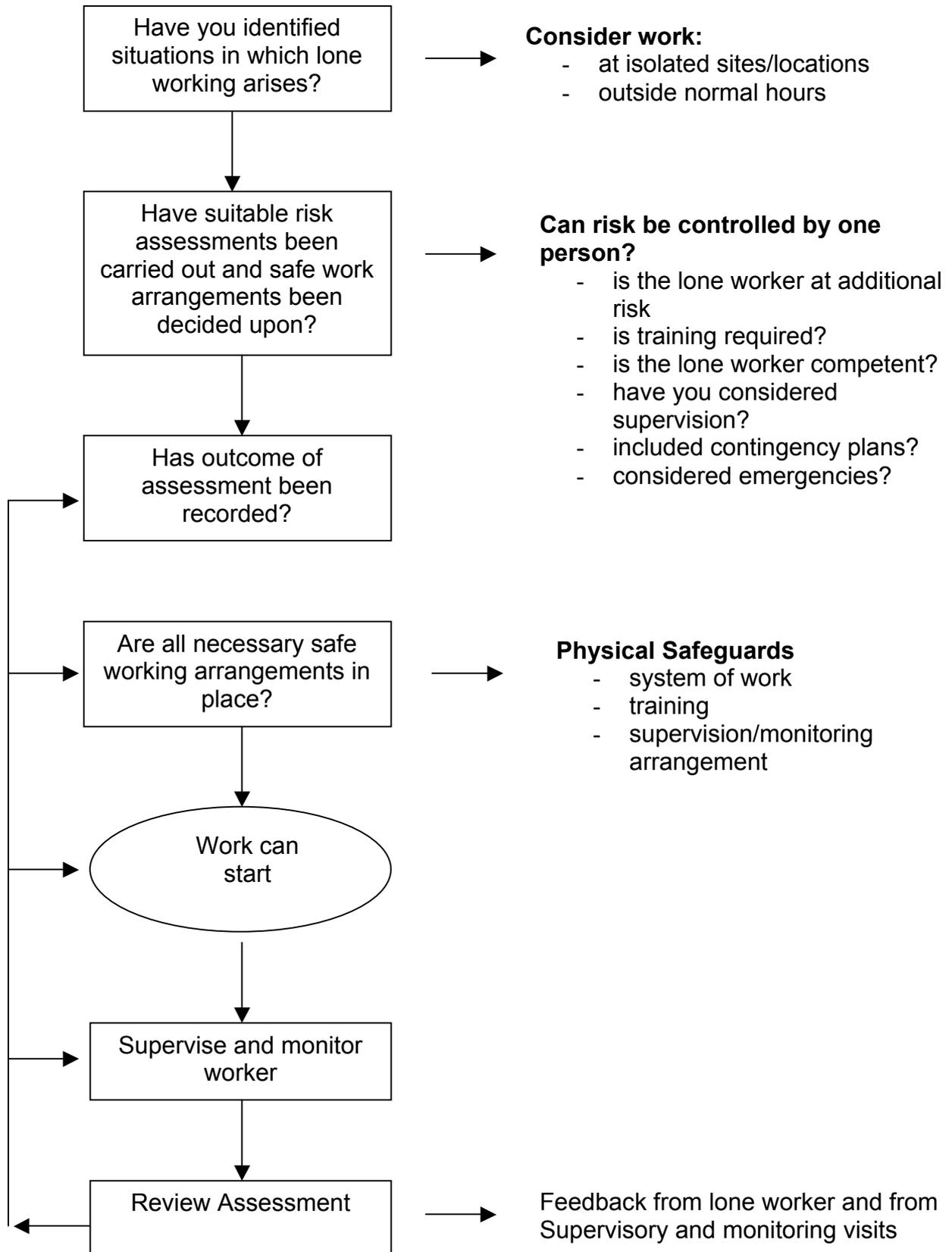
12.0 Monitoring, Audit and Review

The effectiveness of this by policy will be assessed by incident reporting and follow-up action of physical and non-physical assaults and incidents involving lone working.

This document will guide you on WE ARE THRIVE's policy for lone working; additional detailed guidance can be obtained from HSE books – Free publication 'Working Alone in Safety' INDG 73.

Appendix 1

Summary Flowchart for Ensuring the Safety of Lone Workers



Appendix 2

Procedure in the Event of a Contractor not Calling in at the End of a Visit

The following information should be available at the Control Point:-

- Name
- Address
- Home Telephone No.
- Mobile Telephone No.
- Emergency contact details
- Car details (registration, make, model, colour)
- Itinerary of appointments

Initial response:-

If the therapist has not contacted the Control Point within a reasonable amount of time, the Control Point should seek to contact in return.

Escalation:

If, however, at any time the Control Point becomes sufficiently concerned for the safety of an contractor, contractor or volunteer, an escalation procedure must be in place.

This escalation could be to:-

- Director
- Directly to the Police

The police are happy to act on a 'missing person' with immediate effect providing WE ARE THRIVE has made every effort to trace the person concerned **AND** can justify their cause for concern.

Appendix 3

What to do if a serious violent/aggressive incident occurs

