

KETTERING TOWN COUNCIL LONE WORKING POLICY

Who are lone workers and what do they do?

1. Lone workers are those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision. They include
 - a. People in fixed establishments where:
 - Only one person works on the premises, e.g. home workers
 - People work separately from others
 - People who work outside normal hours, e.g. event staff
 - b. Mobile workers working away from a fixed base for example on construction, installation, maintenance, repair or cleaning work
2. Working alone can introduce or enhance hazards for example – lack of assistance if needed, first aid cover, emergency situations, violent attack etc. There are inevitably tasks within the Council where staff work by themselves, including daily home working and frequently lone working may occur in the evenings and at weekends.

The Law

3. Lone working is not illegal but certain requirements must be satisfied before such an arrangement is operated. The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 places a statutory duty on employers to provide a safe and healthy environment to staff and others affected by their undertakings. This includes lone workers. The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 places a duty on employers to undertake risk assessments for all work activities. This includes assessments of the particular risks associated with lone working.

Policy statement

4. The Council acknowledges there may be an increase in potential risks associated with lone working, and requires all such work to be subjected to risk assessments and adequate controls to minimise the risk. The policy applies to all sites and all staff who are recognised as lone workers.

Responsibilities

Managers

5. Managers should:-
 - a. Ensure a risk assessment has been completed.
 - b. Ensure appropriate control measures are in place,
 - c. Ensure staff are aware of this policy and follow it
 - d. Ensure staff have received appropriate training
 - e. Report any incidents using the incident reporting procedure.

Employees

6. Employees should

- Familiarise themselves with the checklist and flowchart set out below, and follow this policy
- Report to their manager or supervisor any problems or difficulties that they are aware of caused by working alone
- Report any incidents using the incident reporting procedure

Further guidance

- HSE document INDG69L: violence to staff
- INDG73L: Working Alone in safety
- The Suzy Lamplugh Trust, www.suzylamplugh.org.uk
- Health and Safety Manager

Risk assessment

7. The Council carries out Risk Assessments for its activities and should ensure that any additional risks to lone workers are identified. Safe working arrangements should be devised and implemented to ensure that the risks are either eliminated or adequately controlled. The assessment should consider the following factors:

- a) Is it safe for the individual to work alone?
- b) Foreseeable emergencies. It must be recognised that a lone worker is more vulnerable when the unexpected occurs, for example: fire, illness, accidents and violence
- c) The fitness and suitability of the person to work alone. Will working alone require additional physical or mental stamina? Is there a medical condition that makes the individual unsuitable for working alone? Is that person competent?
- d) Has the necessary equipment been provided to make lone working and home working safe?
- e) When considering the workplace, the following questions should be considered:
 - Does the workplace present a special risk to the lone worker?
 - Is there a safe means of entry and exit into the workplace?
 - Is there a risk of violence?
 - Will cash or valuables be handled?
 - Is the worker vulnerable to sexual harassment or assault?
- f) Ensure that:
 - Lone workers have full knowledge of the hazards and risks to which they are being exposed
 - The lone workers know what to do if something goes wrong
 - Someone else knows the whereabouts of the lone workers and what they are doing

8. The level of supervision for lone workers should be determined to ensure that it is

consistent with the possible risks and that there is a system for maintaining contact.

9. The remoteness of the workplace should also be considered when assessing the risk to lone workers, for example:
 - Will the emergency services be able to approach close enough if necessary?
 - Is the length of time to do the job defined?
 - Is there adequate access to first aid?
10. Arrangements should be in place to protect or assist lone workers in the event of fire, accident, illness or an incident of violence
11. Lone workers should receive appropriate training to ensure that they are competent and able to deal with foreseeable problems
12. Staff should appreciate their responsibility for their own safety.
13. Lone workers should receive training in the use of any necessary tools and equipment, any increased risk to the lone worker from the use of such items should be identified in the Risk Assessment.

Control measures

14. The following practical guidelines should be applied :
 - a) Authorisation for lone working is required from their manager
 - b) Lone workers should provide their working hours and location to their line manager. This can be done by sharing team calendars to inform others of their whereabouts and duration at that location
 - c) Special arrangements should be considered to ensure the safety of pregnant workers working alone
 - d) Ensure a working telephone is available
 - e) Lone workers should not undertake dangerous work, for example using dangerous chemicals or operating dangerous machinery
 - f) When undertaking off site visits, the checklist below must be considered prior to the visit.

Offsite checklist for lone workers

	YES	NO
Is there a risk of violence?		
Is there safe access and exit for one person?		
Is manual handling undertaken?		
Is the employee medically fit to carry out the lone working tasks?		
Is there first aid provision?		
Can an emergency service approach close enough if necessary?		
Is there a clear understanding on how long the work will take?		
Are transport arrangements to and from the workplace adequate?		
Is there a system for maintaining contact with the lone worker?		
Is there cctv on the site being visited?		
Are staff trained to deal with violence and aggression?		
Are staff briefed about the areas they visit?		
Do staff have all available information on those being visited?		
Has an itinerary been left?		
Have plans been made to keep in contact with colleagues?		
Have staff the means to contact their manager?		
Do staff know how to diffuse potentially violent situations?		
Do staff know how to complete an incident form?		

Lone worker-Employee flowchart

Have you read the guidance for lone working and risk assessed the situation?

No



Read the guidance and risk assess the situation

Yes

Is it safe to conduct the lone working task?

No



Consult your line manager

Yes

Have you updated your diary With your location, including timings onsite?

No



Update your diary

Yes

Have you identified a buddy to let them know where you are and advised them of a time you will be leaving site?

No



Update your buddy

Yes

Remain alert of potential dangers and keep your buddy updated.