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Sign off – Corporate Health and Safety Group

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*AMENDMENT RECORD*

<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Description</b>
1.0	01/09/2005	Original Procedure
2.0	01/05/2019	Complete revision - Reviewed to new format to include current systems following ELT restructure and Policy/ Procedures work stream - Corporate Health and Safety Action Plan 2018-19.

## Introduction

This document sets out the arrangements to be followed when dealing with staff potentially undertaking work activities alone. The HSE define lone workers as “Those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision”

## Objectives

The objectives of this procedure are;

- To ensure relevant legal requirements are met regarding any lone working activities undertaken by employees and others under its control
- To ensure that risks to lone workers are assessed, suitably controlled and kept under review
- To ensure that suitable consultation takes place to enable potential risks to be highlighted and the measures taken to suitably control them.
- To ensure that Managers and Staff are provided with appropriate instruction, training and supervision.
- To ensure that suitable measures are in place in case of accident/ incident or emergency.

## Scope

This procedure applies to all employees of the county council and all school based staff for whom there is no specific procedure laid down in national or local conditions of service.

It is expected that governing bodies of all community and voluntary controlled schools would adopt this procedure. Foundation and voluntary aided schools and academies are encouraged to do the same.

Examples of who this procedure applies to are;

- A person working from home (other than in, low risk office-type work (A separate safety procedure No. 23 covers arrangements for homeworkers doing low-risk work)
- People working alone for long periods
- People working on their own, outside normal hours, e.g. cleaners and site maintenance or repair staff
- Mobile workers working away from their fixed base
- Workers involved in high risk activities including construction, maintenance and repair, plant installation and cleaning work
- Workers in remote or agricultural settings – e.g. Countryside Officers, Trading Standards Officers
- Community Service workers – Social care and health workers, engineers, surveyors, and other service representatives visiting domestic and commercial premises.

There is no general prohibition on working alone, however there are occasions when the high risk nature of the work or existing legislation may require that at least two people are

deployed and a robust safe system of work devised and adhered to. The following are examples of such work situations that require more than one person:

- Work in confined spaces or where a supervisor may need to be present along with someone dedicated to a rescue or close supervision role.
- Work in the health or care sector when dealing with unpredictable client behaviour and situations.
- Certain work with substances hazardous to health.
- Certain construction work which should only be carried out under the 'immediate supervision of a competent person', e.g. the erection of scaffolding
- Work at Height – e.g. Access equipment which cannot be suitably secured e.g. Ladders
- Work by young persons (i.e. under the age of eighteen years of age)
- Electrical work at or near exposed live conductors

This list is not exhaustive. It is therefore necessary to be aware of any specific legal requirements applying to your work process and ensure that they are put in place.

Where there is no specific legal prohibition on working alone, the general duties of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act and Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations apply. This requires Risk Assessment (the identification of hazards associated with the work, assessing the potential risks involved, and implementing measures to ensure that the risks are either eliminated or adequately controlled).

The Corporate Health and Safety Team have prepared a corporate level risk assessment for Lone Working which outline the corporate lone worker controls and can be used as a basis for Directorates/ Schools and Teams to tailor. This is available from your Directorate Health and Safety Advisor.

Arrangements for providing help or back-up for lone workers must be devised. Further guidance is provided in [Appendix 1](#).

## Responsibilities

### Executive Directors

Have overall responsibility for implementing this procedure in their respective Directorates and in particular ensuring appropriate risk assessment, incident reporting investigation and monitoring arrangements are established.

### Assistant Directors/

Are responsible for working under the director of their Corporate Director to ensure suitable arrangements are in place within their areas of responsibility.

## Senior Health, Safety and Wellbeing Manager (Corporate Health and Safety Team)

Is responsible for ensuring that competent health and safety advice and support is available in respect of this procedure.

## Maintained Schools and Settings

Under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, Cumbria County Council as the employer in maintained schools and settings has overall responsibility for health and safety, and will take reasonable steps to ensure oversight and monitoring so that staff and pupils are not exposed to significant risks to their health and safety. This also applies to activities on or off the school premises. The Council recognises that its responsibility for health and safety cannot be devolved; but delegates day to day health and safety responsibilities to Governing Bodies and Head teachers.

It will provide competent technical advice on health and safety matters through the Corporate Health, Safety team to assist governing bodies and head teachers in their delegated task of ensuring effective risk management is in place.

The objectives laid down within this document are the minimum Local Authority Maintained schools must adhere to. Other schools such as voluntary aided, foundation schools, academies and free schools may utilise these procedures for reference for their own employer health and safety arrangements

## Supervisors/ Managers

Line Managers/ Supervisor must ensure;

- That local risk assessments are completed in their area of work and in particular where lone working is an issue to ensure that it is properly assessed and appropriate control measures applied.
- They set clear limits to what can and cannot be done while working alone. They should also specify how the employee is to behave in circumstances that are new, unusual or beyond the scope of training e.g. when to stop work, report issues and seek advice.
- That lone workers have the necessary skills, knowledge, experience and or qualifications. Their risk assessment should determine the level of information, instruction, training and or supervision required and may necessitate a review of a person's training profile and or personal development plan. Additional training and periodic compliance monitoring may also be required.
- Where lone working is unavoidable that suitable lone worker monitoring systems are in place. These should be relevant to the risks involved and aim to check the condition of lone workers at suitable intervals, including a check at the end of each working period. There should also be an appropriate emergency follow-up procedures in place for employees to summon immediate assistance or for "overdue employees" measures to initiate the appropriate emergency response

should they fail to report in or cannot be contacted. (see [Lone Worker Monitoring](#))

- That risk assessments are reviewed at regular intervals and if an individual's circumstances change to ensure that the risks to which the lone worker is exposed remain under control and have not changed significantly over time.
- That accident, incident and near miss reporting procedures are followed with suitable recording and investigation of any reported incidents to prevent a recurrence in line with CCC Accident Incident reporting procedures.
- That local arrangements for regular discussion of health and safety issues. Regular monitoring and inspection should be undertaken to ensure that health and safety management arrangements remain robust and fit for purpose.

### **Trade Union Safety Representatives**

Nominated Union-appointed health and safety representatives will act as co-chairs on the Corporate/ Directorate Level Health and Safety Committees to support and influence continuous improvement in health and safety performance

It is expected that governing bodies of all community and voluntary controlled schools would adopt this procedure. Foundation and voluntary aided schools and academies are encouraged to do the same.

### **All Employees**

Employees must inform their line manager if they feel that insufficient safeguards are in place to protect them from the risk of violence in the work situation, or if they feel they should not deal with a specific situation alone.

Employees must report to their line manager every incident of violent behaviour including intimidation, verbal abuse and threatening behaviour.

All employees must adhere to the advice and safe systems of work provided in relation to health and safety requirements of their role.

All employees must cooperate with their employer to understand information and complete any relevant training in relation to this procedure.

Employees required to work alone must be informed of the hazards involved, understand the risks and what control measures are necessary, as well as the arrangements in case of an emergency. They should also be aware of their own level of competence and at what point they should seek further advice from a supervisor.

## Training Requirements

Executive Directors, Assistant Directors, Senior Managers and Members should ensure completion of IOSH Leading Safely training.

Line Managers need to be committed to the objective of reducing the risk of violence towards employees, even though they may not be exposed to it themselves.

It is recommended that they receive appropriate training/ instruction in

- understanding the definition of violence and how it can develop,
- the effect that a perceived risk as well as a real risk can have on employees morale and stress levels,
- clarification of their role in implementing a preventative strategy (responsibilities)
- how to support employees who have been victims of violence and
- what action to take when a violent incident has occurred. (reporting and investigation)

Induction training – Discussion of relevant risk assessments are included as part of the induction package for new employees and this should be used to provide them with comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the service in relation to potential risks.

Continuous development - higher level training to deal with aggressive customers and defusing difficult situations.

Ongoing training/ instruction to keep up to date with new procedures/ equipment.

Training/ Instructing of other employees can play an important role in an overall strategy e.g. Buddy System Arrangements

## Auditing Compliance and Measuring Performance

Compliance with this procedure at the corporate level will be audited during Health and Safety Management audits arranged by the Corporate Health and Safety Team.

Directorate compliance and performance must be monitored and reviewed by each directorate e.g. by health and safety committees, DMT's, SMT's.

Cumbria County Council Health and Safety Policy outlines the duty to manage risks in order to achieve high standards of health and safety management

## Health and Safety Document/ Data Control

Cumbria County Council has a statutory duty to deliver social care functions. In support of these functions it is sometimes necessary for the Council to record information about individuals that is necessary to help understand and manage risk. This information is often included in a warning marker which is recorded on our social care management systems.

We rely upon the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and article 6(1) (c) of the General Data Protection Regulation as the legal basis for processing personal data that forms part of a warning marker. Any Health and safety related documentation and records must be retained securely and in accordance with Cumbria County Council's current Records Retention and Disposal Schedule and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Data Protection Act 2018.

Should further clarification be required in relation to the implementation of this procedure please contact the Corporate Health and Safety Team T:01228 221616

E:[healthandsafety@cumbria.gov.uk](mailto:healthandsafety@cumbria.gov.uk)

For Schools:

Name of School:	
Date by which School have adopted procedure:	
Signature of Chair of Governors	

## References and Useful Links

### Internal

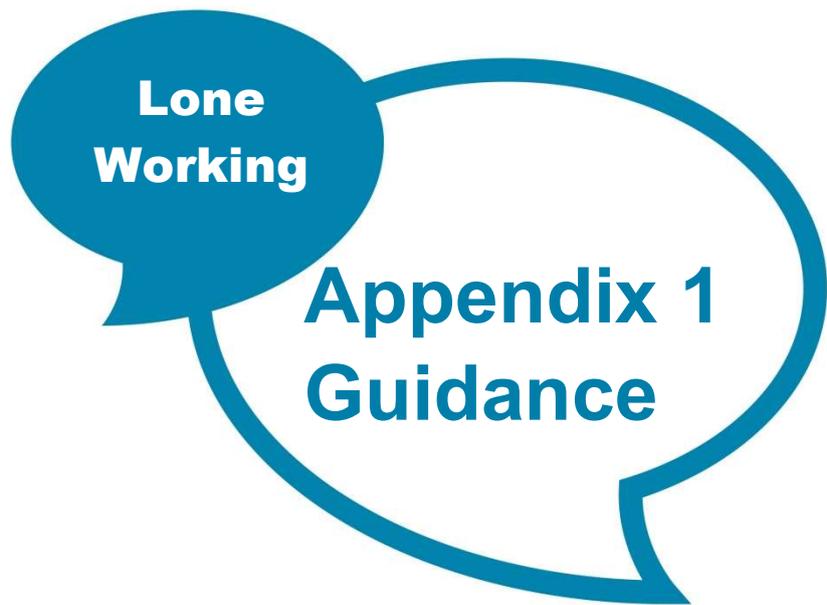
County Council Safety Procedure No 06 – Recording, Reporting and Investigation of Adverse Events  
 County Council Safety Procedure No 15 – Risk Assessment  
 County Council Safety Procedure No 14 - Personal Security in the Workplace  
 County Council Safety Procedure No 19 – Manual Handling  
 County Council Safety Procedure No 23 – Health and Safety for Homeworkers  
 County Council Safety Procedure No 25 – Occupational Road Risk  
 County Council Safety Procedure No 26 – Work at Height  
 County Council Safety Procedure No 31 – Awareness and Competency in Health and Safety  
<http://www.intouch.ccc/healthandsafety/safetyprocedures.asp>

Schools Safety Advice Notes and Model Risk Assessments – Available via School Portal  
 Directorate specific safety guidance and risk assessments available via InTouch

### External

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg73.pdf> - Working Alone HSE Guidance on the risks of lone working (free to download)  
 HSE Lone Working Website - <http://www.hse.gov.uk/toolbox/workers/lone.htm>  
 IND(G) 69(L) Violence at Work (HSE) <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg69.pdf>  
 Working Alone – Unison Guide - <https://www.unison.org.uk/content/uploads/2013/06/On-line-Catalogue178763.pdf>  
 Suzy Lamplugh Trust Resources - <http://www.suzylamplugh.org/Pages/FAQs/Category/resources>

**Date May 2019**



## Introduction

Precautions for protecting lone workers must take account of normal work and foreseeable emergencies such as fire, equipment failure, violent incident, illness and accidents. Lone Workers themselves have responsibilities to take reasonable care of themselves and other people affected by their work activities and to co-operate with their employers in meeting their legal obligations.

## Assessing and Controlling the Risks

The process of conducting a risk assessment for lone workers is no different to that followed when assessing more conventional workplace hazards. The important point is to carry out the assessment systematically in the following way:

- Identify the hazards associated with the work and assess the risks of carrying these out alone.
- Follow a risk reduction approach in order of priority – i.e. can the risks to lone workers be eliminated, substituted with safer alternatives, controlled with engineered solutions, administrative controls or by the issue of personal protective equipment.
- Decide on the safe working arrangements required to control these risks
- Record the findings of the assessment
- Communicate the risk assessment and implement the safe working arrangements
- Monitor and review the safe working arrangements

Further guidance on risk assessment can be found in County Council safety procedure number 15). See [References and Useful Links](#).

Should a risk assessment already exist for a task, e.g Manual Handling, where tasks are routinely conducted with others present, this assessment must be reviewed before permitting the same task to be conducted unaccompanied. Although working alone may not introduce any

new hazards, the risks may differ significantly when the task is carried out unaccompanied, due to the lack of available support.

## Lone Worker Monitoring

Risk assessments must identify, where lone working is unavoidable that suitable lone worker monitoring systems are in place. These should be relevant to the risks involved and aim to check the condition of lone workers at suitable intervals, including a check at the end of each working period. There should also be an appropriate emergency follow-up procedures in place for employees to summon immediate assistance or for “overdue employees” measures to initiate the appropriate emergency response should they fail to report in or cannot be contacted.

The County Council operate a system called Skyguard (aimed at those working in medium to high risk situations, such as those working out in the community) which can be provided by Manager request via ICT (there is a charge for each user). This is available as an app on android work phones or by means of a device (with man down capability). Skyguard is an externally monitored service which allows an individual to raise an alarm if subjected to intimidation or attack, in the event of an accident, or if they have suffered a severe health problem.

The apps/ devices are GPS enabled, so the monitoring provider will be able to locate an employee’s whereabouts. They will also, when an alarm is activated by able to listen to what’s happening and if it’s safe to do so, talk to the employee to advise and reassure. Managers setting up this service for employees will be asked to provide an internal escalation procedure so the monitoring company can make them aware if an alarm has been raised.

In a situation they consider to be an emergency they will automatically contact the Police. They will also record what’s happening remotely – should the incident go to litigation.

## Lone Worker Buddy Systems

Lone workers involved in lower risk activities such as just working from home or travelling to other CCC venues may be covered by a local buddy system. It is up to Managers to determine local systems to be followed not for workers to decide when or if they take part.

A lone working buddy system is a way of staying in contact with someone who is working alone. The buddy is usually a nominated person who the lone worker can contact at any time for the duration of their working day. It’s recommended that the lone working buddy is a colleague who understands the nature of the lone worker’s job role. What’s most important is that they’re immediately available throughout the duration of the worker’s day.

A lone working buddy should:

- Have all of the required contact details for the lone worker, including phone number, email address, home address etc.
- If the lone worker is driving a vehicle for work purposes, have details of the vehicle’s make, model and registration number.

- Be clear on all of the lone worker's projected movements during each shift. The buddy must know where the lone worker is meant to be at all times. Use of outlook calendars should be encouraged with anticipated movements kept up to date.
- If the lone worker does not get in touch at the agreed intervals, attempt to contact the worker every 10-15 minutes for up to an hour, before escalating the matter.
- If the lone worker can still not be contacted after an hour, notify their Line Manager in the first instance and then contact the emergency services if the lone worker remains out of contact.

## **Risk Assessment FAQ's**

HSE Guidance document – Working Alone provides further guidance on the risks of working alone

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg73.pdf>