



## Cloch Housing Association

# Lone Working Policy

<b>Policy Name</b>	Lone Working
<b>Policy Category</b>	Corporate & Governance
<b>Policy Number</b>	091
<b>Date Adopted</b>	01/04/2004
<b>Last Review</b>	20/08/2019
<b>This Review</b>	25/08/2022
<b>Next Review</b>	August 2025
<b>Equalities Impact Assessment Required</b>	Discussed and agreed not required
<b>Link to other policies</b>	Flexible Working H&S Manual
<b>Consultation</b>	Yes
<b>Need for Procedure</b>	Yes, Lone Working Risk Assessment and Hybrid Working Risk Assessment

## **Introduction**

The organisation aims to limit lone working where reasonably practicable. Where lone working is necessary, we will take all reasonable steps, in accordance with our duty of care towards you, to make sure you are safe while you work for us.

In line with our duty of care, you should not be put at any greater risk if you are lone working compared to someone who is not. We have a duty to assess lone working risks and take any reasonable, practical measures to reduce and eliminate these. You are expected to co-operate and follow these measures, this will assist in keeping you safe. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action if it is found that an incident occurred due to not following procedures.

## **Scope of Policy**

This policy and the procedures it contains applies to all employees (permanent, temporary and agency), managers, governing body members, contractors, volunteers and workers.

## **Legislation**

Although there is no single piece of legislation that explicitly applies to lone workers, there are a number of legislation that apply indirectly, these are, but not limited to:

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974;
- The Corporate Homicide Act 2007;
- The Management of Health at Work Regulations 1999, Regulation 3 and 13
- Protection from Harassment 1997.

## **Definition of a Lone Worker**

There are many definitions of a lone worker; for our own purposes, we will use the HSE definition: a lone worker is someone who:

“works by themselves without close or direct supervision”.

Within Cloch Housing Association a lone worker is likely to include the following:

- Working outside normal office hours, even on a one-off basis.
- Working with the public/service users on your own or away from colleagues (out of sight or earshot).

- Working on your own, in an office, at home or some other location.
- Working in other's homes, premises or external sites.
- Travelling alone as part of your job (this does not include commuting).
- Working in the reception area alone, or in another area isolated from the rest of the organisation.
- Working in the office but away from colleagues.
- Any other situation identified through the risk assessment process.

### **Employer Responsibilities**

As your employer, we have a responsibility to make sure you are safe while you work for us and this includes any time you are lone working.

To do this, we will:

- Make sure risk assessments are carried out and reviewed regularly or as and when required.
- Provide procedures for working safely while you are lone working.
- Make sure you are provided with appropriate and relevant training to understand our procedures.
- Have reporting systems in place to record, investigate and review any near misses and incidents.
- Involve you when considering potential risks with lone working and reasonable control measures.
- Make sure you are issued with a copy of this policy.
- Review this policy and update it as is appropriate.
- Ensure our records are up to date with regards to our customer information.
- Carry out regular checks on your safety equipment / PPE to ensure it is working and is recorded as such.

### **Employee Responsibilities**

You also have responsibilities, which we expect you to fulfil. These are as follows:

- Abide by our lone working procedures and speak to a manager if you are unsure of anything.
- Not knowingly put yourself at risk or endanger others by your actions.
- Remove yourself from any situation you do not feel comfortable and/or safe in.

- Report all lone working incidents and near misses by following our reporting procedures.
- Attend training when this is provided.
- Take part in our lone working risk assessment process.
- Whilst in a lone working situation, carry out an informal/dynamic risk assessment.
- Know, understand and follow this policy and the procedures.
- Ensure your emergency contact person is provided with our contact details in line with our policy.

## **Managing Risks**

The overall purpose of risk management is to identify, eliminate, reduce, and control risks.

It is recognised that lone working can present increased risks to staff. It is therefore the responsibility of both of us to manage these.

In practice this means that we will carry out lone working risk assessments which will identify any potential risks. We will also consider the following during the exercise:

- The remoteness of the workplace;
- Potential communication problems;
- The likelihood of a criminal attack;
- Potential for verbal and physical abuse;
- Consideration of lone workers' potential feelings of isolation, stress and depression;
- Whether or not all equipment, materials, etc can be handled safely by one person;
- Whether or not the person is medically fit and suitable to work alone;
- How the lone worker will be supervised;
- How the lone worker will obtain help in an emergency such as an assault, vehicle breakdown, accident or fire;
- Whether or not there is adequate first-aid cover.

In conducting the lone working risk assessment, we will:

- Give consideration to the additional risks to expectant mothers and young persons; or persons with prescribed disabilities.

- Where practical have the person that owns the risk conduct the risk assessment, where this is not possible or practical they will as a minimum be involved in the process and in the development of safe working methods;
- Maintain a file of all lone working assessments (these have to be signed off by the employee and the line manager and are held in their personnel e-folder).
- Make sure those working alone are provided with adequate information, instruction and training to understand the hazards and risks and the safe working procedures associated with working alone.

A formal risk assessment will take place prior to all known lone working situations however, it is important that you are aware and are comfortable to undertake a dynamic risk assessment in any lone worker situation you may find yourself in. If you feel you require guidance on this, please speak to your line manager.

### **Near Miss and Incident Reporting**

It is vital that you report any lone working near miss or incident as soon as possible to your line manager. If it is not possible to report immediately, the incident must be reported within 12 hours of it occurring. On reporting the incident, the line manager must act in accordance with our reporting procedures as detailed in our Health and Safety Manual and they will update you accordingly.

All near miss and incident information must be report to the H&S Administrator and a near miss/incident form completed. The forms are available on the K drive and staff portal.

### **Lone Working Procedure**

Where lone working is necessary you will:

- Follow our safe working arrangements which are as follows:-
  - Check SDM system to ensure visit does not require a 2-person or office visit only.
  - For those staff provided with the new Totalmobile SOS fob; this must be taken with them at all times and must be charged before leaving the office.
  - Keep your mobile phone charged and switched on at all times.
  - Mark up on the Whiteboard at reception where you will be and what time you expect to be back.
  - Keep your electronic diary up to date with details of visits and allow your team access to this.

- If you are not coming back to the office you need to let your line manager know when you have finished your visit and that you are safe/going home.
- If entering a premises ensure you can get out quickly if required (keep other person in front of you so you have a clear exit).
- Make reasonable steps to ensure your own safety;
- Remove yourself from any situation you feel unsafe or uncomfortable and move to a place you feel safe and report to your line manager;
- Inform your line manager/assessor of any near misses, incidents or safety concerns;
- Follow the emergency procedures below when lone working if required:-
  - If a situation escalates, remove yourself to a safe place (eg your car, public space). Call emergency services if required and/or active the Totalmobile fob if you have been provided with this.
  - As soon as possible phone your line manager to advise what has occurred.
  - Report the incident/near miss within the 12 hour window.
- Make sure you know, have read and understood the lone working risk assessment and all the control measures in place;
- Make sure arrangements are in place so that someone else is aware of your whereabouts at all times.
  - Use your telephone Communications Assistant to say “out of office”
  - Mark up on the Whiteboard at reception where you will be and what time you expect to be back
  - Keep your electronic diary up to date with details of visits and allow your team access to this.
  - If you are not coming back to the office you need to let your line manager know when you have finished your visit and that you are safe/going home.

## **Training**

All staff will be trained in line with our lone working procedures to make sure they are aware of the potential risks and our own procedures to reduce and eliminate these.

## **General Data Protection Regulations**

Cloch Housing Association will treat your personal data in line with our obligations under the current data protection regulations and our own Data Protection policy (No 84). Information regarding how your data will be used and the basis for processing your data is provided in Cloch's employee privacy notice.

## **Review of Policy**

This policy and the procedures it contains will be reviewed at least every 3 years. All staff shall be required to sign off the Lone Working Risk Assessment, which is an appendix to the policy.

## **Additional Information**

- The Health & Safety Executive (HSE) published guidance on:-  
Working Alone: Health and Safety Guidance on the risks of lone working.
- ACS
- Health & Safety Control Manual