

# LONE WORKING POLICY

## 1.0 Introduction

The Brain Tumour Charity (referred thereafter as 'The Charity') recognises that some staff are required to work away from the office, by themselves without close or direct supervision. These occasions may also fall outside of 'normal' Monday to Friday 9-5.30pm working hours. Examples of lone working include those who are working alone in the office or at home. It could also include those attending events, meetings or home visits on their own.

Where lone working is necessary, The Charity will take all reasonable steps to ensure the health and safety of staff working alone. The Charity also recognises and supports that some staff members may choose to work alone in certain circumstances however where this is the case, staff must take reasonable steps to ensure their own health and safety.

## 1.1 Who does this policy apply to?

- All members of The Charity staff team, both office and field based.
- Volunteers.
- Trustees.

## 1.2 Aims and objectives of this policy

The Charity works with children, young people, adults and families who are affected by a brain tumour. This work sometimes requires lone working and it is the aim of this policy to ensure that every worker is safe in their practice. The Charity considers personal safety a top priority and has a duty of care to all its staff and volunteers to ensure they can lead active, safe and secure work lives. This policy provides advice on planning ahead, assessing risk and coping with difficult situations.

To learn more about the steps the charity takes to safeguard our community please refer to the **Safeguarding Children** and **Safeguarding Adult's Policy**. There is also separate **Face-To-Face Fundraising guidance** based on The Code of Fundraising Practice, which details how the charity safeguards our community in this context.

## 1.3 Definition of a lone worker

'Someone who works by themselves without close or direct supervision.'

The Health and Safety Executive (March 2020) Protecting Lone Workers: How to manage the risks of working alone.

## 1.4 Risks associated with lone working

Risks that could affect lone workers include:

### 1. Violence in the workplace:

Lone working can make staff more vulnerable and the lack of nearby support could make it harder for them to prevent an incident.

### 2. Stress, effects on mental health or wellbeing:

The lack of direct support from other's could make a staff member feel more isolated, potentially affecting their performance, stress levels and mental health.

### 3. A person's medical suitability to work alone:

There may be some circumstances where an individual's health condition requires additional measures in place to ensure their physical and mental well-being.

4. The workplace itself, for example if it's in a rural or isolated area.

## 1.5 Responsibilities

### **The Brain Tumour Charity will ensure that:**

- The risks to lone workers are considered in The Charity's general risk assessment, including the steps that will be taken to avoid or control these risks.
- If deemed necessary, an individual risk assessment is completed for a member of staff who will be undertaking a specific lone working activity. This should consider the points detailed below in section 1.6. Occasions where an individual risk assessment is required will include, but may not be limited to, completing home visits and lone working in a vehicle.
- Staff required to work alone are capable of undertaking the lone working activities.
- Arrangements are in place so that someone else is aware of a lone worker's whereabouts (e.g. a line manager or nominated staff buddy). Where there is concern for a staff member's safety or well-being (e.g. if they have not returned from the visit, maintained contact with their Buddy and/or cannot be contacted), the line manager should be informed in addition to the staff member's Next of Kin and if necessary, the police.
- Staff complete the charity's E-learning Safeguarding training.
- Due regard is given to the health and well-being of staff who frequently lone work and appropriate support mechanisms are in place including but not limited to: regular check-ins with their line manager, staff awareness of Mental Health First Aid at Work, staff access to well-being training courses on The Charity Academy.
- Training records are kept on People HR.
- Staff are familiar with the contents of this policy.
- There are arrangements in place for monitoring incidents linked to lone working and that the effectiveness of this policy is regularly reviewed.
- Appropriate support is given to staff involved in any incident.
- Staff are provided with a mobile phone, and other personal safety equipment, where this is felt desirable.

### **The lone worker will ensure that:**

- When leaving their workplace (or home) they must record details of where they are going and their estimated time of arrival back at base, on Outlook. On the rare occasions that the meeting may be at a private address, staff should link to the relevant Salesforce record.
- If, in the course of a trip away from the office, plans change significantly, this should be communicated back to the office.
- If the visit is assessed to have sufficient risk, arrangements should be made with a manager or a nominated buddy to check that the lone worker has returned to their base or home on completion of a task.
- They have access to a mobile phone, that it is charged and switched on.
- They report personal safety related accident, incidents, and near misses.
- They take all reasonable precautions to ensure their own safety, as they would in any other circumstance. Lone workers should refer to the Suzy Lamplugh Trust for personal safety tips and advice <https://www.suzylamplugh.org/Pages/Category/personal-safety-advice>

## 1.6 Guidance for completion of Individual Lone Working Risk Assessments

### **Where required a lone worker and their manager should complete an Individual Risk Assessment, giving consideration to:**

- The remoteness of the workplace.
- Potential communication problems.
- The likelihood of a criminal attack.
- The greater risks to expectant mothers.
- Potential for verbal and physical abuse.

- Vulnerability of lone workers to feelings of isolation, stress and depression.
- Whether 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.
- Whether there is adequate first-aid cover.
- Whether the staff member is suitably experienced to be working alone.
- The development of control measures to reduce any potential risks.

Following completion of a lone working assessment, this should be stored on People HR.

## 1.7 Community and home visits

- Consider whether a home visit is absolutely necessary. In the majority of cases meetings should occur in a public place such as a café.
- Gain a relevant background of the individual or family and any information that The Brain Tumour Charity holds.
- No member of staff should undertake an initial home visit on their own, unless: a risk assessment has been completed with their line manager.
- All home visits must be appropriately planned with full consideration given to risk assessment findings e.g. visiting with a colleague for an initial visit.
- No volunteers will ever undertake a home visit.
- Staff attending a home visit alone must check in with their line manager or a designated buddy before and after the visit. If the staff member does not call back within the specified time, the Line Manager or buddy should try to contact the staff member by phone.
- Where there is concern for a staff members safety or well-being (e.g. if they have not returned from the visit, maintained contact with their Buddy and/or cannot be contacted), the line manager should be informed in addition to the staff members Next of Kin and if necessary, the police.

## 1.8 Dealing with a Personal Safety Emergency during a home visit

- If you feel uncomfortable or threatened in anyway, leave the property.
- If in immediate danger, call 999.
- If you are in a situation where you are prevented from leaving or overtly seeking help, phone the office and use The Charity's code words 'Jake's folder' in the conversation. Once these code words have been used, it is the responsibility of whoever answers the phone, to implement emergency procedures immediately, which includes calling the Police and informing the staff member's line manager.
- Stay calm and be mindful of your body language and volume & tone of speech. Avoid any actions which may escalate the situation or appear confrontational – crossed arms, raised voice etc.
- Report the emergency to your Line Manager as soon as possible.

## 1.9 Lone working with Children and Young People under the age of 18

Charity staff and volunteers may come into contact with children under the age of 18 at charity events. Staff and volunteers should not be alone with children or support with any aspects of personal care. There may be occasions when young people aged 13–17 may attend a Charity Event (such as a teen day or Young Adult meet up) without their parents present. If the young person needs assistance travelling to and from the event, then planning should occur to ensure that two members of staff are present.

## 1.10 Lone working in a vehicle

- Staff are strongly discouraged from being alone in a vehicle with one of The Charity's Supporters. Where necessary, charity staff can support with making alternative travel arrangements such as booking trains or taxis on an individual's behalf to negate the need for the staff member to provide the transport in their own vehicle. There may be rare occasions when it is deemed safe and

appropriate for a staff member to give a Supporter a lift in their own vehicle. However, this must be agreed with their line manager in advance and be subject to an individual risk assessment.

- Volunteers must never be in a situation where they are alone in a vehicle with one of The Charity's Supporters.
- Subject to the above considerations, staff should only transport Supporters in their own car if they have valid business insurance in place.

## 1.11 Lone working in the office

Charity staff are discouraged from working alone in the office. If this cannot be avoided:

- Ensure time alone in the office is kept to a minimum and that your line manager or a colleague is aware you are alone in the office.
- Agree a time for a quick check-in with your line manager / colleague; if the staff member does not check in by the agreed time, the manager/colleague should try and contact them.
- If you are working alone in the office, you must ensure that you are aware of the emergency procedures and the location of the first aid kit and accident book.

## 1.12 References

Suzy Lamplugh Trust [www.suzylamplugh.org](http://www.suzylamplugh.org)

The Health and Safety Executive (March 2020) Protecting Lone Workers: How to manage the risks of working alone <https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg73.pdf>

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