
Lone Worker Policy & Risk Assessment



August 2022

Note: This Policy should be read and applied, with reference to all of the LYM Policies.

1. INTRODUCTION

Lincolnshire Youth Mission (LYM) recognises that some staff/volunteers are required to work by themselves for significant periods of time in the community without close or direct supervision, in isolated work areas and often out of normal working hours. The purpose of this policy is to protect staff/volunteers, so far as is reasonably practicable, from the risks of lone working.

LYM recognises it has an obligation under the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974) and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1999), for the health, safety and welfare at work of its staff/volunteers. These responsibilities apply equally to those staff/volunteers who, for whatever reason, work alone. They require LYM to identify hazards, assess the risks and put measures in place to avoid or control the risks.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all Staff employed by LYM and also includes volunteers. The policy applies to all situations involving lone working arising in connection with the duties and activities of our staff/volunteers.

3. DEFINITION OF LONE WORKERS

LYM defines a lone worker as any individual who, in the process of carrying out their duties on behalf of LYM, may find themselves working alone or in an area isolated from colleagues. This will include:

- Staff working in buildings / Vehicles on their own
- Drivers taking a vehicle to or from a stop

LYM recognises that any member of staff/volunteers may spend a limited amount of their working time 'alone'.

There are some circumstances where staff/volunteers are required by law not to work alone. These situations are:

- Young persons under the age of eighteen years who must be working under direct supervision of a competent person
- People who work in confined spaces
- Persons who work at or near electrical conductors

4. THE HAZARDS OF WORKING ALONE

Staff who work alone face the same hazards in their daily work as other workers. However, for lone workers, the risk of harm is often greater. Hazards facing lone workers include (but are not restricted to):

- Fire may pose difficulties for an isolated worker in evacuating a building when the fire alarm activates

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- Lifting and handling tasks may pose more risk to an individual member of staff
 - Electrocutation which is not witnessed and hence medical attention cannot be sought

In practice this policy will apply to a small number of staff/volunteers, especially when they are working in isolated locations and/or when carrying out known high-risk activities. High risk activities may include:

- Working alone in isolated locations
- Driving on isolated roads

5. POLICY AIMS

This policy aims to:

- Increase staff awareness of safety issues relating to lone working
- Ensure that the risk of working alone is assessed (see Lone Worker Risk Assessment at the end of this Policy) in a systematic and ongoing manner, and that safe systems and methods of work are put in place to eliminate risks to staff working alone or to reduce those risks to the lowest practicable level
- Ensure that appropriate training is available to staff in all areas, that equips them to recognize risk and provide practical advice on safety when working alone
- Ensure that appropriate support is available to staff who have to work alone
- Encourage full reporting and recording of all accident/incidents relating to lone working
- assault our staff
- Ensure that LYM complies with relevant health and safety legislation and best practice

6. RESPONSIBILITIES

Lone working environments present unique health and safety challenges. Although there is no specific legal guidance on working alone, under Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, and the Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1999, LYM are required to organise and control the health and safety of lone workers. All incidents including near misses pertaining to lone workers should be reported to the Chair of Lincolnshire Youth Mission Ltd or a Board Member.

LYM Board of Directors are responsible for:

- Promoting and supporting the aims and objectives of this policy
- Making sure that there are arrangements for identifying, evaluating and managing risk associated with lone working
- Providing resources for putting the policy into practice
- Making sure that there are arrangements for monitoring incidents linked to lone working and that the Board reviews the effectiveness of the policy

In addition the Board is responsible for:

- Ensuring that, in the event of a physical assault on a member of staff, systems are in place so that police are contacted immediately either by the person who has been assaulted or an appropriate manager or colleague and that full cooperation is given to the police in any investigation
- Evaluating training programmes to ensure they are of the highest standards and well represented

Lone Worker Policy

Board of Directors

August 2022

- Undertaking training needs analysis to ensure the Associations training programme meets the needs of its staff
- Producing statistics on attendance and feedback on health and safety training for the board of directors, and others as required

Project Management Teams and/or Project Steering Groups are responsible for:

- The operational management of health and safety in their scheme/ services
- Promoting and supporting the aims and objectives of this policy
- Ensuring that all staff and volunteers are aware of the policy
- Identify staff who may be lone workers
- Ensuring that risk assessments are carried out and reviewed regularly
- Assessing the need for working alone
- Putting procedures, devices and/or safe systems of work into practice which are designed to eliminate or reduce the risks associated with working alone
- Ensuring that appropriate support is given to staff involved in any incident recording, reporting, and investigating any incidents involving a lone worker and making recommendations to prevent recurrence
- Ensuring mechanisms are in place to account for, and trace, the whereabouts of lone working employees and that these systems are regularly checked
- Ensuring that accurate records of training undertaken are maintained

All **staff** are responsible for:

- Taking reasonable care of themselves and other people who may be affected by their actions
- Familiarising themselves with relevant health and safety policies and procedures
- Co-operating by following rules and procedures designed for safe working
- Considering and assessing potential risks to their health and safety
- Reporting all incidents, difficulties or risks raised from lone working, however minor, to their manager even if they do not wish any further action to be taken. Failure to report an incident may put others at risk
- Attending all training designed to meet the requirements of the policy
- Reporting any dangers they identify or any concerns they might have in respect of working alone or the safe working arrangements
- Not interfering or misusing anything provided for their, or others, safety
- Being certain of **three important things**:
 - i. That they have full knowledge of the hazards and risks to which they are exposed
 - ii. That they know what to do if something goes wrong and
 - iii. That someone knows their whereabouts, what they are doing and when they are due back.

In addition, the **Board of Directors** are responsible for:

- Ensuring relevant policies are in place to protect the health and safety of staff
- Monitoring the number of incidents relating to lone workers
- Ensuring that lessons learned from incidents are communicated throughout LYM
- Monitoring training statistics and feedback

7. ASSESSING RISK

The assessment of risk is simply a careful examination of anything that may cause harm to staff or others during the course of their work.

A risk assessment is the first step in deciding what prevention or safe working arrangements (control measures) need to be taken to protect staff from harm. All staff whose work contains an element of lone working should carry out a risk assessment of the work, for example, when new premises, vehicles or routes are introduced. Lone workers should not face any more risks than other staff or volunteers within the LYM. They may, however need extra measures put in place to control specific risk.

The risk assessment will provide an indication as to whether the work can or cannot be done safely alone. If the risk assessment indicates unacceptably high levels of risk then the work should not be undertaken unless further safe working arrangements are implemented, for example two or more people working together.

Risk assessment should take account of both normal work and foreseeable emergencies including fire, potential risks such as violence, aggression and containment as well as illness and accidents. The format of the assessment will become a written record and will show any significant finding of any person who may be particularly at risk. The 5 step process, outlined below, should be followed when assessing risk:

- Identify any hazards
- Decide if the person/s may be affected/harmed and how
- Evaluate the risk arising from the information you have already gathered
- Record your findings and eliminate the risk or put control measures in place to reduce the level of risk to the lowest level practicable
- Review the assessment on a regular basis

Risk assessment must be carried out in all areas of work where working alone poses an actual or potential risk to staff. Risk assessment should be carried out by competent persons, be recorded, evaluated at appropriate staff and managerial levels and communicated to all whom their contents may have a bearing upon during the performance of their work. Factors to consider when carrying out the risk assessment include the following:

- Does the activity need to be carried out alone?
- Does the activity need to be specially authorised before lone working can commence?
- Does the workplace present a special risk to the lone worker?
- Is there a record or history of violence, aggression, verbal and physical abuse or racism at the location?
- Is there a potential risk of violence/aggression?
- Does the task being undertaken with the person have the potential to cause them to become angry?
- Is the area being visited a known trouble spot?
- Is there a safe way in/out for one person?
- Can the building be secured to prevent entry but still maintain sufficient emergency exits?
- Are there known drugs, alcohol or mental health issues, which need to be considered?
- Can the risks of the job be adequately controlled by one person?

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- Can the equipment, substances and goods involved in the work be safely handled by one person?
 - Is the person medically fit and suitable to work alone?
 - What training is needed to make sure the staff member is competent in safety matters?
 - Have staff received the training which is necessary to allow them to work alone?
 - How will the person be supervised?
 - Are people of a particular gender especially at risk if they work alone?
 - Are new or inexperienced staff especially at risk if they work alone?
 - Are younger workers especially at risk if they work alone?
 - What happens if a person becomes ill, has an accident, or if there is an emergency?
 - Are there systems in place for contacting and tracing those who work alone?
 - Will the visit/meeting be taking place out of hours?

Details of the risk assessment should be recorded on paper or a retrievable electronic database and should include:

- The extent and nature of the risks
- Factors that contribute to the risk including job content and specific tasks and activities
- Safe systems of work to be followed to eliminate or reduce the risk
- Numbers of staff and others affected by the activity
- Any changes, recommendations, training, policy and procedural reviews necessary
- Who is responsible for ensuring the identified actions in the risk assessment are followed through to a logical conclusion
- Environmental factors e.g. lighting, temperature, noise, floor conditions etc

Information from the risk assessment should be passed to staff. Risk assessments should be reviewed and updated each year, or sooner should circumstances change or there is an incident involving a lone worker.

8. MANAGING RISK

The risks that lone workers face should be reduced to the lowest reasonably practicable level. Using safe working arrangements depends largely on local circumstances, local procedures and protocols. Local procedures and protocols should be put in place to provide staff with specific local guidance in relation to lone working and the associated risk reduction techniques. Issues to consider in developing safe systems of work include:

- Having in place reporting systems to ensure that the whereabouts of staff and volunteers are known
- Consider working patterns and hours of work which at certain times of day or night could reduce risks
- Joint working with others for high-risk activities
- Training to increase staff awareness of risk and the precautions to be taken
- Supervision and auditing of working practices
- Using personal protective equipment or mobile phones and personal alarms
- Joint communications meetings with other services (Police, Social Services etc)

9. SUPERVISION

Although lone workers cannot be subject to constant supervision, it is still LYM's responsibility to ensure staff safety as far as is reasonably practical. Supervision can help to ensure that staff understand the risks associated with their work and that necessary safety precautions are carried out.

Supervision will also be needed when checking progress and compliance with any existing or new control measures that have been put in place as a result of the risk assessments.

Procedures will need to be put in place to monitor lone workers to ensure that lone workers remain safe, these may include:

- Regular contact between the lone worker and remote supervision (eg telephone or digital connection)
- Regular checking of procedures designed to raise the alarm if contact is lost with a lone worker
- Regular checking of other safety devices to ensure that they still work

10. STAFF TRAINING

LYM will provide health and safety training as required.

In relation to Lone Working, staff should be aware of how to deal with potential incidents, and be able to recognise how their own actions can influence or even trigger an incident.

11. REPORTING AND RECORDING

All staff should familiarise themselves with the LYM's accident/incident reporting procedure.

Staff should report **all** accidents/incidents to their Project Director / Line Manager at the earliest opportunity.

Staff should also report 'near misses', where they feel threatened, or 'unsafe', or that their life was in danger from mechanical or electrical mishap - even if this was not a tangible event/experience. Failure to report an incident may put others at risk.

Any incidents or near misses should be reported on LYM's accident/incident form. The completed form should then be passed to their Project Director / Line Manager, who will investigate the incident, implement preventative measures to ensure there is no recurrence of the incident and communicate lessons learned to other staff. A report on the incident will be provided to the Board of Directors without delay.

12. IMMEDIATE SUPPORT FOLLOWING AN INCIDENT

In the event of an incident involving a lone worker, Members of the Project Local Management Team should immediately ensure that the employee receives any necessary medical treatment and/or advice.

13. INVOLVING THE POLICE

If a situation arises which requires Police attendance, the employee at risk, or other relevant person, should contact the Police immediately.

LYM will seek to take legal action in all cases of physical violence and in specified cases of verbal violence, if deemed appropriate.

14. RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

In addition to the above, all staff should ensure that they are aware of the LYM's policies on Health and Safety at Work.

Appendix A **LONE WORKER SECURITY RISK ASSESSMENT FORM**

This risk assessment form aids the reduction of various factors which may be linked to accidents, acts of violence, harassment, theft and criminal damage. Use one form for each lone worker.

Guidelines for Managers and, or assessors

Where lone working takes place in the community the following minimum precautions must be observed:

- Regular lone workers must have a means of confirming arrival and departure from a lone working situation. This must be done even in an emergency.
- If they do not have their own mobile phone, the lone worker must be provided with an aid to communication, such as a mobile telephone.
- Lone workers must receive adequate training including general Health & Safety requirements, security awareness and conflict resolution training.

Breakdown of assessment

- (1) Activity
- (2) Area of work
- (3) Other concerns expressed by the worker
- (4) Remedial action
- (5) Risk probability
- (6) Control measures
- (7) Notification and review
- (8) Re-assessment notes

The following forms should be used when assessing any Lone Worker situation:

Lone Working Risk Assessment Form – Managerial Summary

ASSESSMENT	
Activity being covered by this assessment:	LYM agreed?
Employee name:	Date of Assessment:

(please tick Yes or No box)

Activity	Yes	No
Does this staff member or volunteer work alone?		
Does this staff member or volunteer have a mobile telephone, radio or panic alarm device to contact others?		
Are there means of communication between this person and others?		
Could this staff member or volunteer be located easily at any given time?		
Are there checks to see if any communication policy is adhered too?		
Is a Member of the Local Management team or nominated person notified of all lone worker events?		
Area of working:		
Is the lighting adequate in the area visited?		
Is there any lighting?		
Is the area visited quiet / unfrequented?		
Driving a LYM Vehicle:		
Is the vehicle deemed to be safe?		
Have regular safety checks (in addition to legal requirements) been carried out?		
Has the route of travel been agreed to be "safe".		
Have all electrical systems been checked regularly?		
Are all mechanical and electrical systems able to be easily isolated?		
Do relevant mechanical & electrical systems have security measures to prevent tampering?		

Other concerns – please specify

List any possible immediate remedial action:

Managers / Assessors notes

Use the information gathered so far with the worker to assess the probability of a security threat, or threat of violence to the worker. Complete the risk probability table and record your findings in the overall risk rate section then move on to the next step.

Use the table to assess the risk rating; **example**

Risk level 1 (low) + severity level 1 (minor injury) + likelihood level 1 (not likely) = **3**

- **The Risk** can be defined as the level of risk the particular activity being assessed carries.
- **The Severity** can be defined as the level of injury that may occur during an activity.
- **The Likelihood** can be defined as the perception of a violent or dangerous occurrence happening.
- **Major injury** can be defined as Death, amputation, disability, severe wounding, and broken limbs.
- **Modest injury** can be defined as Fractures, cuts, bruising.
- **Minor injury** can be defined as including emotional upset, shock.
- **Not likely** can be defined as very remote
- **Likely** can be defined as an incident could occur.
- **Very likely** can be defined as an incident will occur.

Risk probability table (where common sense and experience suggest the criteria)

Risk level 1-3	Severity 1-3	Likelihood 1-3	Overall risk rate
1. Low	1. Minor injury	1. Not Likely	
2. Medium	2. Modest injury	2. Likely	
3. High	3. Major injury	3. Very Likely	

Risk Probability (**Part 2**)

Use the scale below to assess how you must now proceed.

Lone Worker Policy

Board of Directors

August 2022

Overall Risk rate	Next step
3-4	Needs to be reviewed annually at re-assessment date
5-6	Needs to be monitored and reviewed regularly
6-7	Changes must be made to work practice and procedures
7-9	This activity must be judged as very Dangerous.

CONTROL MEASURES

Please specify any measures you think are essential to reduce the risks, use page 1 as a guide to minimum precautions.

Alterations to procedures

(1) _____

(2) _____

(3) _____

(4) _____

(5) _____

Expected date of completion: ___/___/___

Alterations to safety practices. (equipment, training etc.)

(1) _____

(2) _____

(3) _____

(4) _____

(5) _____

Expected date of completion: ___/___/___

Expected date of training: ___/___/_____

Alterations to staff or volunteer working systems

(1) _____

(2) _____

(3) _____

(4) _____

(5) _____

Expected date of completion: ___/___/_____

Copies of the risk assessment to be sent to:

Project Director Yes / No

Management Review:

Name and title of the person who completed this assessment:

The date of planned review of this assessment: ___/___/_____

✓

NOTE: A review should take place following any significant incident, or change in work practice.

RE-ASSESSMENT NOTES

When re-assessing please take note of the following:

- Identify any reasons why dates of completion were not met (if any)
- Identify any reasons for none compliance (if any)
- Have any violent incidents occurred since the date this assessment was first completed. If so please specify how the incident was reported.

Have there been any changes to the scheme/service or the workers job that is likely to affect this risk assessment:

Yes	No
✓ Complete new risk assessment with worker involved.	✓ No need to complete a new risk assessment.
✓ Keep this old assessment of file	✓ Ensure current risk assessment reviewed regularly.

Date reviewed: ___/___/_____

Next planned review date: ___/___/_____