



Lone worker policy guide



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Introduction

Lone workers require their own policies and procedures to ensure they are protected from risks and hazards specific to lone working. A lone worker safety policy is a written document that will set out your companies' rules on working alone.

As well as documenting your official policy and procedures, it should also help your employees to understand the risks they may face, and how to mitigate them. Your lone worker policy should be completed by a competent and experienced person within your organization, and be tailored to your individual business needs, job roles, and risk profiles.

This guide covers what to include in your lone worker policy, and how to create one for your business.

What should my lone worker policy include?

Lone working policy statement

A lone working policy statement is made up of one or two paragraphs outlining the organizations dedication to meeting their legal requirements.

A definition of lone working

You must be clear on when you consider your employees to be lone working, so they know when the policy applies to them. For example, do you consider those working late in the office alone to be lone working or does your policy only refer to those leaving the office to carry out home visits?

Your lone worker risk assessment

Set out a list of the risks identified as part of your risk assessment and break them down by job role, location and lone worker type. If you have a number of lone workers carrying out different roles, you should consider writing several policies. This will help your employees to better understand the risks that are relevant to them.

The lone worker procedures and measures you have put in place

It is important for your employees to know what actions you have taken to

reduce risk and what is expected of them. While you should provide briefs and training on the procedures your lone workers need to follow, the policy provides a point of reference.

The purpose of the lone working safety policy

This section provides an opportunity to let your employees know you care about their safety. The focus here should be on the benefits to their wellbeing rather than your own benefits or legal requirements. Communicating with an emphasis on safety and wellbeing will help to encourage compliance.

Employee and employer responsibilities for lone worker safety

In order for procedures and systems to work, both the business and its employees must be aware of their responsibilities. Be clear on which responsibilities are the lone worker and which are their supervisor's.

How to report on hazards or incidents

Outline how and when your employees are expected to report a hazard or incident. Is it the lone worker's responsibility or that of a health and safety representative? Do they need to fill out a form, or do you have an online portal for reporting?

Additional help and support

You should consider including additional information on who employees can contact if they have any concerns, or require additional support. This may include any health and safety representatives within the organization, as well as, external agencies, charities, or support groups.

Tips for creating your lone working policy

Creating your lone working policy is an important task and we understand that sometimes it can seem daunting. Getting your lone workers on board is perhaps the greatest challenge which is why we have put together these tips for creating your lone worker safety policy.

Keep it simple

To ensure your lone workers understand and follow your policy, you should keep it as concise and simple as possible. Use language they would understand and clearly outline what is expected of them. Clarity is key, so consider the layout of the document as well as the language used.

Update it regularly

It is important that your policy is regularly updated. Whenever your risk assessment is reassessed or when you introduce new lone working policies you should update it. A new training course, or implementing a lone worker solution, are good examples of when your policy should be updated.

Involve your lone workers

In order to get your lone workers on board with your new lone worker policy, you should consider involving them in all aspects of the process. Get their input on identifying risks, as well as their recommendations for safety improvements. Once your lone working policy has been developed, consider holding a workshop or health and safety day to discuss why you have developed the policy and what has been put in place. Be sure to focus on a clear safety message and the benefits to your lone workers.

Be direct

While you want to encourage adoption through focusing on employee safety and wellbeing, you also need your employees to understand that the policies and procedures are a requirement. Be direct in the language you use in your lone working policy. Avoid using words such as 'you should' or 'you could' which suggests a choice, use 'you must' or 'it is a requirement that...'

Your lone working policy will be developed as an extension to your lone working risk assessment. The policy document will include your risk assessment and the lone worker procedures you have put in place to reduce or eliminate the identified risks.

Example lone worker policy document

Creating a lone worker policy is an important step in ensuring the safety of your lone workers. Below is an example lone worker policy document. Whilst it provides a basic guide for you to follow, you will need to carefully review and amend the document to suit the needs of your organisation.

[INSERT COMPANY NAME] LONE WORKER POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT

This policy sets out the approach that [INSERT COMPANY NAME] will undertake in managing Lone Working. [INSERT COMPANY NAME] has a legal duty to look after the health, safety and welfare of its employees and this includes a duty of care to reduce, as far as reasonably practicable, the risks associated with lone working within the workplace. These duties are set out in the Health and Safety at Work Act (2015).

PURPOSE OF THE LONE WORKER POLICY

[INSERT COMPANY NAME] is committed to the provision of a safe place of work for all employees, clients, visitors, contractors, volunteers and those affected by or involved in our business activities. We will ensure that lone workers are not exposed to additional or greater risk than any other

workers. More specifically we will ensure that lone workers are identified, hazards and risks are assessed and appropriate action is taken to reduce these risks.

DEFINITION OF LONE WORKING

Lone workers as those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision. At [INSERT COMPANY NAME] lone workers can be split into two main categories:

- ✓ people who work in fixed establishments e.g.
 - ✓ [INSERT YOUR JOB PROFILES HERE]
- ✓ remote workers working away from fixed base e.g.
 - ✓ [INSERT YOUR JOB PROFILES HERE]

There is no general legal prohibition on lone working, however the employer must identify the hazards, assess the risks involved, and put measures in place to avoid or control the risks. If the risk assessment shows that it is not possible for the work to be done safely by a lone worker, then other arrangements need to be put in place.

WHOM THIS POLICY COVERS

This policy applies to all staff including permanent, temporary, contract or agency staff representing [INSERT COMPANY NAME].

Lone worker risk assessment

A risk assessment is an integral management tool that should be completed to ensure your employees are safe in their work. You should include your lone worker risk assessment in this section.

A lone working risk assessment is the process of identifying and assessing risks associated with a job role carried out by a lone worker.

There are 6 steps you need to take in order to identify and control the health and safety risks faced by your lone workers:

- ✓ Identify the hazards
- ✓ Decide who might be harmed and how
- ✓ Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions
- ✓ Record your significant findings
- ✓ Communicate with and train your workforce
- ✓ Review and update

We have a comprehensive guide to undertaking lone worker risk assessments, including a template for you to use, which you can download [here](#).

Responsibilities in relation to lone working

The employer will ensure that:

- ✓ emergency procedures are in place so that lone working employees can obtain assistance if required
- ✓ a risk assessment is completed by a person competent to do so prior to employees working alone
- ✓ any employee working alone is capable of undertaking the work alone, the company / monitoring partner is aware of a lone worker's whereabouts at all times
- ✓ lone workers are provided with adequate information, instruction and training to understand the hazards and risks they face, and the procedures associated with working alone
- ✓ training records are kept, and individuals' personal data (including information about their health) collected during lone working assessments is handled in accordance with the organization's data protection policy / policy on processing special categories of personal data

Lone workers will ensure that they:

- ✓ follow the safe working arrangements developed by the organization
- ✓ take reasonable steps to ensure their own safety
- ✓ inform their line manager / assessor of any incidents, or safety concerns

Lone working procedures

A lone worker procedure refers to a series of steps that need to be followed in order to work alone safely. You may find it useful to write a number of procedures suitable for different groups of employees so that they are able to digest the correct information easily. **You should document all your lone working procedures in this section.**

Lone working procedure examples include:

- ✓ how the lone worker should check-in with their supervisor and how often
- ✓ how and when to use any lone worker solutions, such as apps or devices
- ✓ what to do in an emergency including evacuation procedures and who to contact
- ✓ what to do when a client shows signs of aggression
- ✓ what to do when unauthorised visitors attempt to enter a building where the employee is working alone

Lone worker safety solutions

It is the line manager's duty to ensure that each member of the team is issued with a lone worker solution such as a cell phone app or device, if appropriate.

The manager should ensure that users receive adequate training and are confident in how to use their lone worker solution. Department managers are responsible for overall monitoring of lone worker solution usage.

Reporting

Should an incident or near miss occur, employees must inform their line manager as soon as possible. Standard company guidance on incident reporting can be found in [INSERT DOCUMENT LOCATION].

Line managers should ensure that victims receive adequate support, for example medical assistance, counselling or time off as appropriate.

Evaluation/Review

This policy will be reviewed on [INSERT DATE] and in the event of an incident.

As part of your review process you should consider:

- ✓ whether there have been any significant changes in the workplace
- ✓ whether your policies and procedures have been effective
- ✓ whether your lone workers have identified any other issues
- ✓ whether any accidents or incidents have occurred
- ✓ whether any changes or updates need to be made to the policy

Additional help and support

The [Occupational Safety and Health Administration](#) (OSHA) has published guidance and support materials to help organizations manage the health and safety of their staff. You can find more information on their website.

Further information

Whilst writing your lone worker policy and undertaking your risk assessments you may find that your lone workers could benefit from a specialist solution to keep them safe at work. Advances in technology and the prevalence of cell phone use means that many organizations are using apps to protect their lone working staff and get help to their exact location in an emergency.

The StaySafe app and cloud based Hub gives employers visibility of the location and safety status of lone workers and allows them to check-in safely during and once they have finished a lone working or travel session - helping you to meet your duty of care to staff and keep them safe.

For more information on the [lone worker solutions](#) available and for additional advice on lone worker safety, please [get in touch](#).



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