



East Herts Council

Health and Safety Policy

Lone Working

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Under Review - DRAFT



1. **Policy Statement**

1.1. Where the conditions of service delivery or its associated tasks require an employee to work alone; both the employee and their manager have a duty to assess and reduce the risks which lone working presents.

1.2 The Health and Safety Executive defines “Lone Working” as:

"Lone workers are those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision. They are found in a wide range of situations".

For the context of this policy lone working may be any combination or one of the following examples:

- Working alone at the Councils offices and facilities
- Home workers
- Routine visits to other sites during normal working hours
- Routine out-of- hours visits
- Emergency call out
- Remote or hazardous sites
- Empty, derelict or abandoned premises and sites
- Dark/confined premises
- Unmade ground and building sites
- Home visits or meeting the public off site
- Driving on Council business

1.3 This policy applies to all Council employees including temporary and agency staff, volunteers, students and those on work experience.

1.4 This policy should be read in conjunction with the Health & Safety and Safeguarding policies including, where relevant, those of partnership organisations.



2. **Purpose**

- 2.1 This policy is designed to alert employees to the risks presented by lone working, to identify the responsibilities each person has in this situation, and to describe procedures to minimise risk.
- 2.2 The Council has a responsibility under Health and Safety at Work legislation to ensure all employees reduce the risks to lone working and to implement suitable and sufficient measures to ensure employees' safety at all times when out of hours, off site or lone working. This may cover those parts of employees' homes that may be considered an extension of the workplace due to agreed home-working arrangements.

3.0 **Lone Worker Service Provision**

- 3.1 The Facilities Manager is responsible for the contract management of the Lone Worker service 'Skyguard – Guardian 24'. All incidents of service failure must be reported to the Facilities Manager (via FMhelpdesk@eastherts.gov.uk)
- 3.2 Relevant employees will receive a personal safety device and will be trained in the correct use of the device and protocols by their Line Manager. Lone Working Personal Protection Devices are to be used in accordance with the practice guidance as directed by the device supplier.
Appendix A
- 3.3 In the event of device activation during out of hours events the Alarm Response Centre (ARC) will follow the necessary arrangements to provide assistance to the lone worker. The Alarm Response Centre will send an email to human.resources@eastherts.gov.uk with the details of the incident. Human Resources will check emails daily and will contact the relevant manager.



4.0 Lone Working

4.1 The Council's principles for supporting lone workers include:

- A commitment to supporting employees and managers both in establishing and maintaining safe working practices
- Recognising and reducing risk
- A commitment to the provision of appropriate support for employees
- A clear understanding of responsibilities
- The priority placed on the safety of the individual over property
- A commitment to providing appropriate training
- Ensure appropriate equipment is made available

5.0 Personal Safety

5.1 Employees should take all reasonable precautions to ensure their own safety, as they would in any other circumstances.

5.2 Reasonable precautions might include:

- Checking directions for the destination
- Ensuring your car, if used, is road-worthy and has break-down cover
- Ensuring someone knows where you are and when are expected home
- Having your Lone Working Personal Protection Device (if issued) with you and in a working condition
- Avoiding where possible poorly lit or deserted areas
- Taking care when entering or leaving empty buildings, especially at night
- Ensuring that items such as laptops or mobile phones are carried discreetly

For more information see the Suzy Lamplugh Trust website

<http://www.suzylamplugh.org/personal-safety/personal-safety-tips/>



- 5.3 Before working alone, the Corporate Lone Workers Risk Assessment should be reviewed. This is available in the Health and Safety pages on the intranet.
- 5.4 Employees must inform their manager or other identified person when they will be working alone, giving accurate details of their location, an agreed plan and inform their manager when the task is completed. This includes occasions when a staff member expects to go home following an external commitment rather than returning to their base.
- 5.5 If an employee does not report in as expected, an agreed response plan should be put into operation.
- 5.6 The response plan should be tailored to the needs and nature of the team. Issues to take into account include:
- Staffing levels and availability
 - The identified risks and measures
 - Where employees work alone for extended periods and/or on a regular basis, managers must make provision for regular contact, both to monitor the situation and to counter the effects of working in isolation
 - Employees working away from the office should ensure that they have access to a mobile phone at all times and must be issued with a lone worker device (employees are responsible for checking that mobile phones and lone worker devices are charged and in working order)

6.0 Working alone at another building/location

- 6.1. Managers and employees must ensure that: -
- All appropriate steps are taken to control access to the building/room and that emergency exits are accessible
 - They are familiar with the fire and, if applicable, intruder alarm procedure and know the location of both exits and alarms



- When making a booking at a venue there will be somebody else present in the building (i.e. Building Manager or Caretaker) and that this person can be contacted in the event of an emergency.
- There is access to a telephone and first aid kit
- If there is any indication that the building has been broken into, they call for assistance before entering
- Whenever possible that they park in a well-lit and busy area
- Ensure sign in and sign out procedures are followed where required

7.0 Employees working at home

- 7.1 Employees working from home should take every reasonable precaution to ensure that their personal address and home telephone number remain confidential.
- 7.2 Homeworkers should be in regular contact with their manager or designated person. Managers should be particularly aware of the importance of such arrangements for homeworkers that live alone (please view the Homeworking Policy)

8.0 Monitoring and Policy Review

- 8.1 Any employee with a concern regarding lone working issues should ensure that it is discussed with their manager or with the whole team, as appropriate.
- 8.2 This policy shall be reviewed after three years or sooner in line with legislation and best practice to reflect the best possible level of support and management.



Appendix A

Lone Working Service Guidance

Skyguard specialise in lone worker security and safety and have a dedicated 24/7 Alarm Receiving Centre (ARC) to manage emergency calls on a daily basis.

What happens when you raise the alarm on your personal safety device?

Alarms can be raised by simply pressing the dedicated SOS button which connects to the 24/7 UK based Alarm Receiving Centre (ARC), certified to BS 8484 and BS 5979 (Category II). The ARC controllers will be able to view the user's GPS location and the user's pre-registered emergency information, including escalation procedures and contacts.

Controllers will listen-in and if it's safe to do so, talk to the user. Utilising all the information available the Controllers will manage the incident; contacting the emergency services and/or the organisation's nominated responders.

The Incident Management Centre will listen to what is happening at your end, and if it's safe to do so, talk to you to advise and reassure you. If it's not safe to talk, you don't need to speak the Call Centre will send assistance right away, if necessary. The incident will also be recorded remotely – vital should the incident go to litigation.

How to care for your device

The care and use of your lone worker device is very important for your safety and you should fully understand the lone worker procedures and lone worker policy to support you in a lone worker environment. There are certain steps to take to ensure your device is in full working order.

- a. Ensure your device battery is fully charged before starting work and that you have charging/spare batteries with you if you are away from the lone worker device charging point for extended periods of time.

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- b. When entering lone worker areas ensure that you check the signal strength of your lone worker device. If there is no signal in the area you intend to carry out lone working, then inform your manager and work out a risk mitigation plan with them.
- c. Ensure you protect your lone worker device from the weather and environment (unless the device is weather and shock proof).
- d. Ensure you are trained on the functions on your lone worker device and how they work so that if you need to operate your lone worker device in an emergency you automatically know how it operates.
- e. Depending on your situation you may need to place your lone worker device in a position that you can operate it easily and discreetly if required. Consider this before your start your lone working duties.
- f. Work with the Council to ensure appropriate training, policies and procedures are in place and implemented.

Under Review - DRAFT