



POLICY

LONE WORKING

REVIEWED POLICY MARCH 2023

Wellhouse - The Place To Be

Policy Created:	September 2016
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1. Vision and values

Wellhouse – the Place to Be.

This simple statement is our vision of Wellhouse as an attractive place where people feel happy and safe, benefit from having a good home and an attractive environment and feel proud to be part of a vibrant community.

We believe that our values of **Trust, Honesty and Integrity, Excellence, Accountability and Sustainability** supported by a comprehensive policy framework will help make our vision a reality.

2. Governance

Wellhouse HA is a community controlled registered social landlord and is managed by a group of local people who are elected onto the Management Committee. Their role is to make sure that the Association is well run, meets the needs of the local area and is responsive to what is important to local people.

The Management Committee appoints senior staff, agrees all the Association's policies and takes all the key decisions. The Director and the senior team support the Committee in these responsibilities.

3. Policy Aims

This policy aims to:

- Increase staff awareness of safety issues to lone working
- Make sure that the risk of working alone is assessed in a systematic and ongoing way, and make sure that safe systems and methods of work are put in place to reduce the risk so far as is reasonably practicable
- Make sure that appropriate training is available to staff in all areas, that equips them to recognise risk and provides practical advice on safety when working alone
- Make sure that appropriate support is available to staff who have to work alone
- Encourage full reporting and recording of all adverse incidents relating to lone working
- Reduce the number of incidents and injuries to staff related to lone working

4. Equal Opportunities, Diversity & Human Rights Statement

We aim to ensure that all services, including the delivery of this policy, provide equality of opportunity.

We will respond to the different needs and service requirements of individuals. We will not discriminate against any individual for any reason, including age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage, civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, or other status.

Trust Honesty Integrity Excellence Accountability Sustainability

5. Introduction

The organisation aims to limit lone working where reasonably practicable. Where lone working is necessary, we will take all reasonable steps to make sure you are safe while you work for us.

Within Health & Safety (H&S) law 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 where possible, eliminate these. You have a duty of care to co-operate, provide us with relevant information and abide with the measures that have been put in place.

6. The Policy

This policy and the procedures it contains applies to all employees, 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:

- 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 however, we will use the HSE definition, describing a lone worker as someone who:

“works by themselves without close or direct supervision”.

In the organisation, a lone worker is likely to include:

- Working outside normal office hours, even on a one-off basis.
- Working with the public on your own or away from colleagues.
- Working on your own, in an office, at home or some other location.
- Working in other’s homes or premises.
- If you travel alone as part of your job (this does not include commuting).
- Working in the reception area alone, and isolated from the rest of the organisation.
- Working in the office but, away from colleagues.

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:

1. Make sure risk assessments are carried out and reviewed regularly or as and when required.
2. Provide procedures for working safely based on the risks identified in the risk assessment.
3. Make sure you are provided with appropriate and relevant training.
4. Have reporting systems in place to record, investigate and review any near misses and incidents.
5. Report near misses/incidents on behalf of you if you are unable to do this.
6. Review near misses/incidents, this will include a review of the risk assessment and working procedures.
7. Inform HSE using RIDDOR procedures (if required).
8. Make sure you have appropriate supervision.
9. Provide you with appropriate aftercare and support (in the event of any incident).
10. Make sure you are issued with a copy of this policy.
11. Review this policy and update it as is appropriate
12. Involve you when considering potential risks and control measures.

Employee Responsibilities

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

1. Act responsibly in your work with us at all times.
2. Not intentionally provoke or inflame a potentially aggressive situation.
3. Not knowingly put yourself at risk.
4. Remove yourself from any situation you do not feel comfortable and/or safe in.
5. Report all incidents and near misses, by following our reporting procedures.
6. Complete the near miss/incident report form, (if you are able to do so).
7. Attend training when this is provided.
8. Take part in the formal risk assessment process.
9. Carry out an informal/dynamic risk assessment as and when necessary.
10. Know, understand and follow this policy and the procedures.
11. Speak to your line manager if you are unsure of anything.
12. Ensure your emergency contact person is provided with your line managers' contact details in line with organisation procedure.

Training

All staff will be trained in lone working to increase awareness of the potential risks and to control and reduce these as far as is reasonably practical.

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;
- 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;
- 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 & Safety Manual and they will update you accordingly.

All near miss and incident information must be reported to your line manager and a near miss/incident form completed. The form is available from [INSERT LOCATION]

Near Miss and Incident Reporting

It is vital that you report any near miss situations or actual incidents as soon as it has occurred to your line manager. If it is not possible to report immediately, it must be reported within 12 hours of occurring. Your line manager will make sure the appropriate steps are taken to share this information with the organisation and any governing bodies, if required, and that the risk assessment is updated if appropriate. All near miss and incident information must be reported to the Director along with a near miss and an incident form completed. The form is available from Sharepoint

Once you have reported the incident to your line manager the following will happen:

- Your line manager will have an informal, private discussion with you and discuss any support where appropriate.
- Your submitted near miss/incident form will be reviewed by your line manager. If it is not possible for you to complete this, your line manager will complete this with input from you.
- Your line manager will share any appropriate information with the organisation and any governing bodies, if required, and inform you if the risk assessment should be reviewed.
- A review of the control measures will take place.
- Any updated information will be issued to you.

General Data Protection Regulations

The organisation will treat your personal data in line with our obligations under the current data protection regulations and our own policy GDPR Policy. Information regarding how your data will be used and the basis for processing your data is provided in Wellhouse HA's employee privacy notice

Freedom of Information

As at November 2019, the Association is subject to FOI and all enquiries with respect to Notifiable Events will be handled strictly in line with FOI and confidentiality policies.

Review of Policy

This policy and the procedures it contains will be reviewed 3 yearly.