

Lone Worker Considerations

Numerous occupations involve lone working and although UK legislation does not contain a definition of working alone, it is generally accepted that it means working in an area where there are no other workers present. Thus in the event of an emergency there is no one to give assistance or summon help.

Lone workers are those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision, and they can be found in many working environments.

There is no time limit attached to working alone, it may be for the whole work period, or for only several minutes.

It is a thought process that individuals must be sure they engage in to assure personal safety.

As the employer [yourself if you are self-employed] you must take steps to ensure that any hazards in relation to an employee working alone are eliminated, or if not practical to do so, minimised.

Key Actions:

- You must carry out a risk assessment to demonstrate safety controls have been considered/ introduced for any lone worker. These controls are to be proportionate to the level of risk
- Consider the location and type of work being undertaken in your risk assessment.

Risk Assessment

Risk assessments will cover all work currently undertaken alone (or proposed to be), where the risk may be increased by the work activity itself, or by the lack of on-hand support should something go wrong.

The assessment should:

- Identify any hazards;
- Assess the nature and severity of the risks taking into account the likelihood of any violence and abuse or Injuries from animals;
- Enable control measures to be sought and implemented to remove the risks; and
- Minimise the risks so that they are adequately controlled.

Take reasonable precautions

Reasonable precautions' might include:

- checking directions for the destination
- ensuring your car, if used, is road-worthy and has break-down cover 1
- ensuring someone knows where you are and when are expected home
- 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

Training

Where necessary, all lone workers should be fully trained in the safe working practices to be adopted in order to carry out their tasks safely. This will apply to employees and other workers where applicable, such as agency staff and self-employed contractors.

Lone worker duties

All lone workers are expected to co-operate fully with any instructions given by their employer. They are also expected to follow their employer's safe systems of work and any associated procedures.

There are a number of useful safety devices available that can play a useful part of a person or organisation's overall personal safety strategy.

For more information see the Suzy Lamplugh Trust website

<http://www.suzylamplugh.org>.

Related document: Sample Risk Assessment [Patoss Risk Assessment and Policy Template](#)