



ELHAP Lone Worker Policy

Definitions:

Lone Workers are defined by the HSE as “those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision.”

However, UNISON prefers the definition of “a worker whose activities involve a large percentage of their working time operating in situations without the benefit of interaction with other workers or without supervision”

1. Introduction

1.1 There is no legal prohibition on working alone. However, there are general duties in the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and also requirements to assess and control risks in the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regs 1992.

1.2 ELHAP will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that members of staff who are required to work alone or unsupervised for significant periods of time are protected from risks to their health and safety.

1.3 Lone Working potentially exposes members of staff to particular hazards and it is ELHAP’s intention to reduce the risk and where elimination is not possible, to introduce appropriate control measures.

1.4 The Health & Safety Executive (HSE) identify lone workers as a category of vulnerable persons who might be harmed and who need to be subject to particular attention during the risk assessment process.

2. Lone Workers

2.1 People working alone or in isolation from others may be at particular risk because of their vulnerability in the event of an attack. They may be at risk if they are not in regular contact with others and are not kept informed about relevant current developments.

Examples of lone working situations can include:

- Staff working alone at particular times of the day or night or in isolated parts of otherwise populated areas
- Staff working alone because there is no planned cover for absent colleagues

- Staff who are required to work alone for all or most of the time, such as staff working on outreach or undertaking a duty such as going shopping or to the bank
- Staff working alone as an occasional part of the job – eg staying on to finish urgent work after others have left work – or those who regularly work alone after hours or arrive early before others
- Staff who are keyholders or who are left to turn out the lights, set the alarm and lock up premises after everyone else has gone home
- Peripatetic workers whose work involves travelling or home visiting

3. Risk Assessment

3.1 It is the Project Worker's and Playworker's responsibility to ensure that an assessment of the working environment includes an assessment of the risks of working alone (Management of Health & Safety at Work Regs 1992). This assessment will include identification of hazards such as access and egress, equipment, substances, environment etc, but particular consideration will be given to:

- Non-routine working arrangements
- Working hours (time of day/night)
- The proportion of working time spent in the job away from other staff
- The length of any period(s) of time spent alone
- The age, experience, competency and training of staff left alone in situations where there is a risk of violence
- The existence of any known risks
- The remoteness or isolation of workplaces
- The possibility of violence or criminal activity from other persons
- Any risks of violence associated with particular location or work
- The nature of injury or damage to health and anticipated 'worst case' scenario
- Determining whether the risks of the job, and any foreseeable emergencies can be adequately controlled by one person
- Determining whether lone working is really necessary
- The adequacy of any control measures in place – eg arrangements for supervision and contact with those working alone, systems for checking their whereabouts or safe return to base
- Any problems with communication
- Security, supervisory and cover arrangements
- The effectiveness and reliability of any physical security measures

4. Control Measures

4.1 It is the Project Worker's and Playworker's responsibility to ensure that safe systems of work are developed to protect the Lone Worker and should include consideration of the following:

- Communication
- Training and instruction
- Provision of additional member of staff
- Working Procedures eg Process for requesting second person
- Personal Protective Equipment

- Checks to ensure that the lone worker has returned either to base or home upon completion or their work activity
- Monitoring

5. Communication

5.1 It is the Project Worker's and Playworker's responsibility to ensure that all members of staff identified as lone workers have equipment to enable them to communicate with their base office.

5.2 It is the lone workers responsibility to ensure that their communication equipment is maintained in good working order, eg batteries re-charged.

6. Training

6.1 It is the Project Worker's and Playworker's responsibility to ensure that members of staff are trained in the use of all appropriate communication equipment.

6.2 It is the lone workers responsibility to attend all training.

7. Safe Systems of Work

7.1 It is the Project Worker's and Playworker's responsibility to establish safe systems of work for the benefit of the lone worker to reduce their risk.

7.2 Any safe system of work will include a method of recording and tracking where members of staff are.

8. Reporting

8.1 Members of staff are required to report all incidences of violence and incidence of near misses.

8.2 Any faults identified with the communication system, the Lone Worker should contact their Line Manager.

9. Health Surveillance

6.1 ELHAP will assess the fitness of members of staff identified at risk by their manager, giving due consideration to the following:

- Do the circumstances of working alone place additional requirements on members of staff in terms of their physical or mental stamina?
- Is there a medical condition that makes the member of staff unsuitable for working alone?

10. Information and Training

10.1 All members of staff will be given the appropriate information, instruction, training and supervision to enable them to recognise the hazards and understand the risks involved with working alone.

10.2 All members of staff will be required to follow safe working procedures which will include communication procedures and awareness of emergency procedures.

10.3 All members of staff are required to co-operate with these efforts to ensure safe working and to report any concerns to their manager.

11. Non Communication - Alert

11.1 In the event that the lone worker does not make contact at the agreed time, the following will occur:

- a) The line manager will attempt to contact or identify the member of staff's location through contacting person's at their last known whereabouts.
- b) The line manager will contact the staff member's emergency contacts to identify the whereabouts of the member of staff.
- c) Finally if there is no response or adequate information from these two responses after 30 minutes of the agreed communication time, the police will be advised of overdue status name of member of staff, last known whereabouts, mobile number and car registration.

The line manager will record each of the above actions and complete an ELHAP Incident Report Form.

12. Emergency Procedure

12.1 In the event that an emergency telephone call is made, the following procedure will be initiated:

12.2 The Police will be advised that a Lone Worker has raised an emergency alarm, name of member of staff, last destination, member of staff mobile number and car registration.

12.3 The Manager and/or Project Worker's/Playworker's will then:

- a) Record all details from telephone message
- b) Dial 999 to ensure Police have received message, to confirm information and note Incident Number
- c) Contact Lone Worker
- d) Line Manager will liaise with the Police
- e) Complete ELHAP Incident Report Form

Updated on 18th April 2012