



## ESTABLISHED STANDARDS

# Lone Working

## Description

A lone worker is anyone working without the direct and immediate support of colleagues or others.

Lone workers face the same hazards at work as anyone else,

but there is a greater risk of these hazards causing harm as they may not have anyone to help them if things go wrong. These risks must be controlled through assessment and careful planning.

## Associated Standards

HSE Guidance INDG73 – Protecting lone workers [Suzy Lamplugh Trust](#)

## Guidance



### Lone workers could be

**Staff or contractors working outside of normal office hours**

**Those out of sight and sound of others in remote areas of premises.** These areas may have weak mobile signals too

**Those working remotely from central offices (see [Working at Other Sites](#))**

**Those working from home (see [Working at Home](#))**

**Those who travel as part of their job, including internationally.**



### Risks to consider

**A person's medical suitability** to work alone. Consider both routine work and possible emergencies, such as evacuation and first aid emergencies. These may put additional physical and mental burdens on the lone worker

**Stress, mental health and wellbeing.** Being away from colleagues can affect people's mental health and make it difficult to get proper support.

**Personal factors.** How experienced is the worker in their role and in working alone, have they had previous training regarding lone working in similar roles and environments? Are there any reasons why the worker might be more vulnerable, for example are they young, pregnant, disabled or a trainee?

**Violence.** Lone working does not always mean a higher risk of violence, but it does make workers more vulnerable. The lack of nearby support makes it harder for them to prevent an incident

**Workplace & activities.** Does the workplace present a specific risk to the worker, or is there possibility of conducting task not suitable for one person alone, such as heavy lifting?



### Training, supervision and monitoring

#### Training

Training is particularly important where there is limited supervision. Consider providing lone workers with extra training so that they have the best knowledge possible in avoiding, preventing and managing hazards in the first place.

You should set limits on what can be done while working alone. Training should include site specific protocols. This could include informing Estates and Security of your presence if working late in the office, for example.

Ensure staff are aware and confident of who to raise concerns to and they understand any monitoring system and procedures you use.

#### Supervision

Supervision levels will depend on the risk. Base this on your risk assessment. It's a good idea for a new worker to be supervised at first if they're being trained or dealing with new situations.

#### Monitoring

You must monitor your lone workers and keep in touch with them.

Ensuring colleagues are aware of work locations, travel plans, keeping diaries up to date and agreed keep in touch protocols are simple ways of achieving this.

Lone worker devices, simple Check-Call, Text-In or lone worker Smartphone app systems, can also form part of the monitoring process if required. Base this on the risk assessment.

## Escalation & Further Guidance

If you need any help or advice in completing a lone worker risk assessment, or for further information on lone worker training or devices, please contact your local Health and Safety Advisor.