

# Lone Working Policy

Most recent update: 02 April 2025

*This policy statement is in support of Cheshire West and Chester Council's corporate policy on lone working.*

## Aim

The Skills and Employment team is committed to the effective support and management of staff and volunteers in order to provide a safe working environment for all.

The team also recognises that all employees have a responsibility for ensuring the safety of both themselves and the service users with whom they are working. This policy has taken account of

- the Health and Safety at Work Act, 1974.
- the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations, 1999.

## Scope

The policy will cover all Cheshire West And Chester Council's (CW&C) Skills and Employment employees and volunteers working within the service and employees of our sub-contracted Adult Education partners.

## Definition Of A Lone Worker

A lone worker is defined as any person who works by themselves without direct or close contact with another employee, this includes:

- Working in a building on their own, including tutors working alone in a building with groups of learners. This might be when other people (either staff or public) are in the building and even close by, but the individual is working in isolation and is not seen by them.
- Any employee who is on their own outside, in the street, in a car or using public transport with members of the public around.
- Any employee who is alone with a service user in their home, although this practice is actively discouraged and requires prior management approval.

## Overview

Although there is no general legal prohibition on working alone, the broad duties of the Management of Health and Safety at work regulations still apply. This requires that risks are assessed and identified at work. It recommends that measures are put into place to avoid or control these risks and hazards. This Policy Statement aims to provide a systematic approach to protecting the safety of all lone workers.

### Management Responsibilities

1. Ensure a system of policy and guidelines distribution to all employees.
2. Ensure appropriate training is available to all staff to enable the accurate implementation of the policy and local guidelines.
3. Monitor the implementation of the policy and its effectiveness on staff safety.
4. Ensure all staff are aware of the need for, and their contribution to, the risk assessment process for lone working that applies within their current role.
5. Ensure all untoward incidents are reported to the Skills and Employment Manager and that the appropriate documentation is completed and guidelines followed.
6. Monitor and, where necessary, report any untoward incidents to appropriate CW&C partner agencies.
7. Provide appropriate resources which will aid employee's safety.
8. Ensure all venues and courses/activities are risk assessed and regularly review risk assessments and update work plans with staff. Venue risk assessments to be updated annually. Course risk assessments required for each course taught.
9. Ensure that employees have informed their colleagues of their location when working peripatetically eg outreach learning provision. This can be via access to electronic diaries and teaching timetables.
10. Ensure that specific safety arrangements are made for one-off arrangements eg a tutor/mentor having to visit a learner at home, although this practice is actively discouraged and requires prior management approval.

### Employees' Responsibilities

1. Comply with all guidelines set out in the policy.
2. Attend relevant training.
3. Be aware of and comply with the risk assessment process for lone workers relevant to your current role.
4. Complete the appropriate documentation following an untoward incident.
5. Share information that could have an impact on health and safety with your line manager.
6. Share information with the appropriate line manager and the seconding agency if for health reasons the employee is unable to work.
7. Ensure that a venue risk assessment has been completed for the building you will be working in and complete own course risk assessment for each course delivered.

8. Submit course notification forms so all provision that is planned for delivery is known to the Quality, Progression and Curriculum team.
9. Tutors carrying ICT equipment to offsite venues need to adhere to manual handling guidelines and take steps to enhance safety eg by asking for volunteers to help unload and load equipment at start and end of session.
10. All ICT equipment to be locked and out of sight whilst travelling in the car including stops eg at petrol stations.
11. If threatened in any way regarding the ICT equipment, hand it over without question.
12. If you have to visit a learner/service user at home, which should be a rare occurrence, arrange to confirm to the admin team by telephone that you have left the house and confirm your wellbeing.
13. The employee is responsible for ensuring their personal safety if they are working away from home or travelling long distances during working hours. The Skills and Employment management team has a responsibility to ensure that employees who are working away from home or travelling long distances are contacted if requested by the employee.
14. The employee should be aware of their own level of competence and what is beyond their competencies and should ensure that they take every step necessary to protect their own safety and not put themselves into positions that could make them vulnerable to harm.

## Training

It is important that lone workers are capable of dealing with violent and untoward incidents and they are provided with appropriate equipment and monitoring tools to ensure their personal safety. Training in the prevention and management of violence and intimidation will be available to all employees who are lone workers. Training information and instruction will also be provided in order to minimise risk when lone working.

1. Training needs will be identified via individual staff performance during Play Your Part discussions between employees and their line manager.
2. A report of attendance and non-attendance at training sessions will be recorded.
3. All training will be evaluated by the Skills and Employment operational management team.
4. Training needs will be identified by risk assessment findings.

### **Incident Reporting**

1. Any incident or 'near miss' will be reported to the line manager or deputy at the earliest opportunity.
2. The individual(s) involved in the incident will complete a council incident form and or system and where necessary an incident form for the seconding agency. The line manager must send the completed form to the relevant Health and Safety department as soon as possible.
3. If the incident involves a service user, details of the incident should be fully documented in the appropriate records.

### **Support For Staff**

The Skills and Employment management team acknowledges that staff members are affected both physically and emotionally by untoward incidents. Management will ensure that staff have active support following an incident and, where necessary, our Local Authority Occupational Health Unit will be involved to ensure that appropriate support is available to all staff.

### **Review of Policy**

The Skills and Employment management team will review this policy annually and ensure updates are cascaded to all areas of the partnership.