

Lone Working Guidelines

Most recent update: 02 April 2025

Preventative measures and guidelines

- All lone workers will be issued with panic alarms or mobile phones if requested, as appropriate, and will ensure they are fully competent in their use.
- Each council learning centre to have a panic alarm in the building or alternative arrangements.
- All offsite venues and courses/activities will have a thorough risk assessment before the course takes place. A specific risk assessment should be completed for the venue, course or for any changes eg a member of staff becoming pregnant.
- Employees will provide details of their daily events in the staff diary which the appropriate line manager will monitor. It is the employee's responsibility to keep this diary up-to-date.
- On the rare occasion a tutor needs to visit a learner at home, although actively discouraged, tutors will obtain prior management approval and contact their central team or 'buddy' to let them know the visit is taking place. They will contact at the pre-arranged time of completion whether or not the visit has ended. They will then contact again on completion. If the employee has not made any contact, the agreed co-worker/'buddy' will attempt to contact the employee. If there is no response, they will continue trying and also contact a senior member of staff within 10 minutes. If this is unsuccessful, the police will be contacted. Number to be made available.
- If required, due to the circumstances of the incident, the employee may need to use a coded message to indicate a request for help. The Skills and Employment team will use the code '**red file**' within the context of the conversation.
- Employees working alone in a room with service users will ensure that someone within the building knows they are working alone eg the caretaker of the building. They will also ensure a member of the central team is aware.
- Direct delivery employees will adhere to and comply with guidelines outlined in Appendix 1 and 2.

Travelling On Foot

- Carry a personal alarm.
- Think ahead and be aware of your surroundings.
- Do not carry large sums of money or valuables.
- Walk facing oncoming traffic to avoid kerb crawlers.
- Walk with confidence and purpose; try not to look as if you are not sure of where you are going.
- If someone tries to snatch your personal possessions or council equipment, hand them over without question.
- If you are being threatened, walk away quickly and shout loudly to attract attention.

- If you can't shout, use your personal alarm.
- Call the police straight away following a serious incident, followed by the Skills and Employment Team office soon after.

Travelling By Car

- Make sure the car is in good working order before setting off.
- Do not leave valuables/equipment visible in the car, even when you are in it. Be especially aware of handbags on the front seat.
- Ensure passenger doors are locked when travelling alone.
- When parking in daylight, consider what the area will be like after dark.
- When returning to your vehicle, quickly look around it to make sure there is no one waiting for you.
- Always park in a way that will let you exit in a forward direction.
- If you are forced to stop by another car, stay in the car, lock the doors and speak through a slightly open window, remember use your horn to attract attention if in trouble.
- Make sure you know what to do if your car breaks down, carry a mobile phone or change to make a phone call.
- When stopped at traffic lights, make sure there is enough room between you and the car in front to move out if necessary.
- Join a rescue or breakdown organisation.

Travelling By Public Transport

- Carry a personal alarm.
- Always sit near the driver, where possible.
- If possible, wait for the bus in a busy, well lit area. Have your fare ready, so you don't have to get your purse or wallet out. On trains, sit near the guard or the alarm system.
- Avoid upstairs compartments on buses, they may start off full but may empty quickly.
- Avoid empty compartments on trains.
- In stations, note where the exits are.
- Don't doze off, stay alert.

Visiting Service Users In Their Homes

This should be a very rare occurrence for team members and is actively discouraged. However, a situation could arise where it is necessary. When visiting people in their homes, the rule is to remember that it is their home and their territory.

It is the responsibility of all team members to consider the following points prior to and during home visits

- Do you have to go to the service user's home?
- Is there someone you could go with?
- Is your 'buddy' aware of where you are going?
- Do you have your personal alarm with you?
- When you arrive at the home, if you have driven, is your car parked safely? Will it be dark when you get out?
- When you arrive at the home, remember you are the visitor.
- Do you have your identification badge?
- Check that the service user is expecting you and that they understand who you are.
- Let the person lead you into the house and let them invite you to sit down.
- Wherever possible sit down nearest to the door.
- If the service user appears aggressive, drunk or under the influence of drugs make an excuse to leave and contact your line manager.
- Only take in what is necessary, handbags should be left in the boot of the car or in the main council/partner building.
- Try to avoid reacting to the house if it smells or is dirty, unless you feel it is appropriate, remember it is not your house.
- If the service user has pets which are particularly intimidating, make the excuse that you have an allergy, do not admit to intimidation.