



NEW DIRECTION SUPPORT

## **LONE WORKING AND PERSONAL SAFETY**

Name: New Direction Support

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### **Policy Statement**

This organisation believes that its staff should be safe at work and should not be exposed to undue or unreasonable risk. In particular, the organisation is committed to implementing measures that increase the personal safety and security of staff wherever possible, along with the safety of their personal property, and which ensure an effective response to personal safety and security incidents. The organisation also seeks to encourage people with learning disabilities who receive services, staff and others to have care and concern for the safe keeping of equipment and property, and the personal safety of all.

This organisation believes that staff working alone should not be at more risk than other employees. This organisation understands lone working to be working circumstances without close or direct supervision.

In this context the organisation recognises that its duty as an employer is to assess any risks to lone workers and take steps to avoid or control those risks where necessary. The organisation recognises that staff working alone in potentially isolated conditions have no immediate back up or support and so are at a greater risk of injury through aggression or violence directed towards them from individuals with learning disabilities, relatives, carers or the general public. The organisation also recognises that staff working alone need to rely on their own judgement and initiative and may be at a greater risk of making mistakes or errors.

This organisation recognises that training is particularly important for lone workers; research shows that adequate training is the single most critical factor in avoiding panic reactions in unusual situations. In particular lone workers need to be deemed competent to work alone, to be sufficiently experienced and to understand the risks

New Direction Support (a Premier Care Plymouth Ltd company)

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and precautions needed fully. The organisation recognises its duty as an employer to ensure employees are competent to deal not only with the day to day facets of their work but with circumstances which are new, unusual or beyond the scope of their training, for example, if threatened with aggression and violence.

This policy applies to all organisation staff without exception.

## **The Policy**

### **Personal Safety**

This policy is intended to set out the values and principles underpinning this organisation's approach to ensuring that staff working for the organisation are as safe as is reasonably practical while at work or when travelling to and from work.

### **Responsibilities of the Organisation**

The organisation will:

- Seek to ensure that it can respond effectively to all personal safety and security incidents, including incidents involving violence or threats of violence to staff, through the preparation of plans, management of incidents and appropriate follow up and recovery actions, as deemed necessary
- Seek to ensure that the personal safety of staff is always considered a factor when planning individual care plans with individuals with learning disabilities receiving our services, especially with regard to staff travelling to and from an independent living setting; and, wherever possible, arrangements that involve staff travelling to and from houses alone during the hours of darkness and in isolated areas or in known high crime areas, will be avoided when possible. If this is not possible then appropriate risk assessments and clear strategies will be identified and implemented.
- Special attention will be paid to people living individually who exhibit challenging behaviour, this may be in the form of a staff double up if the risk is deemed to be high
- Be responsible for crime prevention/loss reduction measures, including assessing threats to personal safety of staff, as well as investigating and initiating follow up actions in response to any reported incidents
- Provide staff with a personal alarm, where necessary; raise awareness of personal safety and security issues by offering training and advice to staff and individuals with learning disabilities on personal safety and security.

### **Responsibilities of Staff**

This organisation believes that personal security is also the responsibility of every member of staff. The organisation expects every member of staff to accept that responsibility and to:

- Act and behave in a way so as to ensure their own safety and security at all times

- Act and behave in a way so as to ensure the safety and security of people with learning disabilities and property in the areas in which they are working
- Report all personal safety and security incidents, including violence or threats of violence to themselves, and suspicious activities or incidents
- Always leave information of their whereabouts with the office and with a friend/relative, and to advise the office of any changes to their whereabouts
- Never leave equipment visible in their cars, especially items like mobile phones, laptop computers, etc.; staff should only carry equipment that is strictly necessary for the visit they are making and should lock items in the boot
- Always try to park in a well-lit, open location, or walk to the home of a person with learning disabilities, along well-lit and populated routes.

All staff are strongly encouraged to carry a personal mobile phone and to ensure that an up-to-date contact number for it is left with the main office in case they need to be contacted. Staff carrying mobile phones should ensure that the battery is fully charged before leaving for work. A spare mobile phone is kept in the office for emergency use.

### **The Organisation's Offices**

Security is also considered an issue in the organisation's office(s), especially for staff working alone there. The organisation's security lead, Martin Malloch will conduct or arrange to conduct regular risk assessment checks around the office(s) specifically designed to pick up on security issues. Checks will be carried out on a monthly basis and should include:

- Alarms
- Security lights
- Window and door locks.

Staff need to be aware of who is in the building at all times. Any designated staff working beyond their standard "going home" time should check who is still in the building before they leave.

Staff should enter the building using the appropriate security system i.e. a key or a keypad-controlled entrance. Codes for the keypad should be kept secret by staff and never disclosed to anyone else. Keypad numbers should only be made known to staff on a "need to know" basis. Staff should never leave any security controlled outside door open.

Staff will check the identity of any visitors and their details will be recorded as appropriate. Visitors will only be able to access areas where it is deemed appropriate and their movements monitored as required.

### **Note:**

This organisation pursues a zero-tolerance policy towards aggression and violence.

## **Lone Working**

By definition, lone workers are those who work without close supervision throughout their working day. Procedures are in place to monitor lone workers to ensure they remain safe and to provide supervision on a regular basis.

Supervision helps to ensure that staff understand the risks associated with their work and that the necessary safety precautions are carried out. The extent of supervision required depends on the risks involved and the ability of the lone worker to identify and handle health and safety issues.

When a member of staff visits an individual in their own home he or she may be at risk through health and safety hazards in and around clients' homes and of physical or verbal assaults and hostility from clients, relatives and the general public. Recent evidence suggests that such incidents may be on the increase and home visiting protocols should take this into account, particularly in high risk areas such as high crime rate areas.

## **Pets in the home**

We recognise the important part that pets play in our Service user's wellbeing and will always work with the Service Users and their pets.

However, as an employer, we have a legal responsibility to provide a safe working environment for our workers and employees along with a duty of care for our Service Users.

The health and safety of any staff member visiting their home will always be considered. One aspect is the presence of pets in the home.

The initial needs assessment will identify any health and safety issues including the presence of pets in the home.

If there are pets the assessor will ascertain where they will be when the staff member arrives. A risk assessment will be put in place and become part of the care/support plan.

The service user will be asked not to allow the pet to approach any staff member visiting their home without the handler first ascertaining:

- Whether the member of staff is likely to be allergic to the animal's fur or hair
- Whether the member of staff wants to be approached by the pet

Any pets who are not sociable must be removed from the working area of the staff member for the duration of their visit.

Before their initial visit staff will be informed if there are pets in the home and any preventative measures put in place.

The following infection control procedures should also be in place::

- Staff handling pets must wear a disposable plastic apron
- Immediately afterwards the apron must be removed, and hands and forearms washed

Assistance dogs are highly trained, have regular veterinary treatments and are tested on a regular basis to make sure they don't present a health risk. The Chartered Institute of Environmental Health has determined that they are unlikely to present a risk to

hygiene. They will not wander around and are trained to lie quietly on the floor near the owner during visits.

### **Organisation Procedures:**

- The assessment of all new referrals include a risk assessment which identifies threats from health and safety hazards, from aggression and violence and any other context specific threats to lone working
- Lone workers will carry panic alarms and/or mobile phones so that they can summon help quickly, all phones will include an emergency number which will be attended at all times that staff are working
- Lone workers will call in at regular intervals to report that they are safe, including at the end of a shift
- Administration staff in the central office will log and keep details of all home visits as well as having access to the names, addresses and telephone numbers of people being visited
- Supervisors will periodically visit and observe those working alone and there will be regular telephone contact between the lone worker and their supervisor.
- Administration staff in the central office will contact the duty manager in the event of any emergency situations
- In a situation where a lone worker feels an immediate threat to their physical safety, they will either contact the police directly or inform the duty administrator who will contact the police for them; the administrator will take all appropriate information from the lone worker, such as location and telephone number, and pass this on to the police, after the incident the lone worker will fill in an incident form.

It is strongly advised that staff carry the absolute minimum amount of equipment in their cars and that they always park their car in a well-lit, public place if at all possible. Thefts from cars are a major area of concern and muggings of care staff are a real threat, especially in high crime areas. If on foot then care staff should avoid dark, unlit, isolated routes.

In cases where care is to be provided in a high crime area or to a client with a known history of aggression or violence associated with them, then a targeted risk assessment will be completed by the supervisor/manager. Where a significant risk is identified then the care plan will be altered accordingly, the case will be reviewed with the relevant case manager and action may be taken to arrange for care workers to attend in pairs.

### **Untoward Incidents**

Untoward incidents, including all incidents, which involve the use or threat of aggression or violence, will be reported, recorded, regularly reviewed and audited.

## **Related Policies**

Accident and Incident Reporting (RIDDOR)

Health and Safety

Challenging Behaviour, Violence and Aggression

Good Governance

Risk Assessment

## **Related Guidance**

HSE Lone Working- the basics for employers

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/lone-working/>

HSE

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/toolbox/workers/lone.htm>

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg73.pdf>

HSE Risk Management

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/risk/index.htm>

HSE A safe place of work

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/toolbox/workplace/facilities.htm>

## **Training Statement**

All staff will read this policy and be trained in personal security procedures. Security training will be included in the induction training for all new staff and in-house training sessions on security will be conducted regularly with all relevant staff attending. As part of the induction process supervisors must satisfy themselves that each member of staff is competent and safe to work alone and that they are clear about how to act in ways that will maximise their own safety and about what to do in an emergency situation.

All staff, during induction are made aware of the organisations policies and procedures, all of which are used for training updates. All policies and procedures are reviewed and amended where necessary and staff are made aware of any changes. Observations are undertaken to check skills and competencies. Various methods of training are used including one to one, on-line, workbook, group meetings, individual supervisions and external courses are sourced as required.

This policy will be reviewed by the Registered Manager.

Signed:

Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2026

Review Date: 9th March 2029