



Shildon Town Council

Lone Working Policy

Adopted	11 November 2019	
Next Review		

Lone Working Policy

1. Introduction

Shildon Town Council recognises that its employees are required to work by themselves for periods of time without close or direct supervision in the community, in isolated work areas and out of hours. The purpose of this policy is to protect such staff as far as it is reasonably practicable from the risks of lone working. The Town Council will take every practicable step to protect the health, safety and welfare of its employees including whenever they are required by the nature of their duties to work alone and without direct support and supervision.

The Town Council also recognises it has an obligation under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, for the health, safety and welfare at work of its employees.

2. Definition of Lone Workers

Lone workers are those who work unaccompanied without close or direct supervision. For example, employees working alone in an office or other base or working outside normal hours.

3. Aims of the Policy

The aims of the policy are to:

- a) Increase staff awareness of safety issues relating to lone working
- b) Recognise and reduce risk by ensuring that the risk of lone working is assessed in a systematic and ongoing way, and that safe systems and methods of work are put in place to reduce the risk as far as reasonably practicable
- c) Ensure that appropriate support is available to staff who have to work alone
- d) Encourage full reporting and recording of all adverse incidents relating to lone working.

4. Employers responsibilities

- The lone working arrangements of employees
- Determining the contents of this policy
- Ensuring that there are arrangements for identifying, evaluating and managing risks associated with lone working
- Ensuring compliance with the policy and providing resources for putting the policy into practice
- Ensuring that employees are aware of this policy
- Ensuring that appropriate support is given to employees involved in any incident
- Making sure that risk assessments are carried out and reviewed regularly

5. Employees responsibilities

- It is your responsibility to keep yourself safe. Employees should take all reasonable precautions to ensure their own safety, as they would in any other circumstances

- Taking reasonable care of themselves and other people who may be affected by their actions
- Co-operating by following rules and procedures laid down by the Town Council
- Report all incidents that may affect the health and safety of themselves or others and asking for guidance as appropriate.
- Taking part in training designed to meet the requirements of this policy
- Report any dangers they identify or any concerns they might have
- Recognise and assess potentially high-risk activities in conjunction with the line manager before carrying out any work activity and put in place appropriate arrangements to carry out the identified task safely to mitigate risk associated with working alone
- Lone workers should report any new or unrecorded hazards or risks to their Line Manager at the first opportunity, to enable the initiation of appropriate safe working arrangements
- Employees who operate alone should inform their Line Manager of any change to their personal circumstances, including health, which might have a bearing on their safe working arrangements.

6. Procedures for employees working in fixed bases

- Appropriate steps should be taken to control access to the building, and that emergency exits are accessible
- Alarm systems must be tested regularly
- Familiarise yourself with the Fire Safety procedures and identify escape routes
- Do not answer the door to unexpected visitors - in the case of contractors, ask for identification and don't let them in until you have checked it out
- Practice the locking up procedures
- Do not use lonely exit routes if there are safer alternatives
- If possible, avoid parking your car in badly lit areas, move it nearer to the place you exit the building if possible
- Carry a torch and personal alarm if working late
- Notify people at home when you intend leaving work and what time to expect you home
- Leave contact numbers at home so that the Town Council can be contacted if there are concerns for your safety
- Should you feel ill whilst working alone – seek help immediately
- Access to a telephone and first aid equipment

7. Procedures for mobile workers working away from their fixed base

- All staff should leave details of their movements and give an idea of how long they are going to be away from base and when they are expected to be back
- If plans change the staff member must ring in to let their main office based staff know
- Details of venues being visited, and a contact number should always be provided
- Avoid meetings in isolated locations
- If you work alone on a regular basis, assess any risks with your line manager and identify any measures needed to ensure your personal safety

Where there is any reasonable doubt about the safety of a lone worker in a given situation, consideration should be given to sending a second worker or making other arrangements to complete the task.

8. Prohibition of Lone Working

Certain situations require that employees cannot work alone, for example:

- Young persons under instructions and training on machines
- Certain fumigation activities and other work with substances hazardous to health
- Entry into confined spaces
- Scaffolding and using unsupported access equipment
- Locking up the Shildon Civic Hall at night

9. Incident Reporting

An incident is defined as 'an unplanned or uncontrolled event or sequence of events that has the potential to cause injury, ill health or damage'.

In order to maintain an appropriate record of incidents involving lone workers it is essential that all incidents be reported to your line manager who will prioritise each incident and identify any immediate action. Staff should ensure that all incidents where they feel threatened or unsafe are reported. This includes incidents of verbal abuse.

An annual review will be carried out on identified incidents and risk management measures undertaken and cascaded to employees.

10. Contact the police

The Council is committed to protecting the staff from violence and assault and will support criminal proceedings against those who carry out an assault. All staff are encouraged to report violent incidents to the police and will be supported by the Council throughout the process.