



# **LOAN WORK POLICY GUIDANCE ON LONE WORKING**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

There is nothing in general health and safety legislation that prohibits an employee from working alone except in some very specific circumstances in which at least two people must be involved in such work – see 3.0 below.

Considered below are the issues that management must take into account when deciding whether it is reasonable to permit or require unaccompanied work.

## **2. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Where tasks involve solitary work, the employer should recognise the possibility that a lone person may be more vulnerable, and must see that suitable safeguards are built into the procedures.

Many people frequently work by themselves, or are stationed some distance away from direct supervision. These may include: security personnel; switchboard operators/receptionists; drivers; mobile workers away from their fixed base, e.g. travelling salespeople; technical personnel, maintenance or repair staff, and home workers.

In addition to these occupations, there will be many occasions where people are working early or late in offices or other work premises.

In some work situations persons are not at risk because of the work that they carry out. There is a possibility that the lone worker may need to handle cash and/or other valuables, this could increase the risk of violence from others.

It is not practicable for the employer to make a general rule that people must not work alone. There will be times when lone work is unavoidable. Somebody has to be the first or last person to arrive or depart at the end of the working day.

## **3. WHERE LONE WORK IS NOT PERMITTED**

The law stipulates several hazardous working situations where more than one person should be in attendance.

- Where there is entry into a confined space, within the meaning of the Confined Spaces Regulations.
- Where a risk assessment under the Health & Safety (Young Persons) Regs indicates the need for a young person (under 18) to be supervised.

## **4. RISK ASSESSMENT AND PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES**

Where the employer has decided that lone working can be carried out with a minimum of risk, it is essential to have some sort of precautionary measures to monitor safety.

These should be appropriate to the task and the environment. Employers should devise a safe system, to monitor employees in remote locations. Such a system may include:

- Ensure all relevant personnel are aware of the plan for the staff member to be lone working. Precise details should be provided of days and times of lone working.
- A security check of the building should be conducted by 2 members of staff, prior to lone working taking place
- Check-in arrangements where the worker makes contact with a councillor either via a telephone call or text message. For example, upon arrival at the place of work and to repeat this process having left the building. The person receiving the call/text should acknowledge receipt.
- Lone working restricted to pre-determined areas of the building, for example, staff member's office, bathroom and reception areas.
- Lone worker to ensure their mobile phone is charged, readily available and on their person when moving around the building.
- All staff members to complete a Lone Working Risk Assessment Checklist prior to lone working.

The complexity of the contingency plans should be based upon:

- i. The consequences of an illness or injury.
- ii. The frequency with which lone working is to be carried out.
- iii. The type of work being undertaken.
- iv. The duration of each working period.
- v. The time that it would take to raise the alarm, and for assistance to reach the location.

## LONE WORKING RISK ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

**TASK:** \_\_\_\_\_

**SITE:** \_\_\_\_\_

COMP No.	QUESTION	Yes / No	COMMENTS <i>(if applicable, record existing controls)</i>
1	Accompanied working is not a legal requirement in this case?		
2	Would there be any adverse effects upon the undertaken task, if it were to be left unattended due to illness or injury of the lone worker?		
3	Have time restrictions been set for the work to be carried out by the lone worker?		
4	Have the hazards and risks associated with the task been identified and reduced to the lowest extent reasonably practicable?		
5	Have limits been set as to what can and can't be done while working alone?		
6	Are there written instructions, including contingency measures for foreseeable problems e.g. fire, injury, and power failure?		
7	If there are written instructions (question 6) have these instructions been issued and explained to the lone worker?		
8	Is there documented evidence to prove this?		
9	Is there a formal system for ensuring checks that the lone worker has returned to their base or home on completion of a lone working?		
	<b>Individual Staff</b>		
10	Is the individual a suitable person to work alone, i.e. competence and fitness?		
11	Is the worker free from medical conditions, which preclude them from lone working?		
12	Has he/she received adequate instruction & training in the risks and precautions, to include emergency situations and when to contact management?		

**Checklist Completed By:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Position:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

# LONE WORKING RISK ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

## ACTION PLAN

SITE: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

Comp No.	Comments and Action Required	By Whom	Target Date	Date Comp