

Lone Working Policy

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Relevant to	Church House Staff ✓ Clergy ✓ Parishes ✓
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Purpose

There will be occasions when clergy, lay workers, staff and volunteers will find themselves working alone in order to carry out their duties. The purpose of this policy is to try to reduce the risk of Lone Working wherever possible.

Scope

This policy covers all clergy, lay workers, those holding the Bishops' licence, employees and volunteers. Guidelines have been developed to consider the various situations of each of these groups and these should be read alongside this general policy.

The policy incorporates lone working activities, including, but not limited to:

- Working alone in an office, church or other workplace
- Visiting parishioners, church members, church officers, staff or others
- Working out of hours at evenings and weekends
- Using public transport

Policy

The Diocesan policy is to reduce any risk from lone working as much as possible. Wherever possible, lone working should be avoided. However, it is acknowledged that there will be occasions where lone working cannot be prevented. It encourages workers and volunteers to be aware of the situations in which they find themselves and enable them to conduct a risk assessment to consider whether a work activity is safe.

Potential hazards of lone working

There are a number of areas where risks may be greater when working alone:

- Accidents or sudden illness when there is no-one to summon help or first aid.
- Violence or the threat of violence.
- Allegations of inappropriate and/or abusive behaviour.
- Fire or other threat.
- Attempting tasks which cannot safely be done by one person alone, e.g. heavy lifting, or use of certain equipment.
- Lack of safe way in or out of a building (e.g. danger of being accidentally locked in).
- Loss or damage to property e.g. theft of laptop from parked vehicle.

Risk Assessment

Before carrying out any lone working a Risk Assessment should be conducted. A Risk Assessment template is provided at Appendix 1 for this purpose.

Lone Workers should consider the following points in determining whether an activity is safe to be carried out alone:

1. Recognise

Consider the activity that is to be undertaken. Does it have to be carried out alone? Is there another person who can accompany you? What are the known risks to yourself or others? Do you have any concerns?

2. Respond

Who knows where you will be? Tell someone what time you expect to be back. Is your mobile phone fully charged? How will you summon help if needed?

3. Record

Make a note of where you are going in your diary or an online calendar. Keep a record of visits and any concerns that arose.

4. Refer

Take advice from a manager, clergy person, Parish Safeguarding Officer or a member of the Diocesan Safeguarding team.

Further training on this Risk Assessment is available from the Diocesan Safeguarding Team.

If there is any doubt as to whether the activity is safe do not continue, but seek further advice from a member of the Diocesan Safeguarding Team.

Other support

Best practice advice on risk assessments and safety can be obtained from your Insurance Company. For example, information is available on the Ecclesiastical Insurance website:

<https://www.ecclesiastical.com/church/>

The Church of England National Safeguarding Team has produced a useful document: “Safer Environment and Activities”.

The document can be accessed via the link:

https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2019-11/safer-environment-and-activities-oct19_0.pdf

Suzy Lamplugh Trust <http://www.suzylamplugh.org>

National Churchwatch <https://www.nationalchurcheTrust.org/get-support/support-organisations/national-churchwatch>

Local Police Force websites:

Cheshire police: <https://www.cheshire.police.uk/>

Merseyside police <https://www.merseyside.police.uk/>

Greater Manchester police <https://www.gmp.police.uk/>