



# Lone Working Policy

<b>Document Classification</b>	Confidential	<b>Document Reference</b>	L2
<b>Document Categories</b>		<b>Version</b>	2.1
<b>Author</b>	Lucy Bowyer	<b>Date Created</b>	3/9/12
<b>Owner</b>	AKT	<b>Date Last Updated</b>	3/9/12
<b>Approved by</b>		<b>Date to be reviewed by</b>	Sept 2013



# Lone Working Policy

## Aim

The aim of this policy is to ensure that staff and volunteers who are undertaking Lone Working as a regular part of their work, are aware of the risks and the measures put in place by AKT to reduce those risks.

## Introduction

Lone Working is defined

Definition of a Lone Worker

A “Lone Worker” is defined as anyone who works alone out of contact with other staff for significant periods of time or on a regular basis. Within AKT, this could be a member of staff working in isolation at a Purple Door house or in an office and those staff who visit service users and carers in their homes. It also applies to those staff and volunteers who accompany young people or service users to appointments or on activities outside the organisation without another member of staff and who for that period of time are lone working.

## Risks associated with Lone Working

The risks faced by Lone Workers are largely dependent on the nature on the duties and tasks performed although it is possible to identify some common hazards. Some of these risks are listed below:

### Physical risks

**Workplace** – Staff working alone in offices, schemes, other employers’ workplaces or other people’s homes may not be afforded the same rigorous Health & Safety standards and comfort associated with a “usual” place of work. This is particularly so of staff working in other people’s homes and as such these places can be difficult to assess as they vary so much. In these circumstances it might be more appropriate to analyse the general risks associated with the employee’s job rather than the work location. Wherever practicable the first home visit should be by two staff.

**Personal safety** – Staff working alone in offices, schemes, or other people’s homes without the immediate support of colleagues are more exposed to the threat of violence or aggression from others. It is important that risks are discussed and client risk assessments undertaken before any lone working occurs. All staff working on their own for any length of time with service users will be issued with personal attack alarms and mobile phones. Some schemes where lone working is common may have further adaptations to enhance safety such as panic alarms connected to police stations, CCTV cameras etc. should this be necessary following risk assessments.

**Manual handling** – Staff working alone might be involved in handling furniture, equipment and other items without the assistance of others. If this is likely to occur then manual-handling training for that person must be undertaken.



**First Aid Provisions** – Staff working alone will be issued with emergency first aid kits and attend emergency first aid training courses as part of their core training. It must be emphasised that should staff encounter an emergency situation their first action should be to call the appropriate emergency service.

### **Psychological/emotional risks**

Lone Workers are often detached from other colleagues and therefore may feel isolated. It is important to ensure that such staff are involved in team meetings and other staff events and that regular supervision is maintained

### **Travelling between workplaces**

Lone Workers may have many workplaces. If using their own transport, it is the responsibility of the individual to ensure that the vehicle is safe and roadworthy and that adequate insurance cover has been obtained. The use of mobile telephones is strictly prohibited whilst driving or cycling and could lead to prosecution and or disciplinary action. Staff should be vigilant when travelling in areas unknown to them or late at night and do as much as possible to research safe routes before travelling.

### **Training**

Training in recognising and dealing with challenging behaviour, First Aid and other health and safety issues as appropriate will be made available to lone working staff. Staff roles at AKT involve a significant amount of lone working. In order to ensure that this work is carried out as safely as possible, this policy will provide guidelines, requirements and advice for staff to be able to carry out lone working with a minimum of risk.

Employees also have responsibilities. The law states that they should:

- Take reasonable care of their own safety and that of others
- Follow any Personal Safety procedures set out by employer
- Report any shortcomings or failings in safety practice
- Report any incidents of violence or aggression and near misses

### **Employer Obligations**

Lone working, by its very nature, is a higher-risk manner of working. Planning and preparation for lone working is vital in reducing risk. Under the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974), employers have an obligation to provide a safe working environment for their employees. In addition to this, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992 (updated 1999), requires employers to be proactive in the process of risk management. In light of this legislation, risk assessments of the lone working carried out in Purple Door activities are kept and reviewed at least annually and always following an incident. Staff will be involved with the review of the assessment and their input is valuable to keep assessments realistic and inclusive of potential risks.

Steps that Albert Kennedy Trust have taken to fulfil our legal obligations and our responsibilities to our staff when they are carrying out Lone Working are -



- Ensuring that we have a clear, up-to-date risk assessment for Lone Working, with input from frontline staff, that is updated at least annually
- Have a clear protocol for raising concerns about levels of risk when lone working away from the office, in Purple Door properties, attending appointments with clients, working with clients displaying increased risk,

### **Systems In Place To Reduce Risks To Lone Workers**

All members of AKT staff are trained in Lone Working and involved in the risk management and reduction plan. Staff are also required to abide by any terms laid out in the risk management plan in order to reduce the risks of lone working to both staff and clients.

AKT provides a telephone system to all lone workers who are lone working outside of AKT's offices, outside of office hours or any other situation where they are lone working and where this is deemed appropriate. This service enables workers to log in and out of appointments, as well as summon emergency assistance, should they require it. It is mandatory to use this service when undertaking Lone Working on behalf of AKT.

In Purple Door houses, where lone working is a regular undertaking, there are also panic alarms that directly link to the emergency services. There is CCTV covering communal areas, for the safety and protection of clients and staff in the London house.

There is a clear reporting structure for incidents and concerns to be raised, as well as a Safeguarding and Whistleblowing policies in force. Staff undergo supervision on a monthly basis and can raise concerns about Lone Working at any time to either their line manager or the CEO.

### **Monitoring and Review**

The effectiveness of this Policy and associated procedures will be reviewed in the light of information gained from the Accident/Incident reporting procedures and from feedback from staff and Managers.

### **Raising concerns about Lone Working**

When lone working, situations can alter in the level of risk posed to staff, in a very short space of time. If you feel that a situation may pose an increased risk to staff working within it, you are required to report concerns to the Purple Door manager at the earliest opportunity. Staff should not undertake working in situations where they feel that their safety may be at risk.