Portal Security Ltd

Lone Worker Policy

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1. Introduction

The Company recognises that often our staff will be required to work by themselves for significant periods of time without direct supervision, in isolated work areas and out of hours. The purpose of this policy is to protect such staff so far as is reasonably practicable from the risks of lone working.

The Company also recognises it has an obligation under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (HSW Act) and the Management of Health and safety at Work Regulation 1999 (MHSW), for the health, safety and welfare at work of its employees. These responsibilities apply to those staff that, for whatever reason, work alone.

2. Scope of policy

This policy is provided for use of ALL STAFF in their day-to-day work. This policy also covers volunteers and where appropriate, contractors. The policy applies to all situations involving lone working arising in connection with the duties and activities of our staff.

3. Definition of Lone Workers

Lone workers are those who work alone without close or direct supervision such as:
  i.   Staff in fixed establishments where:
        * Only one member of staff works on the premises
        * Staff working separately from others
        * Staff working outside normal hours
  ii. Mobile lone workers working away from their base when their work may be carried out in:
        * Empty buildings when responding to an alarm e Any sites when on static duty e Gatehouses during non-operational hours
        * Response/Patrol vehicles.

It is recognised that any member of staff may spend a limited amount of their working time 'alone'.

4. **Aims of Policy**

The aim of the policy is to: -
- Increase staff awareness of safety issues relating to lone working;
- Ensure 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 so far is reasonably practicable;
- Ensure that appropriate support is available to staff who have to work alone;
- Encourage full reporting and recording of all incidents relating to lone working; and reduce the number of incidents and injuries to staff related to lone working.

5. **Responsibilities**

The Managing Director

The manager director or nominated person(s) on his behalf is responsible for: -

- Ensuring that there are arrangements for identifying, evaluating and managing risk associated with lone working;
- Providing resources for putting the policy into practice;
- Ensuring that there are arrangements for monitoring incidents linked to lone working and that these incidents are reviewed along with the effectiveness of this policy.

The Management team, Site Security Supervisors and where appropriate Health and Safety Representatives

The above senior staff are responsible for: -

- Ensuring that all staff are aware of the policy;
- Ensuring that Risk assessments are carried out and reviewed regularly;
- Putting procedures and safe systems of work into practice which are designed to eliminate or reduce the risks associated with working alone;
- Ensuring that staff groups and individuals identified as being at risk are given appropriate instruction and training, including training at induction, updates and refresher training as necessary;
- Ensuring that the appropriate support Is given to staff involved in any incident;
- Managing the effectiveness of preventative measures through an effective system of reporting, investigating and reporting incidents.

Employees

Employees are responsible for: -

- Taking responsibility and care of themselves and others affected by their actions;
- Co-operating by following rules and procedures designed for safe working;
- Reporting 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 the policy;
- Reporting any dangers or potential dangers they identify or any concerns they might have in respect of working alone.

6. Risk Assessment

Risk assessment is essential to good risk management. Assessments shall be carried out for and by all staff whose working practice makes them vulnerable. This includes staff that are site based but work in isolation as well as mobile staff whose work takes them out into the community. Recommendations will be made to eliminate or to reduce the risk to the lowest level reasonably practicable.

In all cases there Is a fundamental question about the need for lone working.

Managers must decide whether systems can be adopted to avoid workers carrying out tasks on their own. If this is not possible the working practice of the member of staff plus other contributory factors must be risk assessed.

Where staff either Work Alone in Buildings or Carry out Site Visits managers should first complete the relevant Lone Workers Checklist. See Appendix 1 & 2).

These checklists can be used as a tool to assist managers to identify if the existing control measures are adequate and If not, what modifications or additional actions can be considered necessary to help reduce the risks associated with Lone Working. The checklists should be retained in the site folder and copy kept at Portal Security Services Ltd main office.

Once the checklist has been completed the manager should carry out a Risk Assessment (See Appendix 3) and document its finding in the location assignment instructions.

Assignment instructions for site based lone workers must include:

- Safe access and exit,
- Risk of violence,
- Channels of communication in an emergency,
- Additional security arrangements i.e. alarm systems, CCTV.

Assignment instructions for response lone workers must include:

- Access to site risk assessments where applicable,
- Procedure for alarm response where applicable,
- Travelling between sites,
- Reporting and recording any incidents of note,
- Communication and traceability
- Personal safety/security.

Following completion of the Risk Assessment, consideration should be given to any appropriate action that is required.

Managers must ensure that risk assessment systems are in place to meet the specific needs of all lone workers within their area of control.

7. Incident reporting

An incident can be 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 through the companies Incident Reporting Form. On completion the form should be forwarded to the Portal Security Services main office.

Staff should ensure that all incidents where they feel threatened, or 'unsafe' (even if this was not a tangible event/experience) are reported.

This includes incidents of verbal abuse.

8. Contacting/involving The Police

If a situation arises which precipitates the need for Police attendance, the employee at risk should contact the on-duty member of the management team. The manger will take the details of the situation and will alert the Police, Site Manager and our response vehicle.

Employees who need assistance from the police whilst in the response vehicle should dial 999 then immediately alert the management team.

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

Except in cases of emergency, employees should inform their manager of any incidents immediately. The employees' manager will thereafter take responsibility for contacting the Police to report the details of the incident.

9. **Support for Staff**

All new staff to the company will receive an induction handbook, included in which will be reference to the Lone Workers Policy, and this will be highlighted as part of the employees Induction.

Employees working for the company should know that their safety comes first. Staff should be aware of how to deal with situations where they feel they are at risk, or unsafe. Staff should also be able to recognise how their own actions could influence or even trigger an aggressive response.

Managers will therefore ensure that all lone workers training needs are assessed and that they receive appropriate training.

10. **Immediate Support Following a Violent Incident**

In the event of a violent incident involving a lone worker, the line manager should immediately ensure that the employee(s) receive any necessary medical treatment and/or advice. If an incident occurs out of hours the on-duty manager/night co-ordinator should be contacted.

Managers should be sensitive to the employee's need to talk about the incident and should take care to avoid any impression that this is not accepted or expected.

Discussion should involve identifying any significant learning points for the employee and other colleagues if necessary. Staff should be made aware that a confidential counselling service can be accessed directly by a member of the management team.

The line manager should also consider whether the employee needs specific information or assistance relating to legal or insurance aspects.

If the employee is a member of a Union or Professional Association he/she may find this an appropriate source of practical and emotional support.

The importance of colleague support should never be underestimated. Colleagues are likely to be seen as primary emotional supports.

The manager should ensure appropriate written and verbal reporting of any violent Incident.

11. Review

Appendix 1 – Lone workers checklist working alone on site

Site Name:		
Main Issue of Concern	**YES**	**NO**
Do staff work alone?		
Do staff work outside normal operational hours?		
Do staff interact with members of the public in isolated locations?		
Is there enough security provision?		
Is there poor access to the site?		
Do staff activities involve working on uneven, badly lit surfaces?		
Can staff come into contact with hazardous materials?		
Do you provide joint working for high risk activities (I.e. dealing with an intruder)?		
Do you provide hourly check calls to all lone working employees?		
Are the site cabinets well lit?		
Is the site itself well lit?		
Do staff have access to the assignment instructions?		
Do staff have training In personal safety and conflict management?		
Do staff have access to forms for reporting incidents or near misses and appreciate the need for this procedure?		
Are all staff required to have mobile phones with credit when on duty?		
Signed: Date:		