

FamilyCare

Healing pasts • Building futures

An abstract graphic composed of several overlapping, rounded, organic shapes in various colors: orange, pink, red, brown, green, olive, and blue. The shapes overlap in a way that creates a sense of depth and movement, with some shapes appearing in front of others. The colors are vibrant and saturated.

Lone Working Policy

www.family-care.co.uk

Lone Working Policy

Implemented/Reviewed: September 2026

Date of Next Review: September 2027



General Policy Statement

Lone workers, as defined by the Health and Safety Executive, are "those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision."

Family Care Group recognises its duty of care to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the **health, safety and welfare of all employees**, including those who work alone.

This policy is underpinned by:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 2013

Managers have a duty of care to ensure appropriate arrangements are in place to safeguard lone workers, and employees are responsible for taking reasonable care of their own safety and that of others.

Aim

To ensure that suitable and sufficient control measures are implemented to safeguard employees who undertake lone working at any point during their contractual duties.

Lone Workers

People working alone or in isolation from others may be at increased risk due to:

- Reduced supervision
- Limited immediate assistance in an emergency
- Potential exposure to violence or unsafe environments

Lone workers must not be exposed to greater risks than other employees without appropriate additional control measures.

Control measures must take account of both **normal working activities and foreseeable emergencies**, including:

- Fire
- Equipment failure
- Illness or injury
- Violence or aggression

Employers must identify situations where employees work alone and assess risks, including:

- Whether the workplace presents additional risks
- Safe access and egress arrangements
- Suitability of tasks for one person
- Manual handling limitations
- Risks of violence or aggression
- Medical conditions affecting suitability to work alone
- Emergency arrangements if something goes wrong

Examples of lone working include:

- Residential staff working alone (e.g. night shifts)
- Staff working outside normal hours (early starts / late finishes)
- Key holders opening or closing premises
- Peripatetic staff (e.g. travel or home visits)



Manager Duties

Managers must:

- Provide safe systems of work for lone workers
- Ensure appropriate security arrangements are in place
- Carry out and review **risk assessments**, including dynamic risk assessments where required
- Ensure suitable **control measures and monitoring systems** are implemented
- Establish systems for **communication and escalation**, including:
 - Check-in procedures
 - Buddy systems or designated contacts
 - Actions to take if contact is not made
- Ensure lone workers can raise the alarm or summon assistance
- Ensure staff who cannot safely summon assistance are **not left working alone**
- Ensure staff are suitable and competent to work alone
- Identify and deliver appropriate training
- Discuss lone working arrangements during supervision sessions
- Provide practical support where concerns are raised
- Investigate and review incidents, near misses and concerns
- Ensure accidents and incidents are recorded
- Review risk assessments following incidents or changes in circumstances

Staff Responsibilities

Staff have a duty of care for themselves and others and must:

- Follow all lone working policies and procedures
- Plan activities in advance and assess risks before working alone
- Undertake **dynamic risk assessments** where required
- Be aware of risks in their working environment
- Avoid putting themselves in unsafe situations
- Be aware of emergency procedures and nearest place of safety
- Follow on-site security procedures
- Maintain regular communication through agreed systems
- Use personal alarms, phones or communication devices where provided
- Report all hazards, incidents, threats or concerns promptly

Staff must withdraw from any situation where they feel unsafe and report this to management.

Risks Associated with Violence

Staff must consider the risk of violence when working alone. Indicators that may increase risk include individuals who may:

- Display threatening behaviour
- Possess or use weapons
- Bear grudges or feel victimised
- Harbour grievances
- Suffer from mental health conditions
- Have a dependency on drugs or alcohol
- Associate with violent individuals

Risk assessments must consider these factors and appropriate control measures implemented.

Where there is a risk of violence:

- Staff must not put themselves at risk
- Situations should be avoided or alternative arrangements made
- Incidents must be reported and risk assessments reviewed



Control Measures

Control measures should be proportionate to the risk and reviewed regularly. These may include:

- Lone worker check-in/check-out procedures
- Buddy systems or designated contacts
- Use of personal alarms or communication devices
- Mobile phones or lone worker devices
- Clear escalation procedures if contact is lost
- Pre-visit risk assessments for service users or locations
- Limiting or avoiding high-risk activities when alone

Some activities must not be undertaken alone unless specifically risk assessed and authorised.

These include:

- Working at height
- Working in confined spaces
- Handling hazardous materials without appropriate controls

Threats to Staff

Where threats are identified:

- Report the threat to the police where appropriate and seek advice
- Vary routines and travel routes where necessary
- Use alternative entrances/exits if required
- Report whereabouts and use agreed communication systems
- Consider additional control measures such as buddy systems

Key Holders

Key holders may be required to attend premises outside normal working hours.

All permanent staff may act as key holders where required.

Key holders must:

- Follow lone working procedures
- Ensure communication arrangements are in place
- Conduct dynamic risk assessments before entering premises

Intruders

If a lone worker believes there is an intruder:

- Leave the site immediately and safely
- Contact the police when it is safe to do so
- Inform a designated contact or buddy
- Do not enter the premises until it is safe

When returning:

- Only enter once police confirm it is safe
- Follow police instructions
- If unsure, do not enter the premises

If intruders are present while the building is occupied:

- Contact the police immediately
- Ensure personal safety and the safety of others

- Do not challenge the intruder

Hazards

Lone workers may encounter hazards including:

- Security checks
- Working in poor weather conditions
- Working in low lighting
- Manual handling
- Use of equipment or chemicals

Additional control measures may include:

- Adequate lighting and access
- Suitable equipment and training
- Weather-related precautions
- Carrying torches or communication devices
- Ensuring safe access and egress

Training

A training plan will be provided as part of induction and ongoing development.

Training will include:

- Lone working procedures
- Risk assessment awareness
- Personal safety and conflict management
- Use of communication and alarm systems

Training will be reviewed and updated as required.

First Aid Requirements

Employers must assess first aid needs for lone workers, including those working remotely or travelling.

Where appropriate:

- Staff may be issued with personal first aid kits
- Staff must have access to communication devices to summon assistance

Risk Assessments

Risk assessments must be:

- Suitable and sufficient
- Reviewed regularly
- Updated following changes, incidents or near misses

Dynamic risk assessments must be undertaken where conditions change or new risks arise.

Reporting of Accidents and Incidents

- All accidents, injuries and near misses must be recorded
- The Manager must be informed of all incidents involving violence or aggression

Under RIDDOR 2013:

- Incidents must be reported where they result in **major injury or over 7 days absence from normal duties**

Monitoring and Reviewing

All incidents, accidents and near misses will be monitored by management.

Management will:

- Analyse trends
- Review risk assessments where necessary
- Implement additional control measures



Findings will be reported to senior management and Business Support as appropriate.

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if:

- There are changes in legislation
- An incident highlights deficiencies
- Organisational changes occur

