

# LONE WORKING POLICY

## 1. Introduction

The following policy and procedure has been written in order to minimise risks for staff working alone in their fixed base and working away from their fixed base. Under the Health and Safety Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 it is the duty of Louth Town Council to assess risks to lone workers / volunteers and take steps to avoid or control risk where necessary.

Employees of the Council have responsibilities to take reasonable care of themselves and other people affected by their work and to co-operate with their employers in meeting their legal obligations.

## 2. Lone Working / Lone Workers

These are people who work by themselves without close or direct supervision:

- a. At a fixed base (office or other):
  - i. Only one person working on the premises
  - ii. Working separately from others
  - iii. Working outside of normal hours
- b. Away from their fixed base:
  - i. Staff member who is required to travel alone to and from a fixed base to another base or to attend meetings etc.

## 3. Potential Risks to Lone Workers

- a. Open access and unlocked doors – accessible to the public, contractors etc.
- b. Being taken ill whilst at work
- c. Lack of training regarding Health & Safety procedures
- d. Hazards in the workplace
- e. Remote areas
- f. Parking arrangements: poorly lit and isolated areas

## 4. Assessing the Risk

- a. Before drawing up and recording the assessment of risk, it must be established:
  - i. Whether the work can be done by a lone worker
  - ii. What arrangements will be in place to ensure an individual is not exposed to unnecessary and unacceptable risk?
- b. When recording an assessment of risk, the following should be taking into consideration:
  - i. Environment – location, security, access / egress
  - ii. Context – nature of the task
  - iii. History – have there been any accidents / incidents in the past

All available information should be taken into account and updated as and when necessary. If there is reason for doubt about the safety of a lone worker in a given situation then consideration should be given for making other arrangements to complete the task.

## 5. Safety Guidelines

- a. For staff working in a fixed base:
  - i. Familiarise themselves with the layout of the building including fire exits and escape routes;
  - ii. Keep doors locked that allow direct access to the building/office you are working in;
  - iii. Do not open the door to unexpected visitors. In the case of contractors ask for identification. If still unsure check with the contractor's employer/head office
  - iv. Have contact numbers at hand to be able to contact relevant person(s) immediately (should they feel ill, they suspect an intruder in the building etc.)
  - v. Park as near as they can to the building
  - vi. A risk assessment to be put in place to assess potential risks

- b. For staff working away from their fixed base:
  - i. Staff should inform relevant person(s) from the Council of their movements including the time they estimate they will be away from their base and when they will return, along with relevant information regarding where and at what time, visits will be made and to whom;
  - ii. Leave details of venues including contact numbers;
  - iii. Take mobile phone (or other communication device) with them;
  - iv. Avoid meetings in isolated places. If this cannot be avoided, ask someone to accompany them or make sure they always notify someone when they arrive and leave.

## **6. Responsibility**

- a. Employees Responsibility and Personal Safety:
  - i. To take reasonable care for the health and safety of him / herself and of other persons who may be affected by his / her acts or omissions at work;
  - ii. Always maintain a line of communication on a regular basis with members of the Council to identify and minimise risk(s) ;
  - iii. Always inform someone as to when they leave the fixed base to perform Council tasks and inform a colleague when returning to a fixed base after relevant task completed;
  - iv. Always report an accident / incident that may occur to the Town Clerk or relevant person to allow for a full investigation to take place and assess further potential risks and identify additional safety procedures.
- b. Employers Responsibility:
  - i. To take reasonable care for the health and safety of staff by identifying and assessing potential risks to ensure that staff are safe at all times;
  - ii. Always maintain a line of communication on a regular basis with staff to identify and minimise risk(s);
  - iii. Ensure a signing in and out system is put in place;
  - iv. Ensure staff receive all relevant training and information available ;
  - v. Equip staff with a mobile phone (or other communication instrument) to ensure a system of maintaining contact.

## **7. Exemptions**

Employees and / or Volunteers are exempt from working alone in certain situations:

- a. Young persons under instruction in a fixed base (example work experience, helping with Council tasks etc.);
- b. Where activities and work with substances / machinery could be hazardous to health.

## **8. Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed regularly by the Council to ensure that it is relevant to working practice.