
Lone Working Policy

1. Definition

This Policy applies where staff or volunteer are required to work alone - this may involve working in isolated work areas or outside of normal working hours.

A lone worker is defined as any member of staff working without direct supervision in a building or in the community.

It is both an organisational and an individual responsibility to reduce or eliminate potential risk arising from lone working.

2. Key aims

It is the policy of SeVA to avoid lone working wherever possible, but it is recognised that this is not always appropriate or possible. This Policy is designed to minimise lone working, but ensure that where it occurs there are proper systems and procedures in place to manage any risks identified.

The aims of this Policy are:

- To ensure that there are the appropriate mechanisms in place to manage risks and protect staff and volunteers from potential harm as far as is reasonably practicable
- To ensure that SeVA meets its legal and moral responsibilities to effectively manage the risks associated with volunteers or staff working on their own.
- To manage the risks to staff whilst ensuring that that they are able to perform their duties to clients and the organisation effectively
- To ensure that all staff and volunteers are aware of their roles, responsibility and accountability with regards to lone working
- To raise awareness amongst staff and volunteers and ensure that they are aware of:
 - Risk assessment processes and what they should expect from and contribute to the process
 - Systems and procedures in place to manage or mitigate risks
- To minimise the risk of complaint or other action against SeVA

3. Key Principles

SeVA is committed to the following:

- Ensuring compliance with legal requirements – applying the minimum standards and working towards exceeding these.
- Supporting staff and volunteers as far as reasonably able

- Ensuring that services can be delivered as far as is reasonable

5. Implementation

The safety of staff is of paramount importance and SeVA will ensure that:

- Risk Assessments will be undertaken for each staff member and volunteer to identify:
 - Whether they are likely to be lone working, either with clients or when carrying out other duties
 - Whether there are suitable alternatives to lone working
 - If lone working is unavoidable what systems or procedures should be in place. These may include:
 - Buddying system
 - Use of equipment such as mobile phone/personal alarms
 - Identifying useful contacts/car details etc.
- Risk assessments will be reviewed as and when required and at least once annually
- That staff and volunteers are consulted on the implementation of the Policy
- That individuals are involved and consulted on their own risk assessments
- Procedures will be developed and safe systems of work introduced – staff and volunteers will be advised of the systems and procedures. Procedures may include:
 - Managers periodically visiting and observing people working alone;
 - Regular contact between the lone worker and manager
 - Devices designed to raise the alarm in an emergency, these can be operated manually or automatically by the absence of activity;
 - Checks to ensure a lone worker has returned to their base or home once their work is completed.
- Advice and guidance will be provided for all staff covering personal safety and security aspects for lone workers.
- Equipment will be made available to enable staff to work safely alone including mobile phones and personal attack alarms.
- Training will be made available covering:
 - Avoiding and managing violence and aggression
 - Best practice regarding personal safety and security issues
 - Support system procedures

6. Organisational Responsibilities

Chief Executive

Overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy lies with the Chief Executive, and they will:

- Ensure that the Policy is applied
- Monitor the effectiveness of the Policy

- Ensure effective planning to provide sufficient resources to support the application of lone worker systems
- Ensure that managers and staff are familiar with the policy and any supporting procedure and/or guidelines and understand the requirements;
- Ensure that staff and managers are trained in any agreed procedures and safe systems of work;

Managers and supervisors

Managers are responsible for the day to day implementation of the Policy. They will ensure that;

- Risk assessments are undertaken and appropriate measures are in place to minimise identified hazards;
- That all individual risk assessments are reviewed as and when required (for example a change in working practice or a change in the individual's circumstances), and at least annually
- Staff are given copies of the findings of the risk assessment and agreed control measures
- Staff adhere to the control measures identified – if they do not then they will advise the Chief Executive
- Resources required are provided as appropriate
- They monitor and test the procedures and safe systems of work – if they are concerned that the Policy is not being applied or procedures/systems not being following then they will advise the Chief Executive
- That information relating to risk is requested and shared with other agencies regarding clients that are cared for jointly
- All incidents relating to lone working are recorded and monitored
- That staff are not required to work alone where they are not confident or their safety in doing so may be compromised

All Staff must:

- Ensure they have read the policy and any supporting information and have copies;
- Ensure they have read the outcomes of the risk assessments and have copies;
- Ensure they review the risk assessment on a case by case basis and inform their manager of any shortcomings in arrangements.
- Ensure they adhere to any systems developed for their protection while working alone;
- Take personal responsibility for sharing information regarding their whereabouts;
- Inform their manager of any concerns regarding working on their own;
- Report any incidents of concern that occur whilst they are working alone to a manager or the Chief Executive

9. MONITORING AND REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed annually to ensure that:

- It is being applied by staff and volunteers
- It complies with legislative, regulatory and best practice requirements

The following information will reported to the Board quarterly:

- Number of risk assessments completed or reviewed
- Number of Incidents reported and any actions taken
- Performance against the targets set

The following targets will be set and performance monitored

- That risk assessments are completed for all staff and volunteers
- That all risk assessments are reviewed at least annually
- Annual training on lone working and health and safety for all staff and volunteers

10. Related Policy and Guidance

- Lone Working procedures
- Risk assessments
- Health and Safety Policy
- Stalking Safety Plan
- Data Protection and Confidentiality Policy