



LONE WORKING POLICY

Mayfield & Five Ashes Community Services (MAYFACS)

Policy Statement:

MAYFACS takes the health and safety of its employees and volunteers seriously. We have a legal duty to ensure the health, safety and welfare of our employees and volunteers while at work or carrying out volunteer activity. We realise that at any given time, staff or volunteers may be working or volunteering alone, either in our office space or externally.

Aim and Scope:

This policy is designed to alert employees and volunteers to the risks presented by lone working, to identify the responsibilities each person has in this situation, and to describe procedures which will minimise such risks. It is designed to give employees and volunteers a framework for managing potentially risky situations. We are responsible for assessing the risks to lone workers and taking steps to avoid or control the risks where necessary. Employees and volunteers have responsibility to take reasonable care of themselves and others in lone working situations. Lone working is not inherently unsafe. Taking precaution can reduce the risks associated with working alone. This policy is designed for employees and volunteers who either frequently or occasionally work or volunteer alone. It also refers to both high and low risk activities.

Related Policies and Procedures:

Lone Working Risk Assessment Lone Working Procedure Related Legislation Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

Definition:

The Health and Safety Executive defines lone workers as those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision. For example:

- People working separately from others in a building
- People who work outside 'normal' hours
- People who work away from their fixed base without colleagues
- People who work at home other than in low risk, office-type work

The definition covers staff and volunteers in situations with varying degrees and types of risk. It is important to identify the hazards of the work and assess the risks involved before applying appropriate measures.

Potential Hazards of Working Alone

People who work or volunteer alone will of course face the same risks in their work as others doing similar tasks. However, additionally they may encounter the following:

- Accidents or sudden illnesses may occur when there is no-one to call for help or first aid available
- Fire
- Violence or the threat of violence
- Lack of safe way in or out of a building for example, danger of being accidentally locked in
- Attempting tasks which cannot safely be done by one person alone



Measures to reduce the risk of lone working:

To reduce the risk for people working alone we carry out a risk assessment of the following issues, as appropriate to the circumstances

- The environment – location, security, access
- The context – nature of the task, any special circumstances
- The individuals concerned – indicators of potential or actual risk
- History – any previous incidents in similar situations
- Any other special circumstances

All available information should be taken into account and risk assessments should be updated as necessary. Where there is any reasonable doubt about the safety of a lone worker in a given situation, consideration should be given to sending a second worker or making other arrangements to complete the task.

In any situation where an employee or volunteer is operating alone and feels unsafe, they must remove themselves from that situation immediately and report the incident to their line manager or supervisor.

In any situation where an employee or volunteer is operating alone and an incident occurs, this must be reported to their line manager as soon as possible. An incident is any situation where the health and safety of the employee or volunteer is compromised and may include an accident, fire, violence or threat of violence (this is not exhaustive).

Supervision:

Lone workers are not under constant supervision. We ensure that you understand the risks associated with your work and the relevant safety precautions:

- Employees or volunteers will be given training that covers lone working where appropriate during induction
- Employees or volunteers new to a role where they may be lone working may need to be accompanied initially
- Regular contact by phone may be appropriate and we ensure that employees or volunteers carrying out duties alone always have a mobile phone available to enable them to contact the office in the event of an emergency

Accidents and Emergencies:

Employees and volunteers operating alone should be made aware of the process for responding correctly to emergencies.

Employees or volunteers who are alone in the office must inform another member of the MAYFACS team and are responsible for adhering to security and fire regulations.

Home Working

MAYFACS recognises that as an employer, they have the same health and safety responsibilities for home workers as for any other workers.

When someone is working from home, permanently or temporarily, the charity manager will put procedures in place that:



- Ensures regular communication between the team – regular 1:1/team meetings/WhatsApp messages
- Ensure people have appropriate work that suit their capabilities
- Does not expect anyone to be working outside their normal working days/hours
- Regularly has 1:1 communication with employees to manage their workload and sort out any problems, anxieties to help manage stress
- Ensure employees have all they need to work from home

Managing Time on Direct Screen Equipment (DSE)

For those people who are working using Computer equipment (at home or in the office), the risks associated with using display screen equipment (DSE) must be controlled. To minimise risks employees should do workstation assessments at home and in the workplace. (See attached DSE assessment).

There is no increased risk from DSE work for those working at home temporarily. So, in that situation employers do not need to ask them to carry out home workstation assessments.

Encourage employees to take the following simple steps people to reduce the risks from display screen work:

- breaking up long spells of DSE work with rest breaks (at least 5 minutes every hour) or changes in activity
- avoiding awkward, static postures by regularly changing position
- getting up and moving or doing stretching exercises
- avoiding eye fatigue by changing focus or blinking from time to time

Specialised DSE equipment needs

MAYFACS will try to meet those needs where possible.

For some equipment (eg keyboards, mouse, riser) this could mean allowing employees to take this equipment home.

For other larger items (eg ergonomic chairs, height-adjustable desks) encourage employees to try other ways of creating a comfortable working environment (eg supporting cushions).

Keep DSE arrangements under review. The charity manager will have regular discussions with employees to assess whether additional steps are needed, for example where they report:

- aches, pains or discomfort related to their temporary DSE arrangements
- adverse effects of working in isolation, on remote IT systems
- working longer hours without adequate rest and recovery break

Conclusion:

Establishing safe working for lone workers is no different from organising the safety of other staff or volunteers, but the risk assessment must take account of any extra risk factors.

MAYFACS ensures that measures are in place to reduce risk and that expectations have been communicated to employees and volunteers operating alone and appropriate training provided.



Mayfield & Five Ashes Community Services

Registered Charity No. 1166647

www.mayfacs.org.uk



All staff and volunteers, including lone workers, are responsible for following safe systems of work and should take simple steps to reduce the risks associated with carrying out their normal duties.

POLICY No.
07

DATE POLICY REVIEWED/REVISED: Sept 2024 DATE FOR NEXT REVIEW: Sept 2027

TRUSTEE SIGNATURE: Signed on hard copy

TRUSTEE NAME (Print): L.Firrell (Chair)