Calvay Housing Association Limited

LONE WORKING POLICY

Date Approved: February 2025

Date of Review: February 2030

Introduction

Calvay Housing Association aims to limit lone working where reasonably practicable. Where lone working is necessary, all reasonable steps will be taken, in accordance with our duty of care towards our employees to make sure they are safe while working for us.

In line with the organisation's duty of care, you should not be put at significant risk they due to lone working. . The organisation has a duty to assess lone working risks and take any reasonable, practical measures to reduce and eliminate these as much as possible.

This will be done via our risk assessment process. All employees are expected to co-operate and follow these measures, this will assist in keeping you safe.

Scope of Policy

This policy and the procedures it contains apply to all employees and workers.

Legislation

Although there is no single piece of legislation that explicitly applies to lone workers, the following apply indirectly:

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- The Corporate Homicide Act 2007
- The Management of Health at Work Regulations 1999,
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997

Definition of a Lone Worker

There are many definitions of a lone worker; for our own purposes, we will use the HSE definition: a lone worker is someone who:

> "works by themselves without close or direct supervision".

Within Calvay Housing Association, a lone worker is likely to include the following:

- Working outwith normal office hours, even on a one-off basis.
- Working with the public/service users on your own or away from colleagues (out of sight or earshot)
- Working on your own in an office, at home or some other location.
- Working in others' homes or premises.
- Travelling alone as part of your job (this does not include commuting).
- Working in an area isolated from the rest of the organisation e.g. Wider Role office
- Any other situation identified through the risk assessment process.

This above list is not exhaustive.

Employer Responsibilities

Calvay HA has a responsibility to make sure all employees are safe while working and this includes any time an employee is lone working.

To do this the organisation will:

- Make sure risk assessments are carried out and reviewed regularly or as and when required.
- Provide procedures for working safely while employees are lone working.
- Make sure employees are provided with appropriate and training to understand relevant policy and procedures.
- Have reporting systems in place to record, investigate and review any near misses and incidents.
- Inform HSE using RIDDOR procedures (if required).
- Make sure appropriate supervision arrangements are in place for lone workers.
- Provide appropriate aftercare and support (in the event of any incident).
- Involve employees when considering potential risks with lone working and reasonable control measures.
- Make sure employees are issued with a copy of this policy.
- Review this policy and update it as is appropriate.

Employee Responsibilities

Employees also have responsibilities which the organisation expects all employees tocomply with.

All employees must:

- Abide by the organisation's lone working procedures and speak to a manager if they are unsure of anything contained within these.
- Not knowingly put themselves at risk.
- Not intentionally provoke or inflame a potentially aggressive situation.
- Remove themselves from any situation where they do not feel comfortable and/or safe in.
- Report all lone working incidents and near misses in line with the relevant procedures.
- Attend training when this is provided.
- Take part in our lone working risk assessment process if identified as a lone worker.
- Whilst in a lone working situation carry out an informal/dynamic risk assessment.
- Know, understand and follow this policy and the procedures.
- Ensure their emergency contact person is provided with our contact details in line with our procedure.

Managing Risks

The overall purpose of risk management is to identify, eliminate (where possible), reduce and control risks.

It is recognised that lone working can present increased risks to employees. It is therefore the responsibility of both the organisation and its employees to manage these.

In practice this means that lone working risk assessments will be carried out to identify any potential risks and control measures to mitigate these.

The following points will be considered during this risk assessment:

- The tasks/roles which will result in lone working.
- The remoteness of the workplace.
- Potential communication problems.
- The likelihood of an attack, including a criminal attack.
- Potential for verbal and physical abuse.
- Consideration of lone workers' potential feelings of isolation, stress and depression.
- Whether or not all equipment, materials, etc can be handled safely by one person.
- Whether any individual may be medically unfit and not suitable to work alone;
- How the lone worker will be supervised.
- How the lone worker will obtain help in an emergency such as an assault, vehicle breakdown, accident or fire.
- Whether or not there is adequate first-aid cover.

In conducting the lone working risk assessment, the organisation will:

- Consider the additional risks to expectant mothers and young persons.
- Where practical, have the person that owns the risk conduct the risk assessment, where this is not possible or practical they will as a minimum be involved in the process and in the development of safe working methods.
- Maintain a file of all lone working assessments.
- Make sure those working alone are provided with adequate information, instruction, and training to understand the hazards and risks and the safe working procedures associated with working alone.

A formal risk assessment will take place prior to all known lone working situations however, it is important that employees are aware and comfortable to undertake a dynamic risk assessment in any lone worker situation they may find themselves in. If an employee would like further guidance on this, they should speak to their line manager.

Remote Working

Often employees who are remote working will be alone in their homes which can bring with it lone working risks. Lone workers may also be required to travel, visit sites and deal with normal workloads.

Increased risks for lone workers associated with remote working will be addressed through the risk assessment process and control measures will be communicated to employees.

Control measures may include the following:

- Regular communication and supervision

- Clear direction, management and support over work expected and workloads
- Provision of training in the work required and any technology (e.g. video conferencing)
- Ensuring employees are competent to deal with the work and the working conditions
- Information on HR issues and how to raise concerns
- Information on general homeworking H&S
- Ensuring opportunities for employees to engage with their colleagues on an informal basis are in place.

Near Miss and Incident Reporting

It is vital that employees report any lone working near miss or incident as soon as possible to their line manager. If it is not possible to report immediately, the incident must be reported within 12 hours of it occurring. On reporting the incident, the line manager must act in accordance with our reporting procedures as detailed in our Health & Safety Manual and they will update the employee accordingly.

All near miss and incident information must be reported to the Corporate Services Manager and a near miss/incident form completed. The form is available from the Corporate Services Manager or a copy can be printed from the network (V:\Corporate_Admin\Health & Safety\Forms\Near Miss Report Form).

Lone Working Procedure

Where lone working is necessary all employees must:

- Follow our safe working arrangements which are as follows:
    - *When outwith the office, use the Peoplesafe app, installed on the office mobiles. If this fails to record your location due to low signal, call into the office and let your colleagues know where you are and how long you expect to be.*
- Take all reasonable steps to ensure their own safety;
- Remove themselves from any situation where they feel unsafe or uncomfortable.
- Inform their line manager/assessor of any near misses, incidents or safety concerns.
- Follow the emergency procedures below when lone working.
    - *Use the Peoplesafe app to raise the alarm*
- Make sure they know, have read and understood the lone working risk assessments and all the control measures in place.
- Ensure arrangements are in place so that someone else is aware of their location at all times while lone working.

Training and Information

All employees will be trained in line with our lone working procedures and control measures identified through the risk assessment to make sure they are aware of potential risks and procedures to reduce and eliminate these.

All employees will receive a copy of the Lone Working Policy and procedures along with the risk assessment. This will be covered for new employees during the induction period, prior to any lone working taking place.

General Data Protection Regulations

The organisation will treat your personal data in line with our obligations under the current data protection regulations and our own Data Protection policy. Information regarding how your data will be used and the basis for processing your data is provided in the Association's employee privacy notice.

Review of Policy
This policy and the procedures it contains will be reviewed at least every 5 years.