

Lone Working policy

1. Purpose

- 1.1 This policy outlines Aesop's guidance on lone working and the procedure to be followed to reduce the health and safety risks which lone working can present.
- 1.2 This policy is designed to alert staff to the risks presented by lone working, to identify the responsibilities each person has in lone working situations, and to describe procedures which will minimise risks.
- 1.3 This Policy does not form part of your contract of employment and can be amended at any time.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all staff who work alone, at any time.
- 2.2 A lone worker is an employee (including zero hours and casually employed workers) who work in isolation from other workers without close or direct supervision. This can include regularly working alone and/or occasionally working alone.
- 2.3 Lone workers may be exposed to a higher level of risk because there is no-one to assist them in the event of an accident or ill health when working.

3. Document support

- 3.1 If after reading this document, you need further help, please contact your line manager.

4. Policy

- 4.1 Aesop is committed to an approach that offers you a sound framework to manage lone working. We will take all reasonable steps to ensure your health and safety when working alone.
- 4.2 It is important to consider the activities that carry risk to staff. These include:
- Working with vulnerable groups e.g. older people
 - Staff working alone in buildings
 - Out of hours emergency situations e.g. key holders responding to reported activations of intruder alarm systems
 - Staff handling/carrying cash
 - Staff undertaking visits to settings with attached risks
 - Visits or meetings finishing late in the evening
 - Travelling on foot, particularly after dark
 - Potential communication problems
 - Parking far away from the destination
 - The remoteness of the workplace
 - Potential for physical or verbal abuse
 - The likelihood of criminal attack.

5. Responsibilities

- 5.1 Line managers will:
- Conduct health and safety risk assessments which take account of lone working and physical and emotional factors that are likely to arise
 - Avoid lone working as far as is reasonably practicable
 - Ensure emergency procedures are in place so that if you work alone you are able to obtain assistance if required
 - Make sure you have the necessary skills and experience to undertake work alone
 - Confirm arrangements are in place so that someone else is aware of your whereabouts at all times.
 - Provide you with adequate information including policies and procedures, instruction and training to understand the hazards and risks and the safe working procedures associated with working alone.
 - Remind you (especially if you are new to Aesop) of your personal responsibility under Health and Safety Legislation and your duty of care to others.
 - Maintain up to date training records.
 - Ensure your personal data, including information about your health, is handled in accordance with Aesop's Data Protection and Security policy.

- 5.2 When working alone you will:
- Follow the safe working arrangements developed by Aesop for lone working.
 - Take reasonable steps to ensure your own safety and avoid putting yourself in unnecessary risk.
 - Engage in training if required to do so.
 - Inform your line manager of any incidents or safety concerns.
- 5.3 Consideration will be given to the potential greater risks to expectant mothers, young workers and anyone working alone with a medical condition which might require additional considerations.
- 5.4 You will be involved in any assessment process and be made aware of the findings. A file will be maintained with all risk assessments.

6. Risk Assessments

- 6.1 To minimise risks, Aesop will ensure the health and safety of their staff, workers and volunteers is given full consideration by undertaking risk assessments.
- 6.2 Safe working arrangements are based on the following process:
- An assessment of the likeliness and seriousness of the risk
 - The limiting of the risk
 - Control or management of the risk
- 6.3 Risk assessments will ensure that risks are either eliminated or adequately controlled. When it is not possible to devise arrangements for the work to be done safely by a lone worker, alternative arrangements will be devised.
- 6.4 To conduct a risk assessment the following steps need to be followed;
- Look for potential hazards. For lone working these might include:
 - a. Travelling to a venue.
 - b. Arriving or leaving a location which is isolated, poorly lit, in a high crime area.
 - c. Being in an isolated area with poor or no mobile signal where other telephones are also not available.
 - d. Working with people who may be volatile, with a history of violent behaviours.
 - e. Working very long hours.

f. Having no recourse to colleagues who might be able to assist with stressful situations.

- Evaluate the risk by considering how likely the hazard is to occur and if it were to occur, the severity of a possible outcome; The diagram below will help you think about this.
- Where medium, high or very high risks occur decide whether existing precautions are adequate and if not search for preventative measures or measures which will reduce the risk to an acceptable level.
- Advise staff of the findings of the assessment.
- Create local codes of practice and put them into effect.
- Check the measures work - review and if necessary revise, especially if there has been significant change in working practices.

			Potential Consequences				
			L6	L5	L4	L3	L2
			Minor injuries or discomfort. No medical treatment or measureable physical effects.	Injuries or illness requiring medical treatment. Temporary impairment.	Injuries or illness requiring hospital admission.	Injury or illness resulting in permanent impairment.	Fatality
			Not Significant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Severe
Likelihood	Expected to occur regularly under normal circumstances	Almost Certain	Medium	High	Very High	Very High	Very High
	Expected to occur at some time	Likely	Medium	High	High	Very High	Very High
	May occur at some time	Possible	Low	Medium	High	High	Very High
	Not likely to occur in normal circumstances	Unlikely	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	High
	Could happen, but probably never will	Rare	Low	Low	Low	Low	Medium

7. Keeping in touch

7.1 All staff are required to:

- keep their Outlook calendars up to date to enable their managers and colleagues to locate them and get in touch when necessary.

- let their manager know if plans change (for example, if attending an event and travel plans are disrupted leading to a late arrival or departure).
- keep their work mobiles charged and switched on.
- follow locally agreed procedures.
- inform their manager if they become aware of a health condition which might add to the level of risk when working alone. If you are unsure whether a particular health condition makes you more vulnerable you should speak with your GP.

7.2 Further safety information can be obtained from:

- These Suzy Lamplugh Trust leaflets
<https://www.suzylamplugh.org/personal-safety-leaflets>.
- This short video with sensible tips
<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=NW5WUhlueEQ>.

8. Supervision

- 8.1 It is your manager's duty to provide appropriate controls for lone workers through line Management/Supervision. These provide information, instruction and training, help ensure you understand the risks associated with your work and provide clarity around safety precautions and guidance in situations of uncertainty. Remember, the extent of supervision required depends on the risks involved, and your proficiency and experience to identify and handle safety issues. New staff may need to be accompanied. The extent of supervision required is a local management decision, you do not decide if you require assistance or not.
- 8.2 Managers will ensure there is a suitable system in place to monitor the locations of lone workers. This system should include:
- A reporting back procedure for staff and volunteers at the end of a meeting or working period to confirm all is well.
 - Ensuring there is a record of the whereabouts of staff, particularly where visits are protracted, at the end of the day, in the evening or over the weekend.
 - Emergency contact details for each worker for a colleague to call if the worker fails to return home when expected.
 - A designated person responsible for checking the diary every day. Each diary record should include: the names of the individual(s) to be visited, the venue of the meeting, the time and if possible, a telephone number where they can be contacted. They must be kept up to date and placed in an accessible place.

9. Violence to staff

- 9.1 Thankfully, serious acts of violence towards staff who work alone are relatively infrequent. Nevertheless, aggressive incidents in the course of work do remain a risk. It is important for you to try to recognise danger before an event occurs and act on this recognition. Do not presume that other people behave within certain norms.
- 9.2 Each individual interprets violent behaviour differently, for example one person may find swearing offensive but their colleague may not. Violence includes physical and verbal abuse, threatening behaviour and harassment. For this reason, the definition used by Aesop is as follows:
"Violent behaviour is that which produces damaging or hurtful effects, physically or emotionally in other people"
- 9.3 All staff have a duty to report any such incidences of violence to their Manager.

10. Safety on visits

- 10.1 To minimise the risk of violence it is essential that Aesop have a consistent practice for dealing with visits. The following are points to be observed:
- When meeting someone for the first time, you need to decide whether it is suitable or possible to arrange the first meeting in a public space. If this is not possible you should call the person back to confirm the arrangement (preferably via a land line) and ensure you know as much as possible about the identity of the person you are going to see.
 - Where possible you should take a mobile phone with you.
 - You must never visit individuals who are known to be violent without discussing this with your line manager in advance. A thorough risk assessment must be carried out (see guidelines on risk assessment). Staff should wear suitable clothing that will not hinder their movement if they need to run.
 - You should not wear valuables.
 - You should try to arrange visits during daylight hours and where possible, visits should be completed during working hours.
- 10.2 If a home visit is required to minimise risk the following points are to be observed

- After knocking at the door of a client or customer, do not peer through the letterbox - someone intent on causing harm may be on the other side of the door.
- If you feel uneasy do not enter a property or particular room.
- Make a mental note of escape when entering a property. Where possible, close the door, follow the person inside and stay nearest to the exit.
- Once in a room you should ensure the way to the exit is clear.
- Be aware you are in someone's personal territory and individuals may be anxious about the visit. At all times you must act as a guest in the person's home and respect their privacy.
- Be aware of any dogs or animals in the house and if necessary request they be put in a separate room.
- If a violent incident occurs take reasonable steps to protect yourself.
- Following any visit, you must ensure you inform your Contact person (this may be a manager, partner or colleague). If this does not happen within one hour of the agreed time, the delegated person should be notified, and appropriate action taken.

11. Monitor and review

- 11.1 The implementation of this policy and its procedures will be regularly reviewed by Aesop. Following any incident, a review of the Risk Assessment will be carried out and its findings used to inform change to procedures and working practices.
- 11.2 Any member of staff with a concern regarding lone working or this policy should ensure that it is discussed with their supervisor or with the whole team, as appropriate.

12. Data protection

- 12.1 Aesop processes personal data collected during the risk assessment and monitoring of lone working in accordance with its Data Protection and Security policy. All data is held securely and accessed by, and disclosed to, individuals only for the purposes of conducting a risk assessment or in relation to action needed for lone working. Inappropriate access or disclosure of employee data constitutes a data breach and should be reported in accordance with Aesop's Data Protection and Security policy immediately. It may also constitute a disciplinary offence, which

will be dealt with under the Aesop's Disciplinary and Capability policy.

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