

OCTOBER 2008

**LONE WORKING
POLICY**

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 North Yorkshire Building Control Partnership has a duty to make adequate provision for the health and safety of lone workers in accordance with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.
- 1.2 The following policy has been prepared to inform employees who are required to undertake lone working as part of their employment and their managers of their obligations.
- 1.3 Within the following policy there are a number of principles that must be followed whenever any lone working activity is planned, together with the processes and systems that should be in place whilst they are being undertaken and the requirements to monitor and review all aspects of the lone working activities in order to enable continuous improvement.

2.0 WHO DO THE GUIDELINES APPLY TO?

- 2.1 The Lone Working Policy applies to all employees who are required to undertake lone working as part of their employment with the Partnership.
- 2.2 The policy also applies to managers of staff who are required to undertake lone working as part of their employment.

3.0 DEFINITION OF A LONE WORKER

- 3.1 Lone workers are those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision and are found in a wide range of situations:-
 - ◆ People in fixed establishments where only one person works on the premises (i.e. kiosks and home workers).
 - ◆ People who work separately from others in premises.
 - ◆ People who work outside normal hours.
 - ◆ Mobile workers working away from a fixed base.
- 3.2 Although there is no general prohibition on working alone, the broad duties of The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and The Managing Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 still apply. These require identifying hazards of the work, assessing the risks involved, and putting measures in place to avoid or control the risks.

4.0 RISK ASSESSMENTS AND REVIEW OF ARRANGEMENTS

- 4.1 The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 requires that employers must ensure the welfare, health and safety of all employees and assessments must be carried out on all work activities. The findings of risk assessments must be disseminated to the employees involved or affected by the work.
- 4.2 Once lone workers have been identified it is essential that risk assessments are undertaken in accordance with The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. This can be achieved by using council forms CS 20 "Lone Worker Initial Assessment" or a more detailed assessment using form CS 13 "Risk Assessment - Safe Working Procedure". Risk assessments must be undertaken upon the commencement of employment of an individual and thereafter to review the assessment on an annual basis.

5.0 PRE-ACTIVITY REQUIREMENTS

- 5.1 Thorough planning and preparation are essential for the safety and well being of the participant in any lone working activity. It must take place as early as possible in order to ensure that sufficient time is available to consider all aspects of the activity and to enable sufficient time for the appropriate level of safeguards to be put in place.

6.0 MONITORING OF LONE WORKING

- 6.1 The Partnership is responsible for ensuring that lone working activities are robustly monitored. Managers who have staff or members involved in lone working must ensure that risk assessments are completed in order to identify any hazards and associated risks and that the control measures and safe working procedures are robust enough to ensure the safety of the staff undertaking lone working.

7.0 REPORTING OF INCIDENTS

- 7.1 The Partnership is required to record, and report to the Health and Safety Executive where necessary, all accidents and incidents that take place at work.

8.0 STOPPING AN ACTIVITY OR VISIT

- 8.1 Any person who has concerns about the continuance of an activity should feel confident they have their line managers' support to terminate a visit and return to the base at any time. Where such incidents arise, individuals must also ensure that they report the details to their manager.

LONE WORKING POLICY

- 8.2 On return to base staff should ask for a debrief with their line manager if they feel any issues need to be addressed following a lone working activity. The risk assessment may need to be modified and used as part of the planning process for subsequent activities.

9.0 EMERGENCY PROCEDURE

- 9.1 Managers and supervisors (following a risk assessment) must provide an appropriate emergency procedure. There are a variety of control measures that can be used. However, this will depend on the level of risk and the confidence of the member of staff. Staff must receive training in all cases.

10.0 COMMUNICATION

- 10.1 In accordance with Health and Safety legislation, managers are required to explain in general terms the requirements of health and safety policies and procedures to their employees.

11.0 TRAINING

- 11.1 Where supervision is limited, training to ensure competency is particularly important. Training may also be critical to avoid panic reactions in unusual situations.
- 11.2 Lone workers need to be sufficiently experienced to understand the risks and precautions fully. Managers and supervisors need to set limits on what can and cannot be done when working alone. Employees must be competent to deal with circumstances should they arise and therefore the Partnership will provide appropriate training for lone workers both at induction and during the period of employment.

12.0 SUPPORT

- 12.1 The Partnership aims to provide support to staff by offering an independent counselling service for employees undergoing a stress related experience. Staff are entitled to receive six free sessions with a qualified Counsellor. This service can be accessed directly by all employees or through the Human Resources Team.

13.0 ALLEGATIONS MADE AGAINST STAFF

- 13.1 The Partnership recognises that there may be occasions where lone workers are the subject of allegations made against them by either internal or external customers.

LONE WORKING POLICY

- 13.2 Where such circumstances arise, the matter will be dealt with in accordance with the Partnership's Disciplinary Procedure.
- 13.3 The Partnership will however endeavour to ensure that such cases are treated sensitively and dealt with as speedily as possible.

14.0 DOCUMENTATION

- 14.1 The lone worker must ensure that they have read all relevant documentation pertaining to the person(s), property or place they are visiting. Such documentation will include the necessary relevant activity risk assessments.
- 14.2 A copy of all relevant documents must also be held back at the Building Control office at Easingwold by a designated officer.

15.0 APPEALS

- 15.1 If an employee considers that they have been denied legitimate access to the entitlements detailed in these guidelines, they should report this immediately to Health and Safety Officer who will undertake further enquires".
- 15.2 Any abuse of the Lone Working Policy and Guidelines will be dealt with in accordance with the Partnership's Disciplinary Procedure.

16.0 RECORDS

- 16.1 All correspondence and associated documentary evidence will be held on the employee's personnel file.

17.0 FURTHER INFORMATION

- 17.1 Further information on this policy can be obtained from Ryedale District Council's Human Resources Team or Health and Safety Officer.
- 17.2 Further information is also available for managers in the Managers Guide to Lone Workers and staff in the Staff Guide to Lone Working copies of which are available on Ryedale District Council's intranet or the Human Resources Team.
- 17.3 Employees who are members of a Trade Union may also obtain further information from their representative.