(NEW) LONE WORKING POLICY

Date of Review: 07.06.24

Date of Approval:

Date of Next Review: 30.06.27

Craigdale Housing Association can provide this document on request, in different languages and formats, including Braille and audio formats.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Craigdale Housing Association aims to limit lone working where reasonably practicable. Where lone working is necessary, we will take all reasonable steps, in accordance with our duty of care towards you to make sure you are safe while you work for us.

In line with our duty of care, you should not be put at any greater risk if you are lone working compared to someone who is not. We have a duty to assess lone working risks and take any reasonable, practical measures to reduce and eliminate these as much as we can. This will be done via our risk assessment process. You are expected to co-operate and follow these measures, this will assist in keeping you safe.

2.0 SCOPE OF POLICY

This policy and procedure applies to all employees, managers, governing body members, contractors, volunteers and workers who are based in our community, our office or work from home.

3.0 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

4.0 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 Craigdale Housing Association, a lone worker is likely to include the following:

- Working out-with 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 the reception area alone, or in another area isolated from the rest of the organisation.
- Working in the office but away from colleagues.
- Any other situation identified through the risk assessment process.

This above list is not exhaustive.

5.0 EMPLOYER RESPONSIBILITIES

As your employer, we have a responsibility to make sure you are safe while working for us and this includes any time you are lone working.

To do this we will:

- Make sure risk assessments are carried out and reviewed regularly or as and when required.
- Provide procedures for working safely while you are lone working.
- Make sure you are provided with appropriate and relevant training to understand our procedures.
- Have reporting systems in place to record, investigate and review any near misses and incidents.
- Involve you when considering potential risks with lone working and reasonable control measures.
- Make sure you are issued with a copy of this policy.
- Review this policy and update it as is appropriate.

6.0 EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES

You also have responsibilities which we expect you to fulfil. These are as follows:

- Abide by our lone working procedures and speak to a manager if you are unsure of anything.
- Not knowingly put yourself at risk.
- Remove yourself from any situation you do not feel comfortable and/or safe in.
- Report all lone working incidents and near misses, by following our reporting procedures.
- Attend training when this is provided.
- Take part in our lone working risk assessment process.
- Whilst in a lone working situation carry out an informal/dynamic risk assessment.
- Know, understand and follow this policy and the procedures.
- Ensure your emergency contact person is provided with our contact details in line with our procedure.

7.0 MANAGING RISKS

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

It is recognised that lone working can present increased risks to staff. It is therefore the responsibility of both of us to manage these.

In practice this means that we will carry out lone working risk assessments which will identify any potential risks. We will also consider the following during the exercise:

- the remoteness of the workplace;
- potential communication problems;
- the likelihood of 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 or not the person is medically fit and 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, we will:

- give consideration to 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 you are aware and are comfortable to undertake a dynamic risk assessment in any lone worker situation you may find yourself in. If you feel you require guidance on this, please speak to your line manager.

8.0 NEAR MISS AND INCIDENT REPORTING

It is vital that you report any lone working near miss or incident as soon as possible to your 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 you accordingly.

All near miss and incident information must be reported to Corporate Manager, and a near miss/incident form completed. The form is available from Y:\GOVERNANCE\Health & Safety\Health & Safety Control Manual\Section 7-Appendices\05-Near Miss Report Form

9.0 LONE WORKING PROCEDURE

Where lone working is necessary you will:

- follow our safe working arrangements which are as follows:
- make reasonable steps to ensure your own safety;
- remove yourself from any situation you feel unsafe or uncomfortable and move to a place you feel safe and report to your line manager;
- Inform your line manager/assessor of any near misses, incidents or safety concerns;
- follow the emergency procedures below when lone working if required:

    - ❖ If working a lone in office at night staff member will text Line Manager when they are leaving the office
    - ❖ If Staff Member is out visiting multiple tenants periodic contacts should be made (15/20mins).
    - ❖ Staff Member if caught on the street by tenant and asked to inspect a repair will contact office to inform colleagues that they are visiting an additional tenant
    - ❖ Staff Member will contact Line Manager if evening appointment has been cancelled
    - ❖ Certain Property Visits will be carried out by 2 Staff Members
    - ❖ Allocations Visit will be carried out by 2 Staff Members
    - ❖ Certain Rent Visit will be carried out by 2 Staff Members
    - ❖ All House Visits, Names & Addresses to be marked up
    - ❖ If a Member of Staff is carrying out a House Visit and feel in danger they should phone the office and use the code word **"COULD I SPEAK TO ROBERT"**

- make sure you know, have read and understood the lone working risk assessments and all the control measures in place
- make sure arrangements are in place so that someone else is always aware of your whereabouts.

10.0 TRAINING

All staff will be trained in line with our lone working procedures to make sure they are aware of the potential risks and our own procedures to reduce and eliminate these

11.0 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 Document & Data Retention Policy. Information regarding how your data will be used and the basis for processing your data is provided in Craigdale Housing Association's employee privacy notice.

12.0 REVIEW OF POLICY

This policy and procedure will be reviewed at least every three years.

13.0 ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) published guidance on how to Working alone: Health and safety guidance on the risks of lone working.

- ACS
- Health & Safety Control Manual