

Lone Working Policy – Charity Services Volunteers

Introduction

This Policy is intended for those who volunteer for the Licensed Trade Charity – Charity Services who spend some or all of their volunteer hour's lone working. The definition of a Lone Worker is:

‘A worker whose activities involve a large percentage of their working time operating in situations without the benefit of interaction with other workers or without supervision’.

The policy aims to raise the awareness of personal safety measures for volunteers who are lone working and identify means of reducing imposed risks.

Why do we have this policy?

The Licensed Trade Charity relies on the help of volunteers who are based in various locations around the country and visit potential beneficiaries in their homes. These visits are unaccompanied and therefore volunteers may be exposed to potential risks. It is the responsibility of the Licensed Trade Charity to ensure that the appropriate steps are taken to identify risk and, where possible, ensure that the risks are removed or adequately controlled.

Control measures that the Licensed Trade Charity can implement include:

- Adequate training to enable volunteers to identify and control or minimise risks, and to protect themselves and others.
- Clear reporting and recording procedures when a risk arises
- Clear instructions to volunteers to consider before a visit

Control Measures

Volunteers should ensure that they do not commence a volunteering activity without access to a mobile phone that is charged and has sufficient means to make and accept telephone calls.

Prior to completing any lone working volunteering activity, volunteers must take the following steps:

- Inform a member of staff/family member/friend where they are going to and how long the activity is expected to last
- Telephone that person when they have safely exited and have returned to their car/a public space
- Provide that person with the telephone for the Charity Services office to call for assistance if they are concerned
- During introductory telephone call, the Volunteer must discuss risks with the beneficiary i.e. having dogs at the address
- If the person is living in a hostel, it is suggested that the communal lounge be used – the Volunteer should not enter their bedroom

- Ideally they should **NOT** meet in a public place unless the place where the beneficiary is living is totally unsuitable or in extreme circumstances. If this is the case, then the Volunteer should check with the office first and then inform them of the meeting place. Once the visit has taken place, please call the office to debrief. Volunteers should also note it on their report form that the meeting took place in a public place
- Inform the Charity Services staff if they have any concerns and discuss safety measures
- Ensure that they have a map or use their sat nav (which can be obtained from the Licensed Trade Charity) and are aware of their journey to & from a visit
- Ensure that an identification badge (provided by the Licensed Trade Charity) is worn and visible

Whilst lone working the following should be taken into consideration:

- Make a mental note of a route out of the address should a situation arise where volunteers need to leave
- Ensure that you have enough petrol in your vehicle to enable you to return safely
- Ensure that you are aware of public transport routes should be using this mode of transport
- Have a reason to leave should the situation become uncomfortable (i.e. the volunteer has left a vital form in the car)
- During visits volunteers must not get involved in heavy lifting/use of ladders or equipment
- Volunteers must be aware of procedures to follow and report risks identified during a visit

In the case where a concern has arisen and risk has been unable to be managed the following procedure must be followed:

- Police informed if incident involves a crime
- Medical services involved when necessary if incident involves harm to the volunteer, beneficiary or others
- Fire service informed in the situation where a fire develops. Volunteer is to evacuate by the closest exit and not re-enter the building until the fire has been extinguished and the property is declared safe.
- Inform the Volunteer Manager or other Charity Services Staff of any risks and incidents that occur during the visit and actions that were taken over the telephone followed by a written cause for concern form if necessary.
- All incidents/accidents/near misses will be formally recorded and followed up appropriately.
- Any volunteer who has experienced violence or aggression in the course of their work will be offered appropriate aftercare