# LONE WORKING POLICY

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to set out Age UK Cambridgeshire & Peterborough's (AUKCAP) policy, and its procedures which shall apply to staff working alone.

## SCOPE

This policy applies to all AUKCAP employees and volunteers.

For the purpose of this policy, Lone Workers are defined as employees or volunteers who are required to work on their own without close or direct supervision, either away from the charity's premises or who are alone in an office, day centre or other building.

This includes employees working at another employer's premises, or working close to other people who are not AUKCAP employees.

Throughout this document, reference to 'staff' or 'employees' will be taken to include 'volunteers'.

Throughout this document, reference to 'Line Manager' will be taken to mean Team Leader/Service Lead/Head of Services/Deputy CEO/CEO as appropriate.

Compliance with this policy is a mandatory requirement of AUKCAP.

**ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES**

**In addition to the general responsibilities for H&S outlined in the Health and Safety Policy, specific responsibilities for Lone Working are as follows:**

**Chair of Board of Trustees and Board of Trustees**:
- Ensure Legal Compliance: The Chair and the Board of Trustees must ensure that the Lone Working Policy and all associated procedures are fully compliant with current health and safety legislation, including any applicable national and sector-specific regulations.
- Resource Allocation: The Chair and the Board of Trustees must ensure that adequate resources—financial, human, and technological, as above—are made available to effectively manage the risks associated with lone working, including the implementation, monitoring, and continuous improvement of the policy.

**All employees**:
- Must comply with this policy and any associated lone working procedures
- Must inform their line manager of any medical conditions that may put them at increased risk of harm when working alone
- Must take reasonable care of themselves and others, including refraining from taking unnecessary risks when working alone
- Must seek help and support from their line manager or other AUKCAP managers in the event of an emergency or difficult situation and not attempt to tackle the incident alone.
- Must report to their line manager any incidents affecting their personal safety using the accident reporting procedures
- Must bring to the attention of their line manager any concerns related to lone working and personal safety, including any changes in service users they are supporting with which may increase the risk to the employee's health and safety
- Must complete lone working training at induction and refresh this training when required as detailed in the training matrix.

**Chief Executive Officer (Deputy CEO in absence of)**:
Has direct responsibility for the safe management of lone working across all services, through oversight of the arrangements including:

- Ensuring this policy and related procedures are relevant and regularly reviewed

- Ensuring that personnel are adequately competent to conduct their roles and responsibilities in relation to Lone Working through recruitment, training, development and performance management.
- Reporting concerns relating to lone working and personal safety to the H&S Manager
- Ensuring that resources are directed and deployed accordingly.
- Ensuring the Board are kept informed on all Lone Working issues

**Head of Services**
Oversees the operational implementation of Lone Working Policy and procedures for teams under their leadership

- Must direct and support Service Leads and Team Leaders to ensure day to day compliance with the Lone working policy and procedures. Including but not limited to active participation in:
  - Lone working risk assessment
  - Ongoing implementation and maintenance of the control measures identified in the risk assessments
  - Monitoring and audit of arrangements for safe lone working
  - Ensuring that all lone working training requirements are met
  - Investigation of any incidents, near misses or accidents related to lone working
  - Communication with their services on any issues or updates related to lone working
  - Regular and routine open communication with the H&S Manager

**Service Leads and Team Leaders**
Have day to day responsibility for the activities of their teams to ensure compliance with the Lone Working Policy and Procedures, through

  - Lone working risk assessment for general activities
  - Individual risk assessment where an employee's medical condition significantly increases the risk of harm when working alone.
  - Ongoing implementation and maintenance of the control measures identified in the risk assessments
  - Monitoring and audit of arrangements for safe lone working
  - Ensuring that all lone working training requirements are met
  - Investigation of any incidents, near misses or accidents related to lone working
  - Communication with their services on any issues or updates related to lone working including sharing information about risks associated with service users

      o  Regular and routine open communication with the H&S Manager

**H&S Manager**:
Provides competent advice and devises health and safety tools to enable the safe management of lone working, including:

o Developing and regularly reviewing the Lone Working Policy and associated procedures, in consultation with all relevant employees, both proactively and in response to concerns raised by employees
o Developing, delivering and monitoring Lone working training
o Supporting Line Managers to implementing risk assessment for all activities and individuals where lone working could lead to risk
o Supporting Line Managers to Investigate accidents, incidents and near misses where lone working is a factor
o Supporting Line Managers to monitor and audit arrangements to ensure safe lone working and compliance with the lone working policy and associated procedures
o Providing support, advice and guidance on lone working practices to all employees and volunteers as required
o Ensuring that all employees are consulted on any changes to lone working arrangements

## POLICY AND PROCEDURES

## Risk assessment

Line Managers will complete risk assessments with the assistance of the H&S Manager.

The risks associated with lone working will be considered, evaluated and assessed by each team in their general risk assessment.

Additional specific risk assessments must be conducted if cause for concern is raised about a specific individual, Service User or location.

Risks will vary depending on the nature of the work activity being carried out but may include:

- Risk of violence or aggressive/threatening behaviour resulting in injury and/or psychological trauma
- Risk of injury relating to operating machinery and working at height without assistance.
- Impact on mental health such as feelings of isolation and loneliness, which can increase the risk of stress, depression, negative coping strategies and associated ill-health.
- Risk of worsening health conditions or poorer outcomes in the event of an accident or ill-health, due to the lack of help immediately available.

The risk assessment must identify controls to eliminate or mitigate the risks. Controls may include:
- Mandatory requirements for all employees to maintain an up to date Outlook calendar, made accessible to view (to all if appropriate, but to Line managers as a minimum) This would include:
    - o the names, addresses and telephone numbers of clients being visited at home
    - o appointments at the office or day centre
    - o meetings and other events
    - o Contact numbers for meetings and other events
- Mandatory signing in/out procedures, including
    - o Normal working day
    - o Special arrangements for first visits, out of hours visits and ad hoc events

- o Special arrangement for circumstances where a specific risk is identified
- Mandatory training at induction and refreshed at periods detailed in the training matrix
- Prohibition of lone working:
  - o Where the risk to personal safety is significant
  - o Where the risk assessment indicates that the task/location requires two people
- Mandatory adherence to written Service specific lone working procedures
  - o Guidance on areas of work to consider is available in Appendix 1
  - o Lone Working Service Specific Procedures are found at:
    Sharepoint – All Staff – H&S Resources – Lone Working

All risk assessments must be reviewed annually and whenever there are indications that the circumstances and risk have changed, including:

  - o changes to a service user's behaviour and habits,
  - o unknown visitors at the service user's property,
  - o changes to the property such as signs of deliberate damage, deterioration of conditions,
  - o reports of incidents at or near to the property/work location
  - o other concerns raised by employees

## Emergency Arrangements

- All employees will ensure that AUKCAP have a list of their next of kin/emergency contact details
- AGEUKCAP will issue to every employee a list of 'out of hours' contact numbers.
- Line managers will ensure that they have emergency arrangements in place to follow in the event of
  - o a lone worker failing to make contact in line with the service specific arrangements
  - o contact from an employee's next of kin who are concerned about the safety of an employee

## Keys and Keyholders
- A set of keys to each office and day centre will be maintained at the charity's Head Office.
- The staff named as out of hours contacts will each have access to the charity's Head Office outside normal hours.

**Personal information**
- Staff are discouraged from sharing personal information with third parties with whom they come into contact in the course of their work for AUKCAP.
- In particular staff are not encouraged to give their home address or telephone number to third parties.
- Staff are also discouraged from discussing details of their personal life, for example their home circumstances, with service users.

**Training and Awareness**
Information on lone working procedures is included in the Volunteer Handbook, which is issued to all volunteers at the point of recruitment. In addition, training on personal safety is included in volunteer induction training.

## <u>MONITORING AND REVIEW</u>

This policy and associated procedures will be reviewed every 24 months, unless earlier review is required due to changes in relevant legislation or if areas of concern are highlighted by staff or volunteers, or following any serious incidents.

**Lone Working Policy & Procedures approved: September 2025** (Date)

**Signed by Chair of Trustees** *Hazel Willi*

**Version Control Tracker**

| VERSION | DATE | AUTHOR | COMMENTS |
|---------|------|--------|----------|
| 1.0 | May 2019 | SAM BURTON | Policy created. |
| 2.0 | January 2021 | LIZ WRIGHT | Scheduled review. |
| 2.1 | October 2021 | LIZ WRIGHT | References to County Office removed. |
| 3.0 | February 2023 | LIZ WRIGHT | Scheduled review.<br>Roles and responsibilities updated.<br>Explanation of risks included.<br>General principles added.<br>Home working adding. |
| 3.1 | April 2024 | LIZ WRIGHT | Update to office names/locations. |
| 4.0 | August 2025 | KIRSTEN MONK/SAM BURTON | Scheduled review |

**Appendix 1 – Guidance on areas to include in Lone Working Procedures**

See also Service Specific Lone Working Procedures on Sharepoint:
All Staff - H&S Resources - Lone Working

## 1. LONE WORKING IN THE COMMUNITY

**Where a service user is already known to AUKCAP**:
- No adverse circumstances have been previously reported therefore risk assessed as LOW:
    - Visits conducted in line with arrangements outlined for their service in the Lone Working Service Specific Procedures document.
    - Employees must continue to dynamically risk assess the situation
    - Employees must report immediately to their Line Manager any changes that may indicate the risk level has changed.

**Where a risk has previously been identified**
- Under no circumstances whatsoever should a lone member of AUKCAP staff visit a service user at home where a risk has been previously identified
- The Line Manager must assist the staff member to assess the risk
- Alternatives to lone worker home visits must be implemented:
    - meet the service user at an AUKCAP office or day centre where other members of staff will be present.
    - two members of staff visiting together
    - one member of staff visiting with a third party known to the service user, such as another professional or a friend of the service user.
- If the employee and/or Line Manager are not satisfied that the risk may be suitably reduced, no home visit shall take place.
- The Line Manager will report the circumstances of this decision to the Deputy CEO.

**Where the service user is not already known to AUKCAP:**
- Information must be collected during the referral process to make an informed decision about the potential risk of harm.
- This information must include:
    - previous incidences of violent or aggressive behaviour by the service user or other occupants,
    - mental ill health,
    - presence of animals,
    - hoarding
    - other safety concerns within the property.

- All new referrals must be discussed with the relevant Line Manager prior to a home visit being made.
- If a risk is identified, the procedure detailed about will be followed

## 2. WORKING ALONE IN AN OFFICE, DAY CENTRE OR OTHER BUILDING

Wherever possible staff and volunteers will avoid working alone in a building either during or after working hours. However, where this cannot be avoided when other staff may not be available, or where staff wish to work beyond normal working hours, the following procedures must be followed:

- Before being left alone, staff must ensure that there is no unauthorised person present in the building/office.
- External doors at day centres should be locked, having regard to the need to escape in an emergency. The key to an external door will not be left in the lock on the inside of the door.
- Office doors should be secured so that entry is only possible with a key fob/key code as applicable.
- Where one is available, the lone working safety device should be worn and switched on during all periods of lone working.
- Members of the public are not permitted access to offices and day centres after normal working hours.
- When the lone working is unexpected and unplanned, the member of staff must alert their line manager or a colleague that they are working alone. Upon leaving the building or upon being joined by a colleague the member of staff will inform their line manager or colleague that they are no longer working alone.

## 3. TRAVELLING

When travelling to, from and for work, staff must:
- Plan their route before setting off.
- Keep their vehicle in good condition with sufficient fuel.
- Keep the doors of their vehicle locked when driving, and ensure any valuables are stored out of sight, preferably in the boot.
- Ensure they park in well-lit or busy areas, and plan their route back to their vehicle carefully, particularly if it will be dark.
- Do not give lifts or accept lifts from people they do not know, or they do not know well, including service users.

- If using public transport, they should wait in well-lit areas where there are other people around.  They should sit near the driver on the bus or guard on the train if possible.
- If using a taxi, they should ensure it is a licensed taxi from a reliable firm. Where possible, they should pre-book the taxi and then inform a colleague or friend of the taxi firm's name and number.

## 4. HOME WORKING

When working from home, employees are classed as lone workers and as such are vulnerable to work-related stress, social isolation and depression. Employees working from home should:

- Check in with their line manager and/or colleagues at the start of their working day via a brief message on Teams.
- Discuss with their line manager any concerns relating to the impact of working from home on their mental wellbeing and strategies for managing these.

## 5. REPORTING

- All employees must report any concerns regarding lone working to their Line Manager, including any changes to existing risk levels and suggestions for improvements to the procedures.
- All employees are required to report immediately to their Line Manager, or if after normal hours, to a named emergency contact, any incident where the individual believes his/her health or safety had been compromised due to lone working.
- All concerns and incidents will be investigated by the Service Manager in conjunction with the Health & Safety Manager, and where a full investigation is required, the findings will be reported to the Board and Chief Operating Officer.

### Appendix 2

To read more around subject of Personal Safety at Work please refer to Suzy Lamplugh Trust website via the following link [Suzy Lamplugh Trust](#)  .