

MISBOURNE AREA YOUTH

LONE WORKING POLICY

The Management Committee and Trustees of Misbourne Area Youth (MAY) recognises that on some occasions, a staff member may find themselves working alone. This is of particular concern when working alone during a MAY activity.

This procedure defines who is a lone worker, MAY'S responsibilities, how to assess the risks associated with lone working activities, preventing and controlling the risk and provides guidance on various scenarios. The procedure is intended to support and enhance our existing practices.

Are you ever a Lone Worker?

A lone worker is a person who works on their own for some of the time without close supervision or support. It includes staff who:

- Work out in the community, e.g. in charge of a group of young people in an activity on an outing or trip.
- Work with other members of staff, but who temporarily do so on their own e.g. outside of an activity venue.

MAY's Responsibilities

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 states that all employers have a duty of care and must, as far as reasonably practicable, ensure the safety and welfare of their staff.

The legislation does not say that staff must not work alone but that an employer must assess the risks to staff who do work alone. In accordance with the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, these assessments should be a proactive process and involve:

- Assessing both the associated and all 'reasonably foreseeable' risks;
- Creating safe working procedures;
- Ensuring that staff are informed of those procedures; and that regular monitoring and review of the procedures are carried out.

Only 'competent persons' who are trained to assess risks should carry out the assessments.

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Assessing the Risk

Prior to undertaking lone working activities, the Youth Leader should consider whether the activity is needed and if it could be carried out in other ways.

For example - if you are meeting with a parent, could it be carried out before, after or during an event or where a colleague will be present. However, if there is no option but to work alone then, prior to commencing the activity, the risks must be assessed and the procedures that you must follow must be confirmed.

For example - before going out, confirm where you are going, how far and how long your meeting is likely to take. Telephone once your trip/meeting has concluded to confirm that you are on your way back. If working in the evening, text "Home Safe" to your "buddy".

When carrying out the risk assessment, think about the following:

- Who are you likely to meet?
 - Are they total strangers or well-known people? Do they have a history of violence?
 - Will they welcome you or will they be difficult?
 - If you are a woman, could you be especially at risk?
 - If you are a young worker, could you be especially at risk?
- What will you be doing?
 - Working with youth
 - Working with families?
 - Enforcing rules?
 - Denying services?
 - Collecting supplies, equipment?
 - Can one person adequately control the risks associated with the activity?
- What will the environment be?
 - Is there open access to the public?
 - Is it someone else's home or work area?
 - Are you in your own car or driving a hire or loan vehicle?
 - Is the area isolated or rural?
 - Can you communicate with the Senior Youth Worker /Mentor Support Youth Leader/Line Manager?
 - Are there any special risks?
 - Is there a safe way in and out of the premises?

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- What if there is a problem?
 - How can I call for help?
 - Who could respond if I need help?
 - Will anyone notice if I do not report back?
 - What will happen if I do not report back when expected?

Should you be lone working?

- Am I medically fit to carry out lone working?
- Do I need additional training?
- How will I be supervised and monitored?

A generic risk assessment for lone working is available and you should use this to record your responses.

Preventing or controlling the risk

In order to prevent or at least control the risk, procedures must be put in place to monitor the lone worker. MAY uses the buddy system. This system involves a member of staff knowing where the lone worker is going, what they are doing and when they will be back, and importantly what the staff member should do in the event of an emergency.

1. Your key information will be kept on file, be accessible to your buddy in the event of an emergency and will include:
 - Contact telephone numbers including mobile, home and next of kin.
 - Vehicle details including make, model, colour and registration number.
 - Medical information that may affect lone working. An up to date photograph.
2. Before setting out, you must inform your buddy about:
 - Where you are going including the address and phone number.
 - How long you will be gone including travelling times and meeting times.
 - How you will be travelling i.e. car, train, bus, etc.
 - The route you will be taking.
 - The type of activity you are undertaking.
 - If you are meeting someone include their name, confirm whether the person is already known to you and, if possible, a description of the person you are meeting.
 - How and when you will make contact after the meeting. For evening, always text "Home Safe" to your buddy.

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3. Your buddy must be aware of:

- What to do if you fail to report in on time. This could include contacting them in the first instance.
- What to do if contact cannot be made. Whom does your buddy inform and what actions do they take?

This policy was adopted at the Management Committee Meeting on 23rd November 2022

On behalf of the Management Committee:

..... (signed)

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Trustees and Management Committee