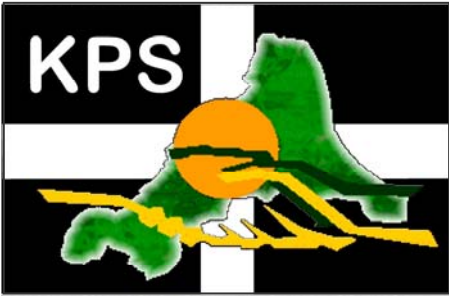


# Lone Worker Procedures Policy

Kernow Positive Support

SPECIALISED HIV INFORMATION,  
SUPPORT, RESPITE & RETREAT

POLICY DOCUMENT 2011



# Lone Worker Policy

## 1. Introduction

Kernow Positive Support (KPS) recognises that some staff and volunteers are required to work by themselves in the community without close or direct supervision, sometimes in isolated work areas or out of office hours.

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (*see KPS Health & Safety Policy*). KPS has a duty of care to advise and assess risk for workers when they work by themselves in these circumstances. However, employees have responsibilities to take reasonable care of themselves and other people affected by their work.

To get some useful tips on personal safety KPS recommends useful guidance sheets produced by the Suzy Lamplugh Trust which can be downloaded from:  
[www.suzylamplugh.org.uk](http://www.suzylamplugh.org.uk) - under Campaigns & Community.

## 2. Scope of the policy

This policy applies to all situations involving lone working arising in connection with the duties and activities of KPS staff, volunteers and trustees.

### *'Lone workers' includes:*

- Those working at their main place of work where:
- Only one person is working on the premises
- People work separately from each other, *e.g. in different locations*
- People working outside normal office hours, *e.g. cleaners*

### *Those working away from their fixed base where:*

- One worker is visiting another agency's premises or meeting venue
- One worker is making a home visit to an individual
- One worker is working from their own home.

## 3. Aims of the Policy

### *The aim of the policy is to: -*

- Increase staff awareness of safety issues relating to lone working;
- Ensure that the risk of lone working is assessed in a systematic and ongoing way, and that safe systems and methods of work are put in place to reduce the risk so far is reasonably practicable;
- Ensure that appropriate support and training is available to all staff that equips them to recognise risk and provides practical advice on safety when working alone;

- Encourage full reporting and recording of all adverse incidents relating to lone working;
- Reduce the number of incidents and injuries to staff related to lone working.

## **4. Responsibilities**

### ***The Chair to the KPS Board of Trustees is responsible for:***

- Ensuring that there are arrangements for identifying, evaluating and managing risk associated with lone working;
- Providing resources for putting the policy into practice; and
- Ensuring that there are arrangements for monitoring incidents linked to lone working and that the effectiveness of this policy is regularly reviewed

### ***Senior Staff member and Health and Safety Representatives are responsible for:***

- Ensuring that all staff are aware of the policy;
- Taking all possible steps to ensure that lone workers are at no greater risk than other employees and volunteers.
- Identify situations where people work alone and decide whether systems can be adopted to avoid workers carrying out tasks on their own
- Ensuring that risk assessments are carried out and reviewed regularly;
- Putting procedures and safe systems of work into practice which are designed to eliminate or reduce the risks associated with working alone;
- Ensuring that staff, volunteers, groups and individuals identified as being at risk are given appropriate information, instruction and training, including training at induction, updating and refreshing this training as necessary;
- Managing the effectiveness of preventative measures through an effective system of reporting, investigating and recording incidents;
- Ensuring that appropriate support is given to staff involved in any incident;
- Providing a mobile phone, and other personal safety equipment, where this is felt to be desirable.

### ***Employees and volunteers are responsible for:***

- Taking reasonable care of themselves and others affected by their actions;
- Following guidance and procedures designed for safe working;
- Reporting all incidents that may affect the health and safety of themselves or others and asking for guidance as appropriate;
- Taking part in training designed to meet the requirements of the policy; and
- Reporting any dangers or potential dangers they identify or any concerns they might have in respect of working alone.

## **5. Guidance for Risk Assessments of Lone Working**

*(see KPS Risk Assessment Policy)*

- Is the person medically fit and suitable to work alone?
- Are there adequate channels of communication in an emergency?
- Does the workplace or task present a special risk to the lone worker?
- Is there a risk of violence?
- Are women especially at risk if they work alone?
- Is any known risk attached to a client(s)?
- Has an alternative to a home visit been considered?
- Has safe travelling between appointments been arranged?
- Have reporting and recording arrangements been made where appropriate?
- Can the whereabouts of the lone worker be traced?

## **6. Good Practice for Lone Workers**

During their working hours, all staff and volunteers leaving the workplace (*or home*) should leave written details of where they are going and their estimated time of arrival back at base. Staff and volunteers at any KPS premises should complete the In/Out board in office. Staff and volunteers of the KPS Housing Related Services should complete a 'Weekly Whereabouts' sheet, which is displayed in the office.

If, in the course of a trip away from the office, plans change significantly, this should be communicated back to the office.

If the visit is assessed to have sufficient risk, details of the planned visit must be recorded in the 'lone working diary' held in the KPS Resources Centre or in the 'Weekly Whereabouts' sheet. Arrangements should be made with a manager or colleague to check that a lone worker has returned to their base or home on completion of a task on time;

Telephone contact between the lone worker and a colleague, may also be advisable. Staff and volunteers should avoid being left on their own with a client in their workplace, or leaving a colleague in this situation.

Staff and volunteers should avoid meeting clients alone at the workplace. When this is unavoidable, staff and volunteers must make a risk assessment and obtain the prior agreement of their line manager who will make any arrangements to ensure their safety. This should be recorded in the bookings diary, giving contact details of the person who is being met.

Lone workers should have access to adequate first-aid facilities and mobile workers should carry a first-aid kit suitable for treating minor injuries.

Lone workers should be provided with a mobile phone and other personal safety equipment where this is necessary.

Occasionally risk assessment may indicate that lone workers need training in first aid.

Children and Vulnerable Adults – Please refer to the relevant Policies. In general, staff and volunteers should **never** work alone with a child or vulnerable adult.

Staff and volunteers should **never** transport a child on their own and should assess any risk before transporting a vulnerable adult alone.

Before making service user visits, the ‘Lone Worker’ must have full knowledge of the hazards, and risks to which he or she may be exposed to and apply control measures to eliminate or reduce the potential risks.

***Have you:***

- Checked the Service User records for up-to-date information?
- Contacted the referrer for up-to-date information on the service user?
- Consulted other colleagues that may have worked with the service user?
- Read and understood any service user specific risk assessment documentation?

***Having collected all the relevant information you then need to plan your contact:***

- Trust your intuition and always think of your personal safety
- What is the best time of day to visit; assess the situation, are you familiar with the property location? Consider the weather/visibility; seasons - will you be driving in the dark?
- Where is the most appropriate place to see this person?
- Do I need to take another worker with me?
- If another agency is involved can we undertake a joint visit?
- Ensure someone knows where you are at all times; do not make last minute/unplanned visits
- Use the ‘wipe board’, a ‘wipe board’ is immediately visual and informs administration and
- Staff/volunteers of your planned visits
- Are you aware of emergency procedures? Do I have all the relevant contact numbers e.g. Office, Line Manager, KPS Help line or other nominated persons
- Do you have your personal panic attack alarm (*if applicable*) and or mobile; check it is charged
- Know where you are travelling to; Check your route to avoid stopping & asking strangers for directions
- Park near street lighting or lit areas whenever possible
- Reverse into parking spaces to ensure a quick getaway
- Keep all doors locked whilst driving and keep valuables out of sight
- It is not good practice to visit service users because ‘your passing’ or your ‘on the way home’
- If you do not intend to return to the office at the end of the day, let someone know at the office.
- Visit the KPS website to view the ‘Managing Personal Safety and Lone Worker Policies; [www.kpsdirect.com/pol.htm](http://www.kpsdirect.com/pol.htm)

This policy also includes the identification of risks posed to both clients and staff during lone working. KPS recognises that a significant proportion of the support provided will be through one to one contact in a variety of settings and the risks to clients, staff and volunteers need to be identified. Staff and volunteer training and induction procedures will highlight the potential risks to staff and volunteers, and the risk to clients will be identified in the client handbook. As part of the overall service provision staff and volunteers are required to draw to the attention of perspective clients the relevant section of the client handbook which deals with these potential risks.

Information covering these potential risks and how staff, volunteers and clients deal with the possible risks which can arise from one to one working are contained in several policy documents including:

- KPS Risk Assessment
- KPS Whistleblowing Policy
- KPS Safeguarding Policy Children/Adults
- KPS Managing your Personal Safety
- KPS Harassment Policy
- KPS Ethics and Practices Policy
- KPS Disciplinary Procedure Policy
- KPS Conflict of Interest Policy
- KPS Confidentiality Policy
- KPS Complaints Policy
- KPS Health & Safety Policy

Including the KPS Client Handbook, and the KPS Staff and Volunteer Handbook.

## **8. Monitoring safety issues**

Lone workers must report incidents such as accidents and near misses, including all incidents where they feel threatened, in the KPS accident book. This includes incidents of verbal abuse. During supervision, managers will ask people working on their own whether there are any safety concerns that aren't being addressed. Lone workers are encouraged to seek help and advice if any safety concerns arise.

All KPS policies and procedures are reviewed annually; this LONE WORKER POLICY has been reviewed and ratified by the KPS Board of Trustees commencing 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011 (*under 'policies' as shown in the KPS Annual Report and Accounts*).

**Ref: LWP2011/12.**