



# Health and Safety

## Lone Working

### Minimum Standard

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## 1 Aims and Principles

The aim of this document is to provide guidance on the steps which should be taken to manage the risks associated with lone working within the Government of Jersey.

**Departments which have employees who carry out lone working or who engage contractors to carry out lone working should develop their own procedures for managing the risks.**

The procedures must at least include the standards set out in this document or go beyond them.

## 2 Legislation and Guidance

### Applicable Legislation

[Health and Safety at Work \(Jersey\) Law 1989](#)

### Guidance

[Protecting lone workers](#) has links to UK guidance

## 3 Definitions

### Lone Workers

Individuals who work by themselves without close or direct supervision.

### Dynamic Risk Assessment

Continuous process of identifying hazards, assessing risk and taking action to eliminate or reduce risk in response to changing circumstances.

## 4 Who does this Minimum Standard apply to?

- Anyone employed by the States Employment Board
- Voluntary staff or those on honorary contracts where there is no implied contract of employment

Where those persons:

- Are responsible for ensuring the safety of GoJ employees who carry out lone working; or
- Engage contractors to carry out tasks involving lone working.

## 5 Links to other GoJ Policies, Corporate Standards and Guidance

### a) Policies

Jersey Public Service – Corporate Health and Safety Policy Statement

### b) GoJ Corporate Minimum Standards

Risk Assessment

Control of Contractors

Managing Construction Work – Contractor

Incident Reporting and Investigation

Manual Handling

Prevention and Management of Violence and Aggression

Slips and trips

Occupational Health

### c) Other Internal Guidance

Working from home – (MyStates)

Further guidance may also be available from other departments carrying out this type of work.

For assistance with preparing internal procedures, contact should be made with your departmental Health and Safety Manager/Adviser “Professional”.

## 6 Roles and Responsibilities

The department’s procedures for managing the risks associated with lone working must clearly set out the roles and responsibilities of all those individuals involved with the work.

Reference should be made to the Jersey Public Service Corporate Health and Safety Policy Statement -for information- on roles and responsibilities in relation to health and safety at work.

## 7 Overview

Lone working can be defined as any situation or location, in which someone works without a colleague nearby, or is out of sight or earshot of another colleague. This includes where people are interacting with others, such as members of the public.

Even employees who work in a building with others, or in a community setting, could be defined as a lone worker if they do not have the immediate support of other colleagues.

Examples of lone workers include:

- employees working alone at a fixed base i.e. are the only person on site
- employees working alone in premises outside of normal working hours e.g. working late when others have left the premises
- an employee working on the same premises as others but away from those people
- employees working away from a fixed base i.e. Mobile worker
- employees working out of hours
- homeworkers.

Lone workers face the same type of hazards at work as anyone else, but there is a greater risk of those hazards causing harm as they may not have anyone to help or support them if things go wrong.

Lone workers can also be at an increased risk from certain hazards, such as physical attack.

Whilst it is often safe to work alone, it is imperative that the lack of contact or support is taken into account when risk assessing the activity.

## 8 Risk Assessments

### Specific Risk Assessment

The Line Manager, in consultation with the employees involved, should complete a risk assessment form using the department's risk assessment system and procedures. The risk assessment must be in place and have been communicated to employees before work starts.

The risk assessment for lone working can be a separate document or the lone working aspects could be incorporated into a general job risk assessment.

Those involved in assessing the risks from lone working during the risk assessment process should consider the following as a minimum:

- is there a risk to personal safety or a risk of conflict situations?
- is there a safe way in and out of the working area for the person and can they easily move to a safe area?
- can one person safely manage all the equipment or machinery for the job?
- are lifting and handling tasks suitable for one person?
- are any chemicals or other hazardous substances being used that may pose a risk?

- are there any reasons why some individuals may be at greater risk e.g. pregnant worker, young worker, trainee etc.?
- how does the department communicate with them and does their whereabouts need to be always known or just occasionally?
- are there any existing security arrangements or alarms in buildings they need to be aware of?
- is the person medically fit for the job. i.e., has an assessment been made if appropriate for any declared medical condition?
- what type of emergency could occur?
- what level of support needs to be available in an emergency?
- What are the first aid and/or emergency arrangements?
- are suitable arrangements in place to ensure no persons are present in premises before being secured?

### Dynamic Risk Assessment

Under normal situations, there will be a risk assessment and safe system of work in place to protect the lone worker. However, occasionally there may be times where lone workers will have to make decisions at the time, based on a changing situation.

This will require them to carry out a dynamic risk assessment to assess the risks posed to them as the situation changes. Where this is likely to be required, the process of carrying out dynamic risk assessments should form part of the lone worker training.

The outcome of a dynamic risk assessment (DRA) i.e. the actions taken in response to the issues identified are usually based on the lone worker's experience, training and perception of risk. Due to the variable nature of these parameters, this can lead to erroneous decisions being made which is why DRA must be used in combination with a specific risk assessment and not be relied upon entirely. Any outcomes of DRA must be recorded either during or after the event (see Risk Assessment Minimum Standard).

## 9 Supervision and Monitoring

The supervision and monitoring arrangements required will depend on the risks associated with the work and should be determined as part of the risk assessment process.

Supervision and monitoring may include:

- periodic visits to the lone worker at the work location
- pre-agreed intervals of regular contact between the lone worker and supervisor
- lone worker communications system or emergency alarms

- implementation of a robust system to ensure there is a check that lone workers have returned to their base or home at the end of the working day.

Lone workers may need to be accompanied at first where they are:

- new to a job
- undergoing training
- doing a job that presents specific risks
- dealing with new situations.

## 10 Use of Technology

Technology is a useful tool for managing the risks associated with lone working but should not be seen as a solution. When evaluating the usefulness of technology, consideration must be given to the legal and ethical implications of its use, as well as to its limitations.

Line Managers will take responsibility for ensuring that technology is used appropriately and effectively and that it is proportionate to the problem it is intended to address.

Examples of technology which could be used for communicating with or monitoring lone workers include:

- mobile phones
- tetra radios
- personal safety alarm devices
- CCTV
- On-line meetings

## 11 Lone Working and Mental Health

Lone working can negatively impact employees' work-related stress levels and their mental health.

It is recognised that good relationships and support from other workers and managers benefits the mental health of employees and that poor management of these can lead to work-related stress. If workers are continually away from colleagues and managers, then good support can be difficult to achieve.

Putting procedures in place that allow direct contact between the lone worker and their manager can help. If contact is poor, employees may feel disconnected, isolated or abandoned, which can affect their performance and potentially their stress levels or mental health. Managers should also be mindful that lone workers (particularly home working) can feel 'always at work' and remind employees of good work/life balance.

To maintain communication, the following should be considered by managers:

- agree how to keep in touch with lone workers through regular meetings, or provide other opportunities to share concerns
- include lone workers in social events and work or team updates
- ensure lone workers are included in any consultation on changes – they may have unique implications for them
- make sure lone workers are included in any training that is required.
- make sure employees know how to access the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) and are aware of the support offered.

## 12 Training

Although the lone worker is competent to carry out their work, the lone working element of the risk assessment may identify additional training needs.

In all circumstances lone workers need to be made aware of:

- any risk assessments and safe systems of work, including any specific information about known risks in the work areas or locations to be visited
- arrangements for their supervision.
- training in the operation of any communication or personal alarm systems
- how to report incidents

They may also require training for specific risks such as dealing with violence and aggression and conflict resolution.

Further information covering general lone worker training and any specific training required should be included in departmental procedures and risk assessments for lone working activities.

## 13 Reporting of Issues

Incidents should be reported using the departmental incident and near miss reporting system. Reported incidents will be followed up and investigated in accordance with the department's arrangements. In the first instance, the Line Manager will be involved but depending on the circumstances of the incident, it may be necessary to involve the H&S Manager/Adviser.

Incidents involving lone workers will be included in departmental and corporate incident and near miss records.

Physical and verbal incidents will be recorded as an accident/incident on the reporting system.



## 14 Monitoring and review

Lone working arrangements should be periodically reviewed to ensure they remain relevant and reflect current working conditions.

These reviews can be:

- as part of any general review of risk assessments
- following an incident
- in response to concerns raised by the lone worker
- following a change in the working routine.