



Herts Vision Loss

Policy on Lone Workers

1. Introduction

The intention of this policy is to ensure the safety of lone workers, staff and volunteers who travel alone by car or using public transport and staff and volunteers who work out of normal office hours. The aim of this policy is to minimise the risks that they face and put in place appropriate measures to improve safety. This Policy represents all areas within the **Charity**. It applies to staff and volunteers.

2. Employer responsibilities

HVL has the legal duty to ensure the health, safety and welfare of those employees who work for the organisation including protection of lone workers. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) defines lone working as:

“those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision”

HVL Board of Trustees is responsible to:

- Ensure appropriate policies and procedures are made to protect lone workers
- Ensure measures to protect lone workers complies with all relevant legislation
 - Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
 - Management of Health and Safety at Work Act 1999
 - Criminal Law Act
 - Protection from Harassment Act 1997
 - Reporting of Injuries, Diseases, Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995
 - Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2008
- Has the overall responsibility for the protection of lone workers by ensuring that policies, procedures and systems to protect lone workers are implemented
- Nomination and appointment of the Chief Executive Officer, and thorough continued liaison ensure that protection of lone workers is being undertaken to the highest standard.
- Oversee the effectiveness of risk reporting, assessment and management processed for the protection of lone workers.

3. Management Responsibilities

HVL is firmly committed to maintaining a safe working practice and to the provision of a safe working environment. To this end the Chief Executive Officer will carry out Risk Assessments with staff to identify potential risks and inform them of control

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measures in place. The Risk Assessment must consider the need/use of mobile phones, personal alarms, diaries and contact numbers.

The Chief Executive Officer responsibilities:

- Ensure staff and volunteers have read and understood Policy and Procedure
- Carry out Risk Assessments with staff to identify potential risks and inform them of the control measures in place
- Monitor and investigate incidents
- Analyse personal safety risks, hazards, concerns
- Aftercare support after incident
- Liaise with the Board of Trustees
- Provision of safety measures, including personal safety equipment.
- Review/audit and monitor information, policy and procedures

4. HVL Staff Responsibilities

HVL recognise the important role that staff have in providing/maintaining a safe place of work and will, therefore, actively encourage HVL staff to play the fullest possible role in doing so. To effectively promote this Policy HVL staff are expected to bring to the attention of management any concerns or ideas they may have in respect of this Policy.

- Staff must read and follow policies and procedures
- Maintain and use dedicated information system, electronic diary, ACT database
- Report incidents of violence and aggression and near misses
- Attend identified training events
- Ensure your own safety
- Ensure the safety of volunteers
- Support others
- Maintain effective communication within the team
- Ensure emergency contact information is kept up to date, notifying the Chief Executive Officer of any changes
- Ensure emergency contact person identified has contact details of a colleague in case they fail to return home from work/training or a meeting including out of hours.

5. General Issues and Definitions

Office hours are generally 9am to 5pm Monday-Friday. During office hours it is the responsibility of the Chief Executive Officer to apply the policy and procedure, which

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is applicable and workable within the given area. However, the following procedure may act as a working guide for those working alone in the Community.

Staff will be issued with mobile phones and personal alarms if the need is identified. See Appendix 1 for use of mobile phone.

6. Lone Worker – Outside The Woodside Centre

- Appointments should be written in the individual member of staff electronic diary giving time, name, address and contact number and expected length of visit.
 - Ensure your car is in good working order
 - Ensure you plan your route to and from your appointment
 - Ensure your mobile phone is charged and switched on
 - Keep your car doors locked when driving (where possible)
 - Always lock anything valuable in your boot, out of sight BEFORE you start your journey, or remove it from the car completely
 - Lock your car, even if you will be away for a minute
 - Ensure you park the car safely and appropriately, planning for any change in lighting if the visit is after hours.
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- Doorstep assessment – upon arrival, staff must carry out an assessment to determine if anything is unusual or if anything makes them feel uneasy. If unsure they should WITHDRAW IMMEDIATELY from the area and inform the office.

7. After Hour Workers - Outside The Woodside Centre

The individual member of staff should inform the office of their whereabouts by:

- a. Writing appointments with times in the electronic diary.
- b. Write name, address and telephone number of the person or place (including training venue) they are visiting.
- c. Estimated length of stay.

8. Essential travellers

Essential travellers are individuals who within the area of the normal working conditions travel to and from individual service user's homes or community venues on a regular basis.

9. Lone Workers – Inside Woodside Centre/Hemel Centre

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1. HVL staff working as lone individuals in an office base outside normal hours, or when the building is otherwise vacant, should remain aware of his/her vulnerability and safety.
2. Once in the area external doors should be secured and locked to prevent unauthorised/unexpected entry. Ground floor windows should remain locked. Any service users coming to the building need to ring and be met at the front door. Be aware of anyone unknown with them.
3. Whilst working alone staff should be aware of such risks as lifting heavy or unstable objects, reaching to high shelving, handling chemicals and substances, scalding or when working with equipment.
4. Whilst travelling to and from work areas and across parking areas, staff should remain alert and observant and attempt to avoid overshadowed areas where people could conceal themselves.
5. If you have a your personal alarm it should be at hand ready for use and to be used as a distraction to enable you to get away safely.
6. Entry keys should be at hand and not searched for whilst standing outside premises. This reduces concentration on surroundings.
7. Personal security is far more important than HVL property.
8. Training
The type and nature of a training package should reflect the context in which intimidation, threats or violence is likely to be encountered. For example the emphasis of training for community staff will be significantly different to those working in administration.

Of particular relevance to community based staff are:

- Understanding the causes of violence
- Recognition of warning signs
- Defusing or de-escalating situations
- Developing good inter-personal skills
- Undertaking risk assessment

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- Risk reduction and safe working practices
- Breakaway techniques

The Chief Executive Officer will ensure that staff required to work alone will be provided with a copy of this procedure with suitable information, supervision and training to enable them to:

- a. Operate door security (and intruder alarm at the Hemel Centre) for the building.
- b. Have sound knowledge of the work area, rooms, lighting, door and window systems.
- c. Have provision of personal alarms and understanding of their use, operation and limitations.
- d. Be aware of local procedures for summoning help.
- e. Know the reporting procedures for identified faults such as lights out of order, faulty locks or property damage.
- f. Arrange for reporting in and out of work areas, learn to use a diary and log system etc.

10. Call back, diaries and notification of movements systems

All staff are responsible for overseeing the effective working of these systems and the Chief Executive Officer should audit the system/procedure to ensure staff are conforming to it and should establish a local procedure.

If the member of staff fails to ring an appropriate person at the given time, that person will try to contact the person on their mobile phone.

If there is no response, they will phone the individual's home. If there is no response, appropriate action will be taken by contacting the police if no response is received after 2 hours.

If the individual staff person fails to comply with the procedures appropriate action, including possible action under the Charity's Disciplinary Procedure, will be taken.

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Appendix 1

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Use Of HVL Mobiles

It is the responsibility of the holder of the telephone to ensure its security, that the battery is charged and the answer service message is relevant and up to date. Messages should be checked regularly and deleted to ensure further messages can be received.

The telephone is for use in the following situations.

- To maintain operational contact between The Woodside Centre and the telephone holder and vice versa and to facilitate contact between staff members.
- To give the telephone holder urgent/emergency access to emergency services.
- To enable the holder to inform clients of unavoidable delay or cancellation traffic etc.
- To give clients a direct contact number for the staff member.

The telephones should not be used for:

- Personal calls (except in emergencies)

Mobile telephones should only be kept switched on when on duty or on-call for HVL.

The telephone must be returned to HVL on termination of employment or change of work pattern, i.e. if no longer required.

Loss or theft of mobile phones must be reported as soon as possible to the Line Manager and the Police.

Bluetooth has been provided but this is to be used only to acknowledge incoming calls and not to enable conversation when driving. Always tell the caller their call will be returned.

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