

Extract from Employees Health and Safety Handbook

4.10 Lone working

Lone working exposes employees to additional hazard. A risk assessment should identify specific hazards in order to eliminate the risks or reduce them to an acceptable level.

Definition

A lone worker is someone who works by themselves without close or direct supervision.

They are found in a wide range of situations, for example –

- People in fixed establishments
 - where only one person works on the premises, such as home workers;
 - working separately from others, such as leisure centres;
 - working outside normal hours, such as cleaners;
 - mobile workers working away from their fixed base, such as pest control workers.

The risk assessment will indicate whether the work can be done safely by one unaccompanied person. It should include the identification of hazards from, for example, means of access/egress, plant and machinery, fire, equipment failure and accidents.

Particular consideration should be given to:

- The remoteness or isolation of workplaces;
- Communication problems;
- The possibility of violence from other people;
- Whether women or young workers are especially at risk if they work alone;
- Whether the employee is medically fit and suitable to do the job on their own.

The council is committed to developing safe working procedures to control risks and to protect employees. Every lone worker should –

- Have full knowledge of the hazards and risks which they may be exposed to;
- Know what to do if something goes wrong;
- Ensure someone else knows where they are, what they are doing and what time they are due back;
- Have some means of communication.