ABM73: Lone Working Policy and Procedure

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The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, section 2, sets out a duty of care on employers to ensure the health, safety and welfare of employees whilst at work.

Although there is no specific legislation in respect to working alone, the management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, Regulation 3, states that every employer shall make suitable and sufficient assessment of 'foreseeable' risks that employees might face in the course of their duties. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has highlights this issue by making it the subject of guidance note (Working alone INDG 73)

Following risk assessment, control measures must be put in place to manage those risks. Risk assessments must devise safe working arrangements for all workers considered to be lone workers. Monitoring procedures also need to be established to ensure that lone workers are following safe systems at work. In January 2018 we have employed a Health and Safety Advisor (HSA) to monitor and audit our Health and Safety practices for employees.

1. Accountability, Responsibility, Compliance and Role

The Director of Curriculum and Curriculum Director remain responsible for Health and Safety, in addition to the responsibilities laid down in the management procedure, there are further specific duties inherent within this procedure. These are detailed below:

1.1. Directors and Senior Managers

Directors and senior managers are responsible for:

- 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 groups and individuals identified as being at risk are given appropriate information, instruction and training
- Ensuring that the lone worker risk assessment is communicated to all staff members involved in the activities and keeping signed documentary evidence that those employees have read and understood the risk assessment and will comply with the control measure put in place for their safety
- Ensuring that all reported incidents are fully investigated
- Ensuring that appropriate support is given to staff involved in any incident
- Managing the effectiveness of preventable measures through suitable system of reporting, investigation and recording of incidents

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1.2.   Line Managers

Whether delivery or support are responsible for:

- Ensuring that all staff are aware of the procedure
- Liaise with Health and Safety Advisor (HSA) to ensure that risk assessments are carried out and reviewed regularly

1.3.   Health and Safety Advisor (HSA)

- Work in co-operation with staff and employers in particular with health, safety and wellbeing in managing issues of a health and safety nature. Liaise closely with ABM Safeguarding team to minimise risks to employees.
- Have an understanding of the hazards and risks to the health and safety of their colleagues within their work. Investigate potential hazards and dangerous occurrences at the workplace, and to examine the causes of accidents in the workplace working with management to introduce and monitor the controls necessary to minimise these.
- Are encouraged to complete accredited Health and Safety qualification within for 6 months of employment if not already qualified.
- Representing employees who have grievances related to health and safety.
- Investigate potential hazards and dangerous occurrences at the workplace.
- Investigate complaints by any member relating to health, safety or welfare at work in communication with line managers.
- Carry out workplace risk assessments, take appropriate actions and log on MIS systems.
- Represent ABM in consultations at the workplace with inspectors from HAS, the Environment Health Department or the fire service.

1.4.   Employees

There is a legal requirement for employees to bring to the notice of their employers any workplace health and safety risks or incidents using cause for concern referral process. There is also a requirement for employees to co-operate with their employers to enable compliance with statutory duties.

Therefore, employees are responsible for:

- Taking reasonable care if themselves and other affected by their actions.
- Familiarising themselves with the lone working risk assessments in place for activities they are involved in.
- Co-operating by following all procedures designed for safe working.

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- Reporting all incidents that may affect health and safety of themselves or others and asking for guidance as appropriate.
- Taking part in training designed to meet the requirements of this procedure.
- Informing their line manager of current contact details.
- Informing their line manager of location and times of appointments out of normal working hours.

2. Policy Statement

Where the conditions of service delivery or its associated tasks require staff to work alone, both the individual staff member and their line manager have a duty to assess and reduce the risks which lone working presents. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Health & Safety and Safeguarding policies.

2.1. Purpose

This policy is designed to alert staff to the risks presented by lone working, to identify the responsibilities each person has in this situation, and to describe procedures which will minimise such risks. It is not intended to raise anxiety unnecessarily, but to give staff a framework for managing potentially risky situations.

2.2. Scope

This policy applies to **all staff** who may be working alone, at any time, in any of the situations described in the definition below. Volunteers would not normally be expected to work alone and so should be outside the scope of this policy. Extra attention is in place for ABM employed apprentices within ABM offices.

2.3. Context

Some staff work outside office hours and/or alone due to flexible working patterns and/or to undertake their job role (i.e. tutors).

ABM's principles for supporting lone workers include:
- A commitment to supporting staff and managers both in establishing and maintaining safe working practices
- Recognising and reducing risk
- A commitment to the provision of appropriate support for staff
- A clear understanding of responsibilities
- The priority placed on the safety of the individual over property
- A commitment to providing appropriate training for staff
- Equipment such as mobile phones will be made available as appropriate

2.4. Definition

Within this document, 'lone working' refers to situations where staff in the course of their duties work alone or are physically isolated from colleagues and **without access** to immediate assistance. This last

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situation may also arise where there are other staff in the building, but the nature of the building itself may essentially create isolated areas.

If visiting an apprentice in the working environment (where possible this should always be the preferred meeting place and other locations must be identified to your line Manager and OneFile records updated to identify exact location), the Health and Safety Adviser (HSA) for ABM has carried out a risk assessment for both ABM staff and visitors. (Zoho systems will clearly identify when a risk assessment has been carried out).

3. Mandatory Building Procedures
3.1 Security of buildings
Line managers and their employees must ensure that: -
- All appropriate steps are taken to control access to the building and that emergency exits are accessible
- Alarm systems are tested regularly – both fire and intruder
- When working alone they are familiar with exits and alarms
- There is access to a telephone and first aid kit
- If there is any indication that the building has been broken into, they call for assistance before entering
- External doors are locked to avoid unwanted visitors if working alone

3.2 Working alone at another building/location
Line managers and their employees must ensure that: -
- They are familiar with the fire and, if applicable, intruder alarm procedure and know the location of both exits and alarms
- When making a booking at a venue there will be somebody else present in the building (i.e. Building manager or caretaker) and that this person can be contacted in the event of an emergency.
- Staff are familiar with the no-smoking rules and procedures
- Whenever possible that they park in a well-lit and busy area
- Ensure sign in and sign out procedures are followed

4. Personal Safety
Before working alone **all staff** must also see the separate working alone tick sheet and sign and date this to confirm their understanding and compliance. Staff must not assume that having a mobile phone and a back-up plan is a sufficient safeguard in itself. The first priority is to plan for a reduction of risk.

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There are many things you can do to avoid trouble in the first place. The organisation has a responsibility as an employer to ensure the health, safety and welfare of staff, but employees also have a duty to take reasonable care themselves.

- Staff should take all reasonable precautions to ensure their own safety, as they would in any other circumstances. Before working alone, if the location has not been risk assessed by the HSA a risk assessment must be done, unless you are meeting in a public place such as a library or café (where a dynamic risk assessment should be carried out) a risk assessment should have been carried out before the initial visit.
- Where required, staff must ensure that they sign in and out of building registers and wear their ABM photographic identification.
- Staff must inform their line manager or other identified person when they are working alone and give accurate details of their location, timings and update any personal contact information.
- Staff such as tutors, who work to a pre-planned programme of sessions, must inform their line manager if they deviate from the programme.
- When working alone if it any time a risk is identified, or a person feels their personal safety is it risk they must ensure they put their personal safety first and minimise or eliminate the risk.
- When visiting a location that has risks associated the lone worker must check in and out with their line manager with timings of visits agreed.
- If a member of staff does not report in as expected whilst visiting an at-risk location an agreed plan should be put into operation, initially to check on the situation and then to respond as appropriate using emergency contact information if necessary.
- If risks occur at any time during a visit a **Situational Risk Assessment** must be completed by the Health and Safety Advisor. Please refer any risks via a cause for concern form.
- Where staff work alone for extended periods and/or on a regular basis, managers must make provision for regular contact, both to monitor the situation and to counter the effects of working in isolation.
- Staff working away from the office should ensure that they have access to a mobile phone always. Staff may use their own mobile phone for this purpose or may borrow one from ABM. Staff are responsible for checking that the mobile phone is charged, in working order and with sufficient credit remaining with the relevant provider.

4.1. Practice Guidance – Personal Safety

'Reasonable precautions' might include:
- Checking directions for the destination
- Ensuring your car, if used, is road-worthy and has break-down cover
- **Ensuring someone knows where you are and when are expected home (If you live alone please ensure your line manager is aware)**
- Avoiding where possible poorly lit or deserted areas

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- Taking care when entering or leaving empty buildings, especially at night
- Ensuring that items such as laptops or mobile phones are carried discreetly

For more information see the Suzy Lamplugh Trust website http://www.suzylamplugh.org/personal-safety/personal-safety-tips/ which gives further advice and information.

This is not about raising anxiety levels but about recognising potential dangers and taking positive steps to reduce risk, for yourself and for service users in your care.

4.2. Be aware of the Environment

- Know what measures are in place where you work: check out alarm systems and procedures, exits and entrances, and the location of the first aid supplies.
- Make sure that your car and mobile phone are in good working order, and that electrical and other mechanical equipment is safe to use. Check the instructions for use and ensure that faults are reported /dealt with.
- If your work takes you into areas which are isolated, poorly lit at night or known for high crime rates arrange to check in when the visit is over.
- If a potentially violent situation occurs, be aware of what might be used as a weapon against you, and of possible escape routes.
- Try to maintain a comfortable level of heating and lighting in buildings you control.

4.3. Be Aware of Yourself

- Think about your body language. What messages are you giving?
- Think about your tone of voice and choice of words. Avoid anything which could be seen as sarcastic or patronising.
- Think about what you are wearing. Is it suitable for the task? Does it hamper your movement? What signals does it send out? In a potentially risky situation, does a scarf or tie offer an opportunity to an assailant?
- Be aware of your own triggers – the things that make you angry or upset.

4.4. Be Aware of Other People

- Take note of their non-verbal signals
- Be aware of their triggers and note them
- Don't crowd people – allow them space
- Make a realistic estimate of the time you will need to do something, and don't make promises which can't be kept, either on your own or someone else's behalf
- Be aware of the context of your meeting – are they already angry or upset before you meet, and for what reason?
- Listen to them and show them you are listening

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5. Assessment of Risk

In drawing up and recording an assessment of risk the following issues should be considered, as appropriate to the circumstances:

- The environment – location, security, access
- The context – nature of the task, any special circumstances
- The individuals concerned – indicators of potential or actual risk
- History – any previous incidents in similar situations
- Any other special circumstances

All available information should be considered and checked or updated as necessary. Where there is any reasonable doubt about the safety of a lone worker in each situation, consideration should be given to sending a second worker or making other arrangements to complete the task. If you undertake a visit and feel there are risks involved, please refer immediately to your line manager and Health and Safety Advisor (HSA) by completing a cause for concern form.

5.1 Planning

- Staff safety should be considered when choosing locations for courses etc.
- Staff should be fully briefed in relation to risk as well as the task itself.
- Communication, checking-in and fall-back arrangements must be in place. Staff should ensure someone is always aware of their movements and expected return time.
- The line manager is responsible for agreeing and facilitating these arrangements, which should be tailored to the operating conditions affecting the staff member.

5.2 Staff Working at Home (with line managers consent)

- Staff working from their own homes should take every reasonable precaution to ensure that their address and telephone number remain confidential.
- Staff working from home should be in regular contact with their line manager or other designated person if working at home for extended periods.
- Managers should be particularly aware of the importance of such arrangements for staff that live alone.
- Staff working from home should be aware that even ex-directory and mobile numbers will show up on caller display and can be retrieved on 1471. To prevent the person, you call accessing your number dial 141 before their number or check the instructions for your mobile phone.

5.3. Staff Working for other Organisations Linked To ABM

Staff working with other organisations should ensure that they are familiar with and comply with the appropriate Health & Safety guidance for the site that they are visiting.

5.4. Monitoring and Review

Any member of staff with a concern regarding lone working issues should ensure that it is discussed with their line manager and HAS is informed of outcome if necessar

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6.Dynamic Risk Assessment

Please refer to generic risk assessment and further risks identified please send amendments to the Health and Safety Advisor.

Assess the situation
Do you have a concern over your safety?

Yes

Which of these concern you?
- The person you are dealing with?
- The environment you are working in?
-The task you are doing?
Can you avoid the risk or minimise the risk so you feel confident?
Report in and out to your line manager and leave the visit

Fill in a cause for concern form and submit to you line manager and HSA

No

Are you sure you have covered all risks?
Proceed and remian vigilant
Proceed with care, and remember that things can change

Hazard= Something which has the potential to cause injury, illness or harm

Risk = Risk is the likelihood that a hazard will have an adverse outcome with a consideration of how bad the outcome is likely to be

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7. Situation Risk Assessment

Please refer concerns to your line manager using a cause for concern form. Your line manager and Health and Safety Advisor will advise the completion of this document for further investigation.

- One form per location listing hazards
- Identify the activity being conducted and where it is taking place, then record significant hazards present
- Record who is carrying out the activity and therefore exposed
- Evaluate the risk without any control measures present – choose HIGH, MEDIUM or LOW.
- Document all existing controls in place and any further controls necessary to reduce the risk, re-evaluate the risk with controls identified in place
- Sign and the date the assessment. Return to your line manager and HSA

Date:		Location:			
Activity being carried out	Hazard	Person/people at risk	Initial risk rating	Control measures	Residual risk rating
			High		Medium
			Medium		Low
			Low		Low

Situation risk assessment completed by.

Name:………………………………..   Signature……………………………..   Date…………………

HSA (risk reviewed and hazards controlled or eliminated)

Name:………………………………..   Signature………………………………   Date…………………

Line Manager.

Name:………………………………..   Signature………………………………   Date…………………

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Policy Agreement Form

ABM take the safety of their staff very seriously and this document is used to check that all staff have read and understood this policy. We updated this policy annually to ensure that everyone is aware of the minimum requirements for working alone. Please read and sign this form to confirm you have read and understand this policy. Please return this page to the head office where this will be kept within your personal file.

This checklist should be read in conjunction with ABM Health and Safety Policy and ABM Safeguarding Policy.

All apprentice workplace premises must have been risk assessed by the Health and Safety adviser (HSA) before visits commence. If any risks are identified this will be communicated to appropriate staff and controls measure put in place.

☐   **Yes, I have read and understood my responsibilities under the ABM Lone working policy and procedure**

This confirmation of your compliance means you can continue to carry out your role following the recommendations from ABM UK Training Ltd

☐   **I have read the ABM Lone Working Policy and Procedure but need further clarification. Please see my comments below** (An appointment will be made to discuss further)

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Name……………………………………………………   Signature…………………………………………………….. Date………………

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