



## **Trinity Safe Space**

# **Policy and Procedure for Lone Working**

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<b>APPROVAL DATE:</b>	June 2022
<b>REVIEWED:</b>	Annually – June 2023
<b>NEXT REVIEW:</b>	June 2024

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## Trinity Safe Space

# Policy and Procedure for Lone Working

### 1. Purpose

Trinity Safe Space recognises the risk of lone working and has developed this policy to ensure the safety of all staff, workers, volunteers and Trustees when working alone in the community or within its premises. The aim of this policy is to clarify the roles and responsibilities of Trinity Safe Space and its staff, workers and volunteers, in order to fulfil its legal obligations and to take action to minimise the risks of lone working. The policy also aims to increase staff awareness of safety issues related to lone working and to ensure that all lone working is assessed in a systematic and consistent manner.

### 2. Objectives

- To protect staff and volunteers from the risk associated with working alone whether they are on Trinity Safe Space premises, at venues used by groups, travelling alone on work/volunteering duties or working/volunteering in an isolated setting.
- To ensure that staff/volunteers understand that Trinity Safe Space as an employer/supervisor of volunteers, does not expect staff/volunteers to expose themselves to unnecessary risks in the course of their duties and that Trinity Safe Space will support a member of staff/a volunteer if they leave a situation in which they feel at risk

### 3. Definition

For the purpose of this policy, lone working will be categorised into two distinct types of work/volunteering:

- Working/volunteering alone in Trinity Safe Space premises or venues used by relevant groups or one person working/volunteering in one place and someone else alone in another. Also, this applies to people working/volunteering outside of normal hours on their own
- Travelling alone between the two categories above and on other journeys eg picking items up and delivering to properties, making a home visit or attending a meeting.

### 4. Policy statement

Trinity Safe Space recognises that some members of staff/volunteers are required to work/volunteer by themselves in the community without close or direct supervision, sometimes in isolated areas or during out of office hours. The organisation acknowledges that these workers and volunteers are potentially at risk and that these risks must be minimised as far as reasonably practicable.

Trinity Safe Space has a duty of care to advise of and assess the risk for all workers and volunteers under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. As such, standard procedures have been developed and set out within this policy, and these should always be followed and adhered to, prior to or when working/volunteering alone.

It is important that all staff and volunteers are aware of the definition of a Lone Worker (see Section 3 above) as they may find themselves, or those under their direct supervision, falling within the definition of a Lone Worker irregularly or infrequently and need to be able to recognise this situation and act appropriately to mitigate the risks.

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## 5. Responsibilities

5.1 The Trustees' Board has overall responsibility for Health and Safety for all employees, workers, volunteers and Trustees and for ensuring mechanisms are in place for the overall implementation, monitoring and revision of the policy.

5.2 The Managers (if/when the organisation has them) also have a responsibility to ensure that all employees and volunteers are able to implement the aims and objectives of the policy and that certain arrangements exist for the provision of safety systems and procedures.

5.3 The Trustees are also responsible for reviewing and updating the policy and procedures following recommendations from staff and volunteers and for approving an updated Lone Worker Policy.

5.4 While there are no line managers it is the responsibility of the Trustees to ensure:

- The Lone Worker Policy is brought to the attention of all new members of staff/volunteers in their inductions and reiterated regularly
- That staff/volunteers attend training events on health and safety, lone working and risk management as appropriate
- That staff/volunteers are aware of their own responsibilities with regards to lone working
- A risk assessment is undertaken by each community-working employee/volunteer before they attend an off-site visit
- Systems are put in place to ensure staff/volunteers who work alone are safe
- All lone work activities are identified and recorded where applicable
- All assessment and safety measures identified are recorded
- All incidents relating to lone working are reported and recorded in line with Trinity Safe Space's Incident Reporting Procedures
- An investigation is carried out regarding any incident involving a lone worker and recommendations made to prevent a reoccurrence
- If a risk cannot be made safe two workers/volunteers must carry out the task, or if not practical to do so the service/task should be withdrawn

5.5 Individuals' Responsibilities - all lone workers have a responsibility to:

- Read and comply with the Lone Worker Policy and follow safe working procedures as set out in the policy
- Attend any relevant training at the request of their manager or a Trustee
- Follow procedures introduced for lone workers including notifications to their Line Manager (if there is one), to a Trustee or 'Buddy'
- Ensure they inform their line manager or Trustee of each off-site visit and record full address and postcode details of the location of these on records, together with a contact's telephone number or other local arrangement where applicable
- Undertake telephone or site-based risk assessments prior to making any off-site visits and be involved in the process of identifying safety measures
- Avoid situations with significant risk, as far as is possible and take care of their own and other people's safety
- Report any incidents as soon as possible in line with Trinity Safe Space's Incident Reporting Procedures

- Ensure their line manager/a Trustee approves any hours worked outside of their standard working hours or the core business hours of the organisation, before they are worked. In the case of a volunteer care should be taken that he/she does not overload him/herself with too many extra tasks

## 6. Lone Working Procedures

While many of the same health and safety risks affect both lone workers and other employees/volunteers, there are other potential risks which are more likely to affect lone workers. These risks should be taken into consideration by everyone (Trustees, line managers, employees and volunteers) prior to lone working taking place and the following procedures and guidelines have been developed to ensure that systems are put in place to assess and minimise any potential risks.

### 6.1 Risk Assessments

The crucial element in ensuring the safety of lone workers is the risk assessment. The main aims of the risk assessment are to find out:

- Whether the work can be done safely by a lone worker
- That the lone worker is not put at any greater risk than those who would do the job with another person
- If any jobs are too difficult or dangerous for a lone worker to carry out

Risk assessments assist Trustees/line managers and lone workers to establish the right level of supervision and control measures required when lone working occurs. For example, some activities may be deemed high-risk and, if appropriate, may require at least two people present. Other activities may need to be referred on to an appropriate external service or agency.

### 6.2 Procedure

There are two stages to the risk assessment process:

Stage 1: Identifying risks

Stage 2: Assessing any risk/s identified

The risk assessment procedure involves firstly identifying any potential risks by using the Risk Assessment Checklist (see appendix 1) and this must be undertaken prior to any community or home-based visit, to ensure all associated risks have been identified as far as reasonably practicable.

These risk assessments must be undertaken prior to community or home-based visits including repeat visits, to ensure all associated risks have been considered and mitigated as far as reasonably practicable. If a risk is identified a risk assessment should be completed in these circumstances using the Risk Assessment form (see appendix 2).

For paid employees/workers, it is the individual's responsibility to ensure that the Risk Assessment Checklist has been undertaken. Anyone who is responsible for volunteers should ensure that a Risk Assessment Checklist is completed before the volunteers attend community or home-based visits or any delivering.

The Risk Assessment Checklist will take into account potential scenarios and hazards and is a review of the current situation. Here are some of the questions that will need to be asked, as appropriate and/or relevant:

- Who is the referrer – name, agency and contact information?
- Does the individual have any issues highlighted as part of referral process e.g. a known mental health problem or a history of violent or aggressive behaviour or known addiction?
- Is there a risk of violence?

- Is there known substance or alcohol use both historical and current?
  - Full address details of the location and contact details
  - Useful information regarding the accommodation and locality
  - Will the individual be alone or will anyone else be present, and if so, whom?
  - Does anyone else live or have use of the property and if so, whom?
  - Details of animals / pets in the house (normally and during the visit itself)
  - Smoker / Non-Smoker
- The assessment form also prompts the employee to document the date and time.

### 6.3 When a risk is identified

Where a risk is identified, the individual should report this directly to their line Manager (if there is one) or a Trinity Safe Space contact/Trustee and the following control measures should be discussed and implemented if deemed necessary. It is important to be clear about the basic ideas underpinning the notion of risk. Risk relates to a negative event (eg violence, self-harm/suicide, self-neglect, threatening behaviour) and covers a number of aspects:

- What exactly is the risk – or risks – to be prevented?
- How severe will the outcome be if it does occur?
- How likely is it that the event will occur?

When a risk is identified it is important to get as much information as possible about the risk/s so a more detailed risk assessment can be carried out using the Risk Assessment Form. Collecting more information from the referrer, person being visited and/or carer/s about the risks identified should be the first step. If this provides additional and relevant information, it should then be discussed directly with the relevant line manager (if there is one) or a Trinity Safe Space contact/Trustee to review and agree on next steps with the following control measures to be discussed and implemented if deemed necessary:

- Visit takes place with at least one other individual (for home risk assessments or one-off visits)
- Risk assessment information shared with all persons who may also be at risk
- Visit postponed until further risks are assessed
- Visit postponed / cancelled and referred on to an external agency or statutory body

Risk Assessments should be carried out wherever possible over the phone. However, in cases where the risk/s identified are unpredictable, variable or unclear such as when a person being visited has a mental health problem which may produce violent or aggressive behaviours, a telephone risk assessment may not be appropriate, and it may be necessary to carry out a home visit to obtain a more detailed assessment of the risk/s identified and how any control measures can be effectively applied. In these cases, the risk assessment process involves working with the person to help characterise and estimate each aspect of the risk/s highlighted. Information about the person's history of violence, self-harm or self-neglect, their relationships and any recent losses or problems, employment and any recent difficulties, housing issues, their family and the support that is available and more general social contacts could all be relevant. It is also relevant to assess how the person is feeling, thinking and perceiving others not just how they are behaving. Efforts should be made to ascertain the person's own views about their trigger factors, early warning signs of disturbed/violent behaviour and other vulnerabilities, and the management of these.

Any risk assessment that requires a home visit must be authorised by a member of the Trustee Board or management team (if there is one) and involve at least one other individual to be present at all times during the visit. The outcome of the risk assessment must be discussed with a member of the Trustee Board/senior management team before any service is put in place.

Any referrer should be made aware that any referrals received where a risk/s is identified would be subject to the Trinity Safe Space risk assessment process and any provision of service would be subject to satisfactory completion of this process.

Internally, Trinity Safe Space's log or any equivalent databases (subsequently referred to as 'the databases') must be updated to reflect that a risk assessment has been highlighted. These will be the main control points for highlighting risks to other service areas and internal personnel. Details should be added onto the databases on the risk tabs associated with each person and should include information relating to the date, the member of staff's/volunteer's name and details of the risks highlighted. If there is insufficient space staff/volunteers should make reference in this tab to the location of a scanned electronic copy of the actual risk assessment (or paper copy if no electronic copy is available).

Risk assessment information on the databases should be reviewed prior to community or home-based visits. This is also necessary for repeat visits to ensure that any additional information that has been added since the member of staff/volunteer last visited is reviewed.

It is imperative that the employee/volunteer documents the date and time of the visit and lets someone know where they are going to ensure that they are easily contactable (see 6.4 below regarding monitoring movements).

If at any point a member of staff/volunteer feels uncomfortable about undertaking a visit or if any potential risks are identified individuals should discuss this with their line manager (if there is one) or a Trinity Safe Space contact/Trustee.

#### 6.4 Monitoring staff movements

To ensure that the organisation is always aware of staff, workers' and volunteers' whereabouts, local reporting systems should be put in place for each individual attending an off-site appointment. All employees/volunteers are required to notify the relevant person where applicable with all off-site appointments ensuring they also state the location and date/time of any visits or events they will be attending away from their standard place of work/volunteering. Full addresses, postcodes and contact telephone numbers must also be notified for each off-site visit. For employees and volunteers who work/volunteer out of office hours, either in the evenings or weekends, there must be an agreed local protocol in place for informing a relevant person of their whereabouts.

#### 6.5 Buddying

Where possible, employees/volunteers should be teamed with a nominated person (or 'buddy') within their team/at their office or work/volunteering location for them to contact before and after the lone working visit. This will ensure, for example, if an employee/volunteer is attending an off-site visit they are able to advise their buddy of the appointment/visit/event they are attending and what time they would expect to return to their work location/office/home. The employee would then let their buddy know when they have returned safely. Notification could take the form of a brief phone call or mobile phone text to confirm that they have returned from their visit.

If no contact has been made after a few hours of the end of the visit and contact cannot be made with the individual, the buddy would be responsible for raising the alarm. Within office hours (Monday to Friday 9-4:30) the alarm can be raised to the Trinity Safe Space premises applicable to the individual or to a Trustee. Outside of office hours the alarm should be raised to the local police or to a nominated Trustee.

In some circumstances such as where the lone worker is returning home rather than to their office base, a family member or friend may be nominated as their buddy under this policy.

If a buddy accompanies a member of staff or a volunteer to a visit, they must be subject to the same level of DBS disclosure process as the person/people they are accompanying (refer to the DBS Policy).

## 6.6 Volunteer interviews

As with staff interviews and meetings with external agencies, initial volunteer interviews should take place in a neutral and public location, such as one of Trinity Safe Space's premises, rather than the volunteer's home. Further visits to the same volunteer (if required) can take place in the volunteer's home if necessary, providing the appropriate risk assessment has been completed. An alternative would be to ask a colleague to also be in attendance at the interview.

## 7. Building Based Lone Working

Having one person working alone in Trinity Safe Space premises or venues is undesirable. However, as it is not practical always to ensure that two people are present then the emphasis of this policy is to reduce risk. When there is more than one person in the premises, there is still need for vigilance.

### Before entering the building

Ensure that the premises look as you would expect them to do – no signs of damage or occupancy and no signs of doors or windows forced or unlocked when you expect them to be locked

If you have concerns do not enter but contact a Trustee or ask a second person to enter the building with you. **Do not enter alone.**

### On entering the building

Ensure that the building and contents are as you would expect them – If you have any concerns leave the premises and contact a Trustee.

It should be encouraged, where possible, to standardise working/volunteering hours and patterns to try and avoid one person either opening up or locking the office alone. Where this is not possible, the following steps should be taken:

- You should inform and seek approval from your line manager (if there is one) or a Trustee if you are likely to be staying late or make it known to the last person to leave the office/premises before you
- If you are one of only a few people in the building at the end of the day/session you should advise remaining people when you leave, this is especially important if not all areas are visible
- Do not turn lights off in central areas if there is someone else in another part of the building as this is a Health and Safety risk
- Do not let anyone into the building whilst you are lone working, unless you are satisfied that they do not pose any risk. In buildings where staff/volunteers are working/volunteering and have no control over who enters the building staff/volunteers should use any security measures which are in place eg key pads which limit access
- Ensure that no one else can enter the building (making sure that this does not compromise evacuation in the event of an emergency)
- You should contact a family member or colleague when you are leaving the building so that someone is aware you are on your way home
- Whilst travelling to and from work/volunteering areas and across car parks, you should remain alert and observant
- You should familiarise yourself with the location and general instructions to ensure that you are aware of any building closing procedures if you are the last person in the premises

### Whilst working alone in the building

- Work as near as possible to the telephone

- Ensure that the front door is locked and that the security door and emergency fire exit doors are closed. If there are any, **do not** pull the security guard across the fire door until you leave
- Do not open doors unless you know or have checked the identity of any visitor
- When talking to anybody you do not know on the phone, do not tell them you are alone in the building
- If you hear the fire alarm, apart from any regular tests, exit the building in the usual way and contact a Trustee. If we are notified that there will be a fire alarm and it is known that you are scheduled to be the only person in the building you will be warned in advance
- If anybody appears in the premises that you do not know, remain calm and non-threatening – ask who they are and who they are looking for, explain that the person they are looking for is not present and escort them from the premises. Then contact a Trustee or emergency contact
- **Always trust your instincts – if you do not feel comfortable about letting a person in the building, then ask them to return at a time when you will not be alone**
- If you make an appointment with somebody for the first time or with somebody who you are not comfortable being with, then arrange for somebody else to be in the premises, or in the meeting with you, at the time of the appointment

#### On leaving the building

Ensure all doors are shut, close the grill on the fire exit door, if there are any, and lock the door(s), setting the alarm as relevant.

#### If an incident takes place

If an incident occurs where there is a breach of your personal safety, you should complete an incident report including the date, time, location and description of the incident, including names and contact details of any witnesses, if known. This should be given to a Trustee. This should be done no matter how minor the incident as the policies stated here may need to be reviewed.

#### 8. Incident Reporting

All incidents in relation to lone working should be reported through the Trinity Safe Space Incident Reporting procedure (contained within the Health and Safety Policy) and to an individual's line manager (if there is one) or a Trinity Safe Space contact. Staff should ensure that all incidents where they feel threatened or unsafe are reported through this system and should advise volunteers of this procedure as part of their induction.

#### 9. Training

Trinity Safe Space can arrange training courses for employees and volunteers including health and safety training. During induction and 1:1s staff and volunteers' training needs should be identified and appropriate action taken.

#### 10. Guidance for Lone Workers

The following constitutes general guidance to familiarise yourself with in the event that you are lone working.

- Ensure you have read the lone working policy and procedure
- Keep to your schedule of work/volunteering - if you are delayed for any reason let the appropriate person know
- Make sure you have all of the emergency phone numbers you need on your phone preferably on 'speed dial'
- Make sure you attend any training sessions the organisation provides to keep you safe when working alone

Driving to an off-site appointment or delivery

- Avoid parking in a deserted place or where there is poor lighting
- Secure the vehicle when you leave it and ensure that you do not leave belongings on show in



the vehicle

- Remember to charge and take your mobile phone with you, if you have one
- Ensure you fill your car up with fuel before your journey, if you are running low
- Keep all valuables in your car out of sight

During a lone working visit

- Ensure that you have the correct address for the person/organisation that you intend to visit
- Report into your local nominated person or to your buddy after the visit
- Ensure that you are wearing your ID/name badge (if applicable) and that your telephone or communication equipment is within easy reach
- If you reach the site/location and feel at risk or uncertain then do not enter the premises. Tell the person you are visiting that you have received a phone call requesting that you return to the main site/home immediately and that you will call to reschedule the appointment as soon as possible. Apologise for any inconvenience and leave
- Always follow the person you are visiting into the house/building rather than leading the way yourself
- Be aware of all exit routes in case you need to leave in a hurry
- If there is an animal/pet at the site request that it is put into another room, or secured for the duration of the visit. The animal/pet may have to be moved a number of times if you are visiting more than one room at the site
- Use personal protective equipment (PPE) when this has been provided for you, where necessary

Working Alone at the Venues of Other Organisations

- Try only to arrange appointments at the premises of other organisations if you know that there will be more than one other person present. If this is not possible arrange the appointment at Trinity Safe Space's premises
- If you arrive at the premises of another organisation and you are not comfortable with going ahead with the appointment; then leave and report this to a Trustee

Travelling Alone During Working Hours

Travelling alone holds the same risks whether or not you are travelling for work/volunteering purposes or pleasure. However, it is far more likely that during working/volunteering time you will be travelling in unfamiliar areas and therefore the planning of the travel is far more important.

The Suzy Lamplugh Trust recommends that an individual plans their movements whether at work/during volunteering or in daily life.

**P\*L\*A\*N**

**For being safe out and about**

**Prepare yourself for the journey**

**Look confident**

**Avoid risk**

**Never assume**

**Prepare yourself for your journey**

- Know exactly where you are going and how you are going to get there
- Ensure that you have informed the team (by way of a diary or message) or a Trustee where you are going
- Assess any risks there may be in doing the journey you are about to undertake
- Ensure you have your personal belongings (e.g. keys, travel card) in your pocket and other items in a bag which sits close to your body with fastening innermost

### **Look confident**

- Stand tall and look as if you know what you are doing and where you are going
- Be alert to what is going on around you
- Do not wear headphones
- Carry a personal alarm
- Ensure you have a working mobile phone with you

### **Avoid risk**

- Do not take short cuts unless they are as safe as the longer route
- Do not change plans at the last minute

### **Never Assume**

- "It won't happen to me"
- Do not ignore your instincts

## **11. General Rules**

Trinity Safe Space must have details of your mobile numbers (work and/or personal), your home contact number and a person to be contacted in case of emergencies

A personal alarm will be provided if requested

A record of daily movements should be kept in a Trinity Safe Space calendar so that others are aware of them, to ensure personal safety

**Appendix 1 – Person Being Referred Visit Risk Assessment Checklist**

<b>Date of verbal assessment:</b>			
<b>Referrer details:</b>			
<b>Person being referred's full name:</b>			
<b>Date of birth:</b>			
<b>Full address:</b>			
<b>Telephone number of person being referred:</b>			
<b>Telephone number of next of kin if applicable</b>			
<b>Sex:</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	
<b>Type of accommodation:</b>			
<b>Any issues with entry to property/parking issues/phone entry system:</b>			
<b>Any known issues from referrer?</b>			
<b>Environment</b>			
<b>Do they live alone?</b>			
<b>If not, who else lives in the property?</b>			
<b>If so, will they be present during the visit?</b>			
<b>Smoker/non-smoker:</b>			
<b>If so, have they agreed to refrain from smoking before and during visit?</b>			

<b>Pets</b>	
<b>Any animals in house/flat/room:</b>	
<b>If so, has the person agreed to lock animal away in secure room during visit?</b>	
<b>Behaviours</b>	
<b>Does the client, or anyone else who lives in the property have a known mental health problem?</b>	
<b>Does the client, or anyone else who lives in the property have a history of violent or aggressive behaviour?</b>	
<b>Is there a risk of violent behaviour?</b>	
<b>Is there known substance or alcohol use both historical and current?</b>	
<b>If yes to any of the above, please refer to line manager/Trustee</b>	

**Appendix 2 –Risk Assessment form**

**Risk Assessment Form**

<b>ESTABLISHMENT/WORKPLACE:</b>	
<b>WORK ACTIVITY: Home Visiting/Lone Working</b>	
<b>DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY:</b>  Visiting people in their own homes to undertake assessments, to check on a person’s health, to provide befriending support, to provide information etc	<b>PEOPLE AT RISK:</b>  Volunteers Carers Staff Visitors Potential service users
<b>SIGNIFICANT HAZARDS:</b> Intimidation or abuse (both verbal and physical to staff by carer, person or person’s/carers’ family members/friends. Specific threats to staff/volunteers Holding against will History of reported accidents Emotional over involvement Driving Lone working Environment of people’s homes Unpredictable behaviour People’s disabilities People’s pets	<b>ADVERSE EFFECTS:</b> Physical injury Emotional stress Anxiety Intimidation Vulnerability Sickness absence Legal action Road traffic accidents Slips/trips/falls Bites, scratches, infection Communicable diseases
<b>EXISTING CONTROL MEASURES:</b> Movement diaries Joint working, if in doubt or where higher risk is identified Appropriate referrals and referral information on risk Staff training, supervision and support H&S Policy and Lone Working Policy Transport policy	
<b>RISK FACTOR =</b>	
<b>ACTION AND TIMESCALE(S) :</b>	
<b>Note: Undertake a further Risk Assessment following the introduction of additional control measures</b>	
<b>Residual Risk=</b>	

Identified risk	Likelihood of risk occurring	Severity of risk occurring	Risk level (likelihood X severity)	Counter measures	Residual risk

**Key:**

**Low (infrequent likelihood, minimal/no severity of harm) = 1**

**Medium (occasional likelihood, some severity of harm) = 2**

**High (frequent likelihood, major severity of harm) = 3**

**Risk Factor Action Table**

Risk factor	Action required
<b>7-9</b>	<b>Unacceptable risk – immediate action required</b>
<b>4-6</b>	<b>Risk reduction required – high priority</b>
<b>1-3</b>	<b>Low risk – no further action required</b>

A further risk assessment should always be completed following the introduction of any additional control measures. If no further control measures are needed, any risk assessment should be reviewed annually or sooner if there are any significant changes in terms of the activity originally assessed.