

# Cambourne Church Lone Worker Policy and Procedure

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## Introduction

Lone workers are those who work by themselves without close supervision, such as when alone on church premises or visiting homes of clients or members of the community or other venues on behalf of the church. Although there will always be some risk in church work, wherever possible, steps should be taken to preserve safety, both for those employed or appointed by the church, and to the benefit of their clients.

## Policy aims

- To encourage safe working for all volunteers and staff
- To protect volunteers and staff from false accusations
- To ensure that lone working is risk-assessed and safe systems put into place.

## Scope

This policy applies to all church volunteers and staff who may be working alone in the church buildings or other venues, driving alone, or visiting private homes on behalf of the church.

## Principles and Procedures

### 1 Travelling

- 1.1 Before leaving home staff and volunteers should always check that they have a mobile phone that is fully charged and topped up, and has emergency numbers programmed in.
- 1.2 If using public transport, staff and volunteers should plan the route in advance, have extra change for alternative route if necessary, sit in a more crowded place or near driver and get off if feel uncomfortable with behaviour of others.
- 1.3 If using taxis, staff or volunteers should book in advance if possible, only use licensed companies, have their numbers programmed in to mobile phone for quick access, wait in a public place and sit behind driver.
- 1.4 If walking late at night, know routes, walk with others or get cab, don't use phone or earphones, walk confidently and keep to main roads.

- 1.5 If driving, staff and volunteers should always ensure they have spare food, drink, blankets, a small amount of coins, first aid kit, torch, and mobile phone.
- 1.6 With all of the above, staff should be encouraged to recognise warning signs and be encouraged to heed them.
- 1.7 Before setting off for visits or meetings, staff and volunteers should ensure that someone knows their intentions, their mobile number and expected time of return. See "buddy" procedure below (section 4.5-4.8).
- 1.8 If staff and volunteers are working at night or in dangerous areas they should be offered use of a panic alarm. This should be discussed with their line manager and panic alarms will be made available from the church office.

## **2 If working alone in a building**

- 2.1 Staff and volunteers should always lock the door and not open it to anyone without being confident of their identity and intention. Consider part opening a window to allow communication with the visitor and to gather more information. Where possible all visits should be prearranged.
- 2.2 Staff and volunteers should have a mobile phone with them at all times.
- 2.3 Staff and volunteers should not engage in any potentially hazardous activity, e.g. climbing a ladder or using machinery.
- 2.4 When leaving a building at night, staff and volunteers should be mindful not to leave one person to lock up alone as far as is possible.
- 2.5 Staff and volunteers should not invite a lone client into their own home when they are there alone.

## **3 General**

- 3.1 All staff and volunteers will be given a copy of this policy and it is their responsibility to read and follow the principles and procedures described in this document.
- 3.2 Children, teenagers and vulnerable adults: All staff and volunteers must familiarise themselves with the church's policy on safeguarding and any special arrangements to consider when working or travelling alone with children and vulnerable adults.
- 3.3 All meetings and visits should be recorded in a diary or other document, which should be kept for five years. Sensitive information should be kept securely in a filing cabinet.
- 3.4 Any occurrence or near miss occurrence where the staff member or volunteer felt threatened should be verbally reported to their line manager as soon as possible. This should be followed up with a written record which is signed and dated.
- 3.5 If staff or volunteers are not in a good state of health they should not be alone in a building or lone visiting clients or members of the community.

## 4 Lone Worker Procedure

4.1 All staff or volunteers working for Cambourne Church who undertake lone working must read **Cambourne Church Lone Worker Policy** and must complete an **Emergency Contact Form**. This will be kept securely in the church office. If any of the details change it is the responsibility of the staff member or volunteer to ensure details are updated.

4.2 All episodes of lone working should be risk assessed as per the policy using the checklist below:

- Always ask: Do I really need to make this visit/meeting and do I have to make it alone? Could I ask this person to meet in the office or a public place?
- If it is someone of the opposite gender, try to ensure that you are not alone together in their home. Instead try to make the appointment when another person is at home, take someone with you or meet in a public place.
- Ask yourself 'what if?' And cover all obvious outcomes.
- If in doubt or you do not feel confident to go, do not go.

4.3 If a lone visit is unavoidable, please follow the procedure below:

4.4 For all episodes of lone working a third party should be made aware of the details of the appointment including expected time of return irrespective of whether the person being visited is known or deemed to be 'low risk'.

4.5 In all cases where the person is to be visited for the first time or there is any actual or perceived risk the following 'buddy system' should be used. A 'buddy' should be a member of the Cambourne Church Staff Team who is familiar with the Lone Worker Policy and Procedure.

4.6 Inform a 'buddy' of details of the appointment either face to face, by telephone or text (if text is used ensure a response is received).  
The following information should be given to the buddy:

- Location of appointment
- Contact number
- Name or further details if appropriate
- Time of appointment
- Estimated length of appointment
- Time expected to confirm appointment is completed.

4.7 After the appointment, in the event where confirmation is not received from the lone worker at the expected time, the following procedure should be followed:

- Buddy to call lone worker's mobile phone and if any indication of distress the police should be called immediately
- If there is no response on the mobile phone, wait five minutes and try again.
- At this stage the buddy should call the lone worker's home number and /or next of kin.
- If the lone worker can still not be located, the buddy should consider visiting the location but must take a third party and must inform a fourth party of this plan.
- If there is no response at the location of the visit the police should be called.

4.8 Lone workers should remain mindful of this system and make every effort to inform their buddy once the visit is completed to avoid unnecessary concern.

## **5 Method of distribution**

5.1 Copies of this document will be made available to all staff and volunteers who exercise lone worker roles on behalf of Cambourne Church. Those involved in lone working should read this policy and procedure annually.

## Emergency Contact Form

Your Name:

Address:

Home number:

Mobile number:

Work number if relevant:

Email:

Any other phone or contact details:

Car make, colour and registration (all cars used):

### **Next of kin:**

Address:

Home number:

Work number:

Mobile number:

Email:

### **Medical history (optional)**

Medical conditions:

Medications:

Allergies:

Signed:

Date:

**This form will be kept securely in the church office. If details change, it is the responsibility of the person completing this form to update the information.**