SEND the Help CIC

Lone Working Policy & Procedure

Policy Title: Lone Working Policy & Procedure
Organisation: SEND the Help CIC
Last Reviewed: 23/09/25
Review Cycle: Annually (or sooner if legal/regulatory change or serious incident)
Next Review Due: 23/09/26
Approved by: Directors, SEND the Help CIC

1. Purpose

To ensure the safety, welfare, and protection of practitioners and staff of SEND the Help CIC who carry out lone working — including home visits, outreach in remote venues, or similar settings. This policy defines appropriate precautions, risk■assessment processes, emergency procedures, and oversight to minimise risk.

2. Scope

Applies to: - All SEND the Help CIC practitioners, staff, and volunteers undertaking home visits, outreach in remote or community settings, or working alone outside of standard office / service premises. - Situations including home visits, community venues, remote partner sites, or other non■agency premises. - Does not cover work in schools, colleges, or places of regular agency partner premises where there is shared health & safety oversight (unless otherwise agreed).

3. Legislative & Regulatory Framework

This policy is informed by and aligned with: - Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 - Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999 - Relevant local authority H&S; guidance for outreach / lone working - Safeguarding legislation and duty of care obligations - SEND Code of Practice, particularly where SEND or health needs may affect risk or communication

4. Definitions

- Lone Working: Any work carried out by a practitioner without another person present, including home visits, remote venue work, outreach when alone. - Remote Venue: A location not regularly used by the organisation, not under direct supervision, e.g. homes, community settings, partner's non■agency premises. - Risk Assessment: A process for identifying, evaluating, and mitigating risks before and during the visit. - SLT (Senior Leadership Team): Named persons responsible for oversight of lone working within SEND the Help CIC.

5. Responsibilities

- Directors / Senior Leadership Team (SLT): Ensure policy is implemented; ensure training, resource allocation, and oversight. Review incidents or policy failures annually. - SEND the Help Practitioners / Staff / Volunteers: Before each lone working / home visit / remote venue task, complete a risk assessment; follow agreed systems (inform SLT of location, timing, expected duration, and contact check■in); carry necessary equipment; use safe arrival / departure and regular check■ins. - Named Line Manager / Supervisors: Monitor compliance; review risk

assessments; check in after visits; ensure incident reporting is followed; provide support if issues arise.

6. Procedure

A. Pre■Visit Planning & Notification: - Practitioner must inform SLT / line manager of all relevant details (address, time, duration, names of people involved). - Carry out / review risk assessment in advance; update if anything has changed. Identify specific risks (location, animals, behaviour, access, communication issues). - Where risk is assessed as high, consider alternatives or make arrangements for two■person visit. B. During the Visit or Remote Work: - Maintain regular communication: check■in at agreed times. - Be aware of signs of risk: environment, behaviour, health, local hazards. - Ensure mobile phone or other communication device is working (signal, battery). C. End of Visit / Check■Out: - Practitioner contacts SLT or designated person at agreed finish time. - If no contact received within agreed timeframe, follow escalation: phone mobile; contact backup; if required, alert emergency services.

7. Emergency Procedures

- If a practitioner feels unsafe, withdraw if possible, or call for help (neighbour, partner organisation, emergency services). - Use pre■agreed safety code phrases (if in policy) to indicate distress or need for help. - Document any incident or near■miss as soon as possible; report to SLT.

8. Risk Assessment & Mitigation

- Use formal risk assessment forms/templates before visits. - Mitigations may include doing visits during daylight; jointly visiting with another person; avoiding high■risk areas; ensuring somebody knows your route / expected return; carrying personal safety equipment. - Special adjustments made for SEND / health / communication needs: for example, if practitioner or young person has a disability, limited mobility, anxiety, or sensory processing issues, adjust plan accordingly.

9. Training & Induction

- All new practitioners / volunteers to receive induction training on lone working procedures. - Refresher training annually. - Training to cover risk assessment, emergency response, communication, handling difficult situations, safeguarding.

10. Recording, Monitoring & Review

- All visits, incidents, near misses, and safety concerns to be logged in the SEND the Help CIC incident / risk records. - SLT to review logs at least termly to identify patterns / necessary policy adjustments. - Review policy annually or sooner if required by incident, change in regulation, or organisational change.