LONE WORKING POLICY

PRN-84: Lone Working Policy
Company Name: AI Auto-Tech Ltd
Trading/Business Name: CAREHOPES
Company Registration Number: 15556946
SIC Code: 88100 – Social Work Activities Without Accommodation for the Elderly and Disabled
Email: admin@carehopes.com
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1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for protecting the health, safety, wellbeing, and security of employees and volunteers who work alone while carrying out duties on behalf of the organisation.

As a Non-Accommodation Companionship and Wellbeing Support Service, employees and volunteers may undertake activities independently in service users' homes, community settings, public venues, or while travelling.

The organisation recognises its duty to take reasonable steps to identify, assess, and manage the risks associated with lone working.

This policy aims to:

- Minimise risks to lone workers.
- Promote safe working practices.
- Ensure appropriate support arrangements are in place.
- Protect service users and staff.
- Comply with health and safety obligations.

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2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Employees
- Volunteers
- Managers

- Directors
- Trustees
- Agency workers
- Students and placements

This policy applies whenever an individual is working alone on behalf of the organisation, including:

- Home visits
- Wellbeing checks
- Community visits
- Accompanied outings
- Travel between visits
- Remote working
- Lone attendance at meetings or events

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3. Policy Statement

The organisation is committed to ensuring that lone workers:

- Are protected from foreseeable risks.
- Receive appropriate training and support.
- Have access to assistance when required.
- Are able to report concerns without delay.
- Work within safe systems and procedures.

The organisation recognises that while lone working is not inherently unsafe, it may increase risks due to isolation and reduced access to immediate support.

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4. Definition of Lone Working

A lone worker is any employee or volunteer who works by themselves without close or direct supervision.

Examples include:

- Visiting a service user alone.

- Travelling alone between appointments.
- Conducting wellbeing visits without another colleague present.
- Working remotely from home.
- Attending community activities independently.

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5. Legal Framework

This policy is guided by:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Care Act 2014

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6. Potential Risks of Lone Working

Lone workers may encounter risks including:

- Accidents or medical emergencies.
- Slips, trips, and falls.
- Aggressive or threatening behaviour.
- Harassment or abuse.
- Road traffic incidents.
- Environmental hazards.
- Safeguarding concerns.
- Mental health impacts of isolation.
- Difficult or unpredictable situations.

Risks will vary depending on the location, activity, service user, and environment.

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7. Responsibilities

Directors

Responsible for:

- Ensuring appropriate lone working arrangements.
- Providing resources to manage risks.
- Reviewing significant incidents.

Managers

Responsible for:

- Conducting risk assessments.
- Providing guidance and support.
- Monitoring lone working arrangements.
- Reviewing incidents and concerns.
- Ensuring staff receive appropriate training.

Employees and Volunteers

Responsible for:

- Following lone working procedures.
- Reporting concerns promptly.
- Participating in risk assessments.
- Maintaining communication arrangements.
- Taking reasonable care of their own safety.

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8. Risk Assessment

A risk assessment should be completed where lone working activities are undertaken.

The assessment should consider:

- Location of the visit.
- Service user's circumstances.
- Known risks or concerns.
- Time of day.

- Travel arrangements.
- Accessibility.
- Environmental hazards.
- Previous incidents.

Risk assessments should be reviewed regularly and whenever circumstances change.

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9. Pre-Visit Planning

Before undertaking lone working activities, employees and volunteers should consider:

- The purpose of the visit.
- Known risks.
- Contact arrangements.
- Emergency procedures.
- Appropriate timings.
- Safe travel arrangements.

Where concerns exist, additional measures should be considered.

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10. Home Visits

Prior to home visits, employees and volunteers should be aware of:

- Access arrangements.
- Known safeguarding concerns.
- Pets or animals.
- Smoking in the property.
- Environmental hazards.
- Previous incidents.
- Potential behavioural risks.

If a situation appears unsafe, the worker should leave immediately and inform management.

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11. Check-In and Check-Out Procedures

To support worker safety, lone workers should follow agreed communication arrangements.

This may include:

Before the Visit

- Informing a manager of their schedule.
- Recording visit details.

During the Visit

- Maintaining access to a mobile phone where practical.
- Reporting significant concerns immediately.

After the Visit

- Confirming that the visit has concluded safely.
- Reporting any incidents or concerns.

Managers should have arrangements in place for responding to missed check-ins.

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12. Use of Mobile Phones and Communication Equipment

Employees and volunteers should:

- Carry a charged mobile phone where possible.
- Ensure emergency contacts are available.
- Maintain communication with management when required.
- Report communication difficulties promptly.

Mobile phones should not be relied upon as the sole safety measure.

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13. Personal Safety During Visits

Employees and volunteers should:

- Remain aware of their surroundings.
- Position themselves near exits where appropriate.
- Trust their instincts if a situation feels unsafe.

- Avoid unnecessary risks.
- Remain calm in difficult situations.

They should not:

- Enter unsafe environments.
- Remain in threatening situations.
- Place themselves at risk to continue a visit.

Personal safety must always take priority.

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14. Managing Aggressive or Threatening Behaviour

The organisation has zero tolerance for violence, aggression, abuse, intimidation, or threatening behaviour.

Where aggression occurs, employees and volunteers should:

- Remain calm.
- Avoid confrontation.
- Withdraw from the situation if safe to do so.
- Contact emergency services if necessary.
- Inform management immediately.

Any incident involving aggression must be reported and recorded.

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15. Emergency Situations

In an emergency, lone workers should:

Prioritise Immediate Safety

Remove themselves from danger where possible.

Contact Emergency Services

Call **999** where:

- Life is at risk.
- Serious injury has occurred.
- Violence is occurring.

- Criminal activity is taking place.

Inform Management

As soon as it is safe to do so.

Emergency situations must always be formally reported afterwards.

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16. Medical Emergencies

If a lone worker becomes unwell or is involved in an accident:

- Emergency services should be contacted where necessary.
- Managers should be informed as soon as possible.
- Incident reporting procedures should be followed.

The organisation will provide appropriate support following the incident.

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17. Safeguarding Concerns During Lone Working

Lone workers may encounter safeguarding concerns while carrying out their duties.

Examples include:

- Abuse
- Neglect
- Financial exploitation
- Self-neglect
- Domestic abuse

Workers must:

- Follow the Adult Safeguarding Policy.
- Record concerns accurately.
- Report concerns immediately.

Workers must not investigate safeguarding concerns themselves.

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18. Travel Safety

Employees and volunteers travelling on behalf of the organisation should:

- Plan journeys in advance.
- Allow adequate travel time.
- Use safe and appropriate transport.
- Inform managers of significant delays where necessary.
- Avoid unnecessary risks during travel.

Weather conditions and local safety concerns should be considered.

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19. Wellbeing and Emotional Support

Lone working can occasionally be isolating or emotionally demanding.

The organisation will seek to support employees and volunteers through:

- Supervision sessions.
- Wellbeing discussions.
- Debrief opportunities.
- Peer support.
- Access to management support.

Workers are encouraged to raise concerns about their wellbeing at an early stage.

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20. Incident Reporting

All lone working incidents, accidents, near misses, and safety concerns must be reported.

Examples include:

- Threatening behaviour.
- Unsafe environments.
- Missed check-ins.
- Accidents.
- Safeguarding incidents.
- Security concerns.

Incident reports should be completed in accordance with the Incident Reporting Policy.

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21. Training

Employees and volunteers involved in lone working will receive training appropriate to their role.

Training may include:

- Lone working awareness.
- Risk assessment.
- Conflict management.
- Personal safety.
- Safeguarding.
- Incident reporting.
- Emergency procedures.

Training completion will be monitored.

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22. Case Study

Scenario: Unsafe Home Environment

A wellbeing volunteer arrives for a scheduled home visit and notices evidence of significant intoxication and verbal aggression from a visitor present in the property.

Action Taken

The volunteer:

- Remains calm.
- Decides not to proceed with the visit.
- Leaves the property safely.
- Contacts the Service Manager.
- Completes an incident report.

Outcome

The risk assessment is reviewed, additional safeguards are introduced, and future visits are planned with enhanced monitoring.

Learning Point

Lone workers should always prioritise personal safety and are not expected to remain in situations where they feel threatened or unsafe.

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23. Responsibilities Summary

Role	Key Responsibilities
Directors	Governance and oversight
Managers	Risk assessments, support, monitoring
Employees	Follow procedures, report concerns
Volunteers	Follow guidance, maintain communication, report risks

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24. Monitoring and Quality Assurance

The organisation will monitor:

- Lone working incidents.
- Risk assessments.
- Near misses.
- Safeguarding concerns.
- Employee and volunteer feedback.
- Training compliance.
- Health and safety reviews.

The organisation will use monitoring information to strengthen lone working arrangements and improve safety.

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25. Review Arrangements

This policy will be reviewed:

- Annually
- Following significant incidents
- Following lone worker safety concerns
- Following legislative changes

- Following organisational changes

Related Policies

- Health and Safety Policy
- Risk Assessment Policy
- Adult Safeguarding Policy
- Incident Reporting Policy
- Employee Wellbeing Policy
- Volunteer Management Policy
- Dignity and Respect Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy