LONE WORKING AND COMMUNITY VISITS PROCEDURE

PRN-83: Lone Working and Community Visits Procedure
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
Version Number: V01 20260815
Date of Review: (August 2026)

---

1. Purpose

This procedure provides practical guidance for employees and volunteers undertaking lone working activities and community visits on behalf of the organisation.

The procedure aims to:

- Protect employees and volunteers from harm.
- Promote safe working practices.
- Reduce risks associated with lone working.
- Ensure appropriate communication and monitoring arrangements are in place.
- Support safe delivery of companionship and wellbeing services.

This procedure should be read alongside the:

- Lone Working Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Adult Safeguarding Policy
- Incident Reporting Policy
- Risk Assessment Policy

---

2. Scope

This procedure applies to:

- Employees

- Volunteers
- Managers
- Community wellbeing workers
- Befriending and companionship volunteers

It covers activities including:

- Home visits
- Wellbeing visits
- Community activities
- Accompanied outings
- Welfare checks
- Travel between visits
- Lone attendance at events

---

3. Guiding Principle

The safety of employees and volunteers is paramount.

No employee or volunteer is expected to place themselves at risk in order to deliver a service.

If a situation feels unsafe, they should:

- Leave immediately where safe to do so.
- Inform management.
- Follow reporting procedures.

---

4. Before Accepting a Visit

Before a visit is allocated, managers should consider:

- Known safeguarding concerns.
- Previous incidents.
- Environmental risks.
- Mobility or access issues.

- Lone working risks.
- Time of day.
- Location.
- Service user needs.

Additional controls may be required if risks are identified.

---

5. Pre-Visit Risk Assessment

Before the first visit, consideration should be given to:

Service User Factors

- Behavioural concerns.
- Mental health concerns.
- Substance misuse concerns.
- Safeguarding history.
- Known risks.

Environmental Factors

- Unsafe premises.
- Excessive clutter.
- Aggressive animals.
- Isolated locations.
- Poor lighting.

Travel Factors

- Distance.
- Parking arrangements.
- Public transport availability.
- Weather conditions.

The outcome should determine whether the visit is suitable for lone working.

---

6. Planning the Visit

Prior to visiting, employees and volunteers should:

- Confirm visit details.
- Review known risks.
- Ensure contact information is available.
- Carry a charged mobile phone.
- Know emergency contact arrangements.
- Plan travel routes.

They should avoid making unnecessary changes to planned visits without informing management.

---

7. Check-In Procedure

Before commencing visits, the employee or volunteer should ensure that:

- Their schedule is known.
- Location details are recorded.
- Expected finish times are available.
- Relevant contact details are accessible.

Managers should know:

- Who is being visited.
- Visit location.
- Approximate duration.
- Expected completion time.

---

8. Arrival at the Property

When arriving at a service user's home, employees and volunteers should:

- Observe the surrounding environment.
- Assess any immediate risks.
- Remain alert to unusual circumstances.
- Trust their instincts.

Do not enter if:

- Violence appears likely.
- Criminal activity is evident.
- You believe your safety may be compromised.

If concerned, leave the area and contact your manager immediately.

---

9. Entering the Property

Upon entering:

- Introduce yourself appropriately.
- Confirm the service user's identity.
- Maintain awareness of exits.
- Assess the environment.
- Remain professional and observant.

Where possible:

- Sit where you can access an exit.
- Avoid becoming trapped in confined spaces.
- Remain aware of changes in circumstances.

---

10. During the Visit

Employees and volunteers should:

- Maintain professional boundaries.
- Remain attentive to safety concerns.
- Monitor for safeguarding concerns.
- Maintain appropriate communication.
- Respect confidentiality and dignity.

They should not:

- Become involved in financial arrangements.
- Accept money.

- Enter unsafe parts of the property.
- Take unnecessary risks.

---

11. Aggressive Behaviour

If an individual becomes aggressive:

Remain Calm

Avoid arguments or confrontation.

Maintain Distance

Create space if safe to do so.

Withdraw

Leave if there is any concern regarding personal safety.

Seek Help

Contact emergency services if required.

Report

Inform management immediately.

Safety must always take priority over completing the visit.

---

12. Unsafe Environments

Examples of unsafe environments may include:

- Aggressive animals.
- Drug or alcohol misuse.
- Violence.
- Threatening visitors.
- Severe property hazards.
- Criminal activity.

Employees and volunteers should leave immediately if the environment becomes unsafe.

Managers should be informed as soon as practicable.

---

13. Accompanied Community Visits

Where employees or volunteers accompany service users into the community:

- Risk assessments should be considered.
- Accessibility needs should be reviewed.
- Emergency contacts should be available.
- Travel arrangements should be planned.
- Safeguarding responsibilities should be maintained.

The wellbeing and safety of both parties should be considered.

---

14. Transport Safety

Employees and volunteers should:

- Use safe routes.
- Park in well-lit locations where possible.
- Secure valuables out of sight.
- Follow road safety requirements.
- Avoid unnecessary travel during severe weather.

Any travel concerns should be communicated promptly.

---

15. Mobile Phone Requirements

Employees and volunteers undertaking community visits should:

- Carry a charged mobile phone.
- Ensure emergency numbers are available.
- Notify management if communication difficulties arise.

Mobile devices should only be used safely and appropriately.

---

16. Missed Contact Procedure

If a check-in is missed:

Step 1

Attempt to contact the employee or volunteer.

Step 2

Attempt alternative contact methods.

Step 3

Contact emergency contacts where appropriate.

Step 4

Escalate concerns to management.

Step 5

Contact emergency services if immediate welfare concerns exist.

All actions should be recorded.

---

17. Emergency Situations

In an emergency:

Prioritise Safety

Move to a safe location.

Contact Emergency Services

Call **999** where necessary.

Inform Management

Notify the manager as soon as practicable.

Record the Incident

Complete required documentation.

---

18. Safeguarding Concerns During Visits

Employees and volunteers may identify concerns such as:

- Abuse
- Neglect
- Self-neglect

- Financial exploitation
- Domestic abuse

Where concerns arise:

- Follow safeguarding procedures.
- Record information carefully.
- Report immediately.

Employees and volunteers should never investigate concerns independently.

---

19. Ending the Visit

When leaving:

- Ensure the visit has concluded appropriately.
- Record any concerns.
- Follow check-out procedures.
- Confirm completion where required.

Any significant issues should be reported immediately.

---

20. Post-Visit Recording

Records should include:

- Date and time.
- Visit location.
- Purpose of visit.
- Key observations.
- Actions undertaken.
- Safeguarding concerns.
- Follow-up requirements.

Records should be completed as soon as possible after the visit.

---

21. Incident Reporting

The following should be reported:

- Aggression.
- Threats.
- Near misses.
- Accidents.
- Safeguarding concerns.
- Unsafe environments.
- Missed check-ins.

Incident reporting procedures must be followed at all times.

---

22. Manager Responsibilities

Managers are responsible for:

- Allocating visits safely.
- Reviewing risks.
- Maintaining contact arrangements.
- Investigating incidents.
- Supporting employees and volunteers.
- Reviewing lone working practices.

---

23. Employee and Volunteer Responsibilities

Employees and volunteers are responsible for:

- Following this procedure.
- Reporting concerns promptly.
- Completing required records.
- Participating in training.
- Prioritising personal safety.

No employee or volunteer should undertake activities beyond their competence or training.

---

24. Training Requirements

Training may include:

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

Training records should be maintained.

---

25. Procedure Flowchart

Before Visit

Risk Assessment → Visit Planned → Schedule Logged

↓

During Visit

Monitor Safety → Deliver Support → Identify Concerns

↓

If Risk Arises

Withdraw Safely → Contact Manager → Complete Incident Report

↓

After Visit

Record Visit → Report Concerns → Complete Check-Out

---

26. Monitoring and Review

The organisation will monitor:

- Lone working incidents.

- Community visit records.
- Near misses.
- Safeguarding concerns.
- Training compliance.
- Employee and volunteer feedback.

Findings will be used to improve lone working arrangements and ensure ongoing safety.

Related Policies

- Lone Working Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Adult Safeguarding Policy
- Incident Reporting Policy
- Risk Assessment Policy
- Employee Wellbeing Policy
- Volunteer Management Policy