

# **Trinity St Andrew's Church Meeting Lone Working Policy**

## **1. Introduction**

At times, Trinity St Andrew's lay employees will be in situations where they are a 'lone worker'. Trinity St Andrew's aim is to be a good employer, concerned about the safety of employees. Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, an employer has a duty of care to advise and assess risk for workers when they work by themselves, whether working on the employer's premises or from the employee's own home. Employees also have a responsibility to take reasonable care of themselves and other people affected by their work.

Trinity St Andrew's will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that employees, and authorised / appointed contractors who are required to work alone or unsupervised are protected from risks to their health and safety. Measures will also be adopted to protect anyone else affected by solitary working, such as volunteers.

Solitary working exposes employees and others to certain hazards. Trinity St Andrew's objective is either to entirely remove the risks from these hazards or, where complete elimination is not possible, to reduce them to a minimal level.

## **2. Scope of the policy**

This policy applies to all situations involving lone working arising in connection with the duties and activities of Trinity St Andrew's. 'Lone worker' includes:

- Those working at their main place of work where:
  - only one person is working on the premises
  - one person is working from their own home
  - people work in the same building as colleagues but in a space on their own, which may create isolation risks
  - people work separately from each other, e.g. in different locations
  - people work outside normal office hours, e.g. cleaners
  
- Those working away from their fixed base where:
  - one person is visiting another premises or meeting venue
  - one person is making a home visit to an individual
  - one person is working from their own home

## **3. Aims of the Policy**

The aims of the policy are to:

- Increase staff awareness of safety issues relating to lone working.
- Ensure that the risk of lone working is assessed in a systematic and ongoing way, and that safe systems and methods of work are put in place to reduce the risk so far as is reasonably practicable.
- Ensure that appropriate support and training is available to all staff that equips them to recognise risk and provides practical advice on safety when working alone.
- Encourage full reporting and recording of all adverse incidents relating to lone working.
- Reduce the number of incidents and injuries to staff related to lone working.

#### **4. Responsibilities of Trinity St Andrew's**

- Providing all necessary information, instruction, training and supervision to enable employees to recognize hazards and appreciate the risks involved with working alone.
- Assessing 'reasonably foreseeable risks' – identifying, evaluating and managing risks associated with lone working.
- Ensuring that employees or volunteers have a means of summoning help if necessary.
- Ensuring that up to date contact details for the employee and their next of kin are kept on file.
- Keeping a record of any health issues that might affect someone's ability to work alone safely.
- Ensuring that a system is in place so that Trinity St Andrew's knows that an employee is safe when working on their own either on or off the premises, e.g. check calls at regular scheduled intervals.
- Providing resources for putting the policy into practice.
- Ensuring that there are arrangements for monitoring incidents linked to lone working and that the effectiveness of this policy is regularly reviewed.
- Ensuring that all staff are aware of the policy.
- Identifying situations where people work alone and considering alternative arrangements, where appropriate.
- Managing the effectiveness of preventative measures through an effective system of reporting, investigating and recording incidents.
- Ensuring that appropriate support is given to staff involved in any incident.
- Providing a mobile phone, or reimbursement of costs incurred for work-related calls made, and other personal safety equipment where this is felt to be desirable.
- Ensuring that employees receive a Health and Safety Induction and that the Certificate of Employers' Liability is displayed in Trinity St Andrew's Office.
- Checking that insurance cover adequately covers the work to be undertaken.
- Ensuring the availability of appropriate and adequate personal protective equipment for mandatory use by employees as necessary.
- Providing an accident book and ensuring it is kept up to date at all times, or suitable methods of record keeping to record incidents / accidents and that these are reviewed to identify improvements.

The Leadership Team is responsible for the implementation of this policy.

#### **5. Arrangements for Securing the Health and Safety of Workers**

Assessment of the risks of working alone carried out under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 will confirm whether the work can actually be achieved safely by one unaccompanied person. This will include the identification of hazards from, for example, means of access and/or egress, work equipment, plant, materials, goods, substances and environment, etc.

In relation to lone worker risk assessment, particular consideration should also be given to:

- The remoteness of the workplace.
- Potential communication problems.
- Potential for verbal and physical abuse including the possibility of interference, such as violence or criminal activity from other persons.
- Vulnerability of lone workers to feelings of isolation, stress and depression.
- Whether or not the plant, equipment, materials, etc. can be handled safely by one person.

- The nature of potential injury or damage to health and anticipated “worst case” scenario.
- Whether or not the person is emotionally and medically fit and able to work alone.
- How the lone worker will be supervised effectively.
- How the lone worker will obtain help in an emergency such as assault, vehicle breakdown, accident or fire.
- Whether or not there is adequate first aid cover and resources (first aid box) and the lone worker’s capacity to administer this on themselves before help arrives.

## **6. Safe System of Work**

Trinity St Andrew’s will provide controls, resources and instructions, if necessary in writing, to cover the following:

- required ability of employees, for example:
  - training, qualifications and experience
  - full knowledge of work planned
  - medical fitness
- suitability of equipment, for example:
  - quality of work equipment
  - adequate level of appropriate personal protective equipment supplied by Trinity St Andrew’s
  - insulation of portable electrical appliances
  - safe and suitable equipment for the task
- task, for example:
  - compliance with all job instructions
  - avoidance of non-authorized or non-risk assessed work
- means of communication, for example:
  - mobile telephone
  - regular visits by competent person
- provision for treatment of injuries, for example:
  - portable first aid kit
  - availability of first aider/emergency response
- emergency and accident procedures, for example:
  - means of summoning help
  - means of raising alarm
  - rescue plans and equipment, as appropriate to the activity
  - fire-fighting equipment and its safe operation
- training, for example:
  - for safe use of any specialised equipment and processes
- supervision, for example:
  - for trainees, young people or new recruits, who must be confirmed as competent to work alone before supervision is reduced to the level of occasional visits.

## **7. Defined Working Limits**

Trinity St Andrew’s will establish clear procedures to set limits of what can and what cannot be done while working alone. The general precautionary principle of not carrying out work if in doubt is advocated and employees should contact their line manager for instructions where there is any concern.

## 8. Responsibilities of Employees

- To take reasonable care of their own safety.
- To co-operate with Trinity St Andrew's efforts to ensure safe lone working.
- To comply with all safe working procedures as devised by Trinity St Andrew's.
- To report any concerns relating to lone working (including incidents of violence or aggressive behaviour) to their line manager.
- To arrange to meet unknown individuals in a public place and preferably with another person present.
- If making a home visit, to make sure that someone knows where they are going and that they have a mobile phone, charged and turned on, with them, at all times.
- If practical, on leaving their work base to tell someone where they are going and when they hope to be back.
- If practical, to leave a note or send a text message stating who and where they are visiting and how they will get there.
- To consider a 'buddy' system where they let a colleague or friend know that they have arrived at a visit/premises and when they have left a visit/premises.
- To consider carrying a Personal Shriek Alarm.
- To always stay alert and be 'streetwise' and vigilant, taking note of what is going on around them.

## 9. Summary

Working alone can bring additional risks to a work activity. Trinity St Andrew's has developed policies and procedures to control the risks and protect employees and others and these should be followed. Apart from lone workers being competent in doing the job on their own, the three most important things to be certain of are that:

- the lone worker has full knowledge of the potential hazards and risks to which they are being exposed;
- the lone worker knows what the task entails and what to do if something goes wrong;
- a suitable person knows the whereabouts of a lone worker, what they are doing and the planned duration of the work.

## 10. Useful Resources

Additional information can be downloaded from the Suzy Lamplugh Trust website ([www.suzylamplugh.org](http://www.suzylamplugh.org)) and a guide to undertaking a risk assessment and a risk assessment form template can be downloaded from the Methodist Church website: [www.methodist.org.uk](http://www.methodist.org.uk)