



LONE WORKING POLICY

Version: 1

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Policy

Dublin and Dun Laoghaire Education and Training Board (DDLETB) is committed to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of employees, students and visitors at all times while working including flexibility to undertake work outside conventional hours or alone.

It is the policy of DDLETB to ensure its objectives in relation to planning for 'Lone Workers' are fulfilled.

This policy and procedure is applicable to all employees of DDLETB. The policy also covers volunteers and where appropriate contractors. The policy applies to all situations involving lone working arising in connection with the duties and responsibilities of staff.

Definition

Lone workers are those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision.

Examples of lone workers may include someone working in remote locations, mobile workers away from the workplace or someone working in an office on their own in an otherwise empty building. Examples of DDLETB lone workers may include Home School Liaison Officers or Youth Officers.

Lone working does not include the chance or occasional occurrence of being on one's own at work, for example in every workplace somebody arrives first and somebody leaves last. A person who has visual or audible communication with another staff member is not considered as working alone.

Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to ensure that when working outside conventional working hours or working alone during normal working hours, all Health & Safety, statutory and ETB regulations are complied with.

The aim of the procedure is to

- Increase staff awareness of the safety issues involved in lone working.
- Increase line managers awareness of their responsibilities towards staff that report to them and who are required to work alone.
- Ensure 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 insofar as is reasonably practicable.
- Ensure that appropriate support and training is provided to all staff that work alone.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Managers, Principals, Coordinators, Organisers

- Identify lone workers and their activities.
- Ensure this policy and procedure is communicated effectively to all staff in their area of responsibility
- Undertake written risk assessments for lone working with staff members and regularly update formal risk assessments of staff who work alone.

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- Ensure staff receive appropriate training in lone working where it is required as part of their work activities
- Pay due regard to outcomes of the lone working risk assessment and make any management changes as necessary.
- Ensure review assessments are undertaken annually.
- Ensure adequate supervision is provided. This may include:
 - Periodic checks (visits)
 - Periodic contact (mobile/telephone)
 - Checks on lone workers to ensure they have returned to their destination upon completion. Line managers and/or other designated staff members should be aware of the amount of time that a lone worker will be away from site.

Lone Workers

- Pay due regard to the outcomes of the lone working risk assessment and take responsibility for following the advice resulting from the assessment.
- Take due care and responsibility for themselves and others affected by their work activities
- Cooperate by following guidelines, work systems and rules designed for safe working.
- Report all incidents that may affect the health, safety and wellbeing of themselves and others and ask for guidance as appropriate.
- Participate in training designed to meet the requirements of the policy and report any concerns they have with regard to lone working.

RISK ASSESSMENTS

1. Risk Assessments for those who work alone on site must take the following into account as a minimum requirement
 - Safe Access/Egress
 - Site Security Systems
 - Channels of Communication for the employee in an Emergency
 - Channels of Communication/traceability
 - Authorisations/reporting/recording arrangements for working alone.
 - Levels of off/on site supervision required.
 - Potential for violence or aggression and for an individual to withdraw from a dangerous situation.
2. Risk Assessments for those who work alone and mobile work must take the following into account as a minimum requirement
 - Client/student risk assessment where applicable.
 - Arrangements for home visits including consideration of alternatives
 - Channels of Communication for the employee in an Emergency.

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- Channels of Communication/traceability
- Authorisations/reporting/recording arrangements for working alone.
- Personal safety/security.

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Guidelines for Carrying out Risk Assessments and Establishing Control Procedures to eliminate or minimise Risks

Risk Assessment Process:

The risk assessment process for a given activity comprises of the following four steps which are

- Step 1 Identify the Hazard
- Step 2 Identify the Risks associated with the hazard
- Step 3 Assess the risks (i.e. rate the risk)
- Step 4 Identify any additional control measures (if any) required (i.e. evaluate and treat the risk)

When carrying out risk assessment consideration should be given to the hazards and identified risks associated with the Environment, the Context, the Clientele and History.

Risk Assessment must take the following into account as a minimum requirement:

- The medical suitability of the individual to work alone.
- The ability of an individual to carry out the activity safely on their own.
- Potential of violence and for an individual to withdraw from a dangerous situation.
- Risks related to driving.
- Fire Safety
- Existing precautionary and emergency measures.
- Safe System of Work examples
 - Joint working with others on high-risk activities
 - Security lighting
 - Improvements to safety arrangements for buildings
 - Check-in and monitoring systems
 - Communication systems for sharing information on risk with colleagues
 - Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), Mobile Phones and Personal Alarms.
 - Emergency equipment that may be required such as torches, telephone numbers for emergency services.

Risk Control Measures include the following

- Communication is very important—mobile phone, telephone or radio.
- Periodic Checks
- Automatic Warning Devices e.g. panic alarms, no movement alarms, automatic distress message systems i.e. pre-recorded message sent if not actively cancelled by operative.
- Instruction and training in proper emergency procedures e.g. code words for potentially violent situations when combined with mobile phone communication.
- Use of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

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- First aid kits and training
- Locking and Securing place of work
- Implementing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)
- Implementing correct Incident Reporting Procedures
- Provision of Employee Assistance Programme services i.e. counselling.

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