



Lone Working Policy

Purpose

To enable Compass Group UK & Ireland to manage the risks associated with lone working.

Introduction

Compass Group UKI & Ireland has a responsibility to manage the health and safety risks before people can work alone.

Lone working can be defined as situations where an employee is engaged in a solo activity out of others' sight and hearing range. Anyone who works by themselves, without close or direct supervision is considered to be a lone worker. This covers many scenarios and examples include security staff, cleaners and home workers.

Almost all of us work alone at some point in our normal daily work; there will always be somebody who is the first to arrive, and somebody who is the last to leave. This policy applies to non-routine situations, where there is a foreseeable significant risk as a result of lone working.

Guidance key safety points for lone workers

Health and Safety legislation requires Compass Group UK & Ireland manage the risk to lone workers, by training them to identify hazards, providing supervision in any high-risk environments, monitoring lone workers by staying in touch with them and control risk, providing systems and tools for emergencies and ensure that workers know how to use these.

Apart from employees being sure that they have the training, skills experience and physical capabilities to carry out the required tasks on their own, the most important things to be certain of are that:

- The lone worker has full knowledge of the hazards and risks to which he or she is being exposed.
- The lone worker knows what to do if something goes wrong.
- Someone else knows the whereabouts of a lone worker and what they are doing.
- There is a reliable means of communication to and from the lone worker.

Legal Requirements

Employers have general responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 (HSWA Act) for the health and safety of all their employees and others that might be affected by their work activities. All employees have a duty under Section 7 of the HSW Act to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of anyone else who might be affected by the work activity.

Regulation 3 of the Health and Safety (First Aid) Regulations 1981 requires an employer to make appropriate provision for enabling first aid to be rendered to employees. If a lone worker sustains a minor injury, he or she may be able to use a first aid box or phone for help. However, a more serious injury may mean that the worker cannot help him or herself or use the telephone. Where more serious injuries are foreseeable then the absence of a colleague to administer first aid or organise help could be constructed as insufficient first aid cover.

Where an employee is working alone, away from their base e.g., while visiting a third party, and suffers an accident that is reportable under RIDDOR (Reporting of Injuries, Disease & Dangerous Occurrences Regulations), the employer of that employee must report it to the employers enforcing authority – not the third party.

Violence

The Health and Safety Executive defines violence at work as 'any incident in which a person is abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances of their work'; this includes verbal abuse and threats. Lone working does not always mean there is a high risk of violence, however it does make workers more vulnerable.



Examples of workplace violence risks include carrying cash or valuables, working with people affected by alcohol or drugs working in positions with authority over customers (e.g. security) or working at night, late evening or early morning. Workers should be trained to recognise situations where they are potentially exposed to risk and how to use conflict resolution or to remove themselves from the situation.

Employers are required to treat “an act of non-consensual physical violence done to a person at work” as a reportable accident under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995, if the injury criteria are met.

Employees who count cash or carry cash, or who can be seen in possession of valuables such as laptop computers, and other valuables may be at risk from robbery or attack, particularly women. Women may also face increased risks from particular forms of violence when working alone, such as sexual harassment and assault.

Large amounts of cash should only ever be handled in a secure room and security firm should be employed to collect and deliver cash from the premises.

Violent assaults on lone workers are often very traumatic. Even where no physical injury results, people can suffer severe psychological stress and fear, long after the incident.

Stress

Lone working can make people feel isolated, disconnected or abandoned, which can cause stress and affect mental health. Procedures should be in place to keep regular and direct contact to workers so that signs of stress can be easily recognised.

Procedure

The Site Manager must complete **ES12 Lone Working Risk Assessment** where any workers are deemed to be lone workers. This will identify specific tasks that involve lone working and control measure that need to be put in place.

Assessments of the risks of working alone will confirm whether the work can actually be done safely by one unaccompanied person. This will include the identification of hazards from, for example, means of access and/or egress, plant, machinery, good, substances, environment, and atmosphere, etc. The assessment will also prompt you to ask ‘What arrangements will ensure that an individual is not exposed to greater risks than employees who work together?’

Particular consideration must be given to: the remoteness or isolation of the workplace communication problems that exist or may occur the possibility of interference, such as violence or criminal activity from other persons the nature of injury or damage to health and anticipated “worse case” scenarios regarding the provision of emergency help/first aid.

Where significant risks are identified legal requirements exist, some or all of the work may need to be done under a ‘permit to work’ system. Copies of permits would normally be issued to everyone directly involved with the activity, e.g., the solitary worker, the closest supervisor and the relevant manager. Where time limits are a consideration, e.g., to control exposure to heat, fatigue or to ensure essential supplies such as breathing gases are not exhausted, the permit would state required starting and finishing times or maximum duration of the task.

A **Lone Workers Workplace Checklist (ES12a)** must be completed with each individual lone worker. The checklist allows you to identify any specific hazards or concerns relating to the individual lone worker and their role.

The risk assessment and all checklists must be reviewed at least every 3 years, or whenever there is any change in the activity or following an incident involving the activity.

Due to the potentially serious consequences that may arise, complex or extended lone working situations must always be referred to your HSE Manager for advice and guidance.