

## Lone Working Policy

<b>Policy information</b>	
<b>Organisation</b>	National Survivor User Network (NSUN)
<b>Scope of policy</b>	The policy applies to employees and those undertaking work on behalf of NSUN and funders who have a concern about NSUN. It applies to all activities.
<b>Policy operational date</b>	March 2017
<b>Policy prepared by</b>	Mark Wood, NSUN Treasurer Sarah Yiannoullou, NSUN Managing Director
<b>Date approved by Board of Trustees</b>	23 May 2017
<b>Policy review date</b>	May 2018

### 1. Introduction

The broad definition of lone working for this policy is any situation or location in which someone works without a colleague nearby; or when someone is working out of sight or earshot of another colleague. It is recognised that many people within NSUN by the nature of their role can be required to work alone or can find themselves in such circumstances. This document will lay down some basic principles around lone working and outline some procedures specific to how we work.

### 2. Statement

NSUN is committed to providing a safe working environment for all and we believe that lone workers should not be put at more risk than other employees. NSUN will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that staff who are required to work alone or unsupervised for significant periods of time are protected from risks to their health and safety such as violence, accident or sudden illness. This policy has been developed in support of the NSUN Health and Safety at Work Policy.

### 3. Purpose

The policy aims to ensure:

- The lone worker understands hazards and risks that they are exposed to.
- The lone worker knows what to do if something goes wrong.
- Someone knows the whereabouts of the lone worker, what they are doing and for how long and is able to make an immediate response in an emergency situation.

### 4. Principles

- We will ensure that staff are aware of this policy and understand the methods and timing of reporting incidents. All lone working situations will be subject to a risk assessment.

- We will take steps to ensure risks are removed where possible or put in place control measures.
- We will review risk assessments periodically or when there has been a significant change in working practice.
- We will involve staff when considering potential risks and measures to control them.
- We will inform partner organisations of any risks our staff identify while working in their buildings and make suggestions as to control measures.
- We will ensure that staff receive appropriate information, instruction, training, supervision and equipment and know what to do if something goes wrong.
- Any incidents including 'near misses' should be recorded using the incident reporting procedures and reported; they should be reviewed against the effectiveness of the policy and procedures.
- We will keep up to date contact details to ensure fast communications if needed in emergency situations.

## **5. Types of lone working**

Lone working takes place at NSUN when people:

- Travel alone as part of their work e.g. to meetings and events.
- Visit groups and individuals outside of NSUN premises.
- Work alone in the office.

## **6. Risk assessment**

Key to identifying and managing risk in any lone working situation is the risk assessment. A risk assessment is a careful examination of any potential hazard in our work that could cause harm to people and that enables us to decide what precautions we need to take to prevent that harm from occurring. A hazard is anything that may cause harm and the risk is the chance, high or low, that somebody could be harmed by this hazard along with an indication of how serious this harm could be.

Lone workers have the absolute right to decline an instruction if this is considered unsafe.

The Health and Safety Executive recommends a five step approach to risk assessment:

1. Identify the hazards.
2. Decide who might be harmed and how.
3. Evaluate the risks and decide on precautions.
4. Record your findings, communicate and implement them with everyone affected.
5. Review your risk assessment annually and update as and when any changes occur.

A risk assessment can be completed by the member of staff in the lone working situation and should be signed off by his/her manager. Many of the risks are well known and control measures already in place or easy to apply; also, many activities such as home working, retail shops, reception duties and events of a similar nature and the generic risk assessments (accessed from the intranet) should form the basis for the risk assessment, with any identified specific risks added in.

NSUN has a pro-forma risk assessment for all our activities and this should be used when assessing all lone working scenarios. Training in effective risk assessment will be provided ensuring this knowledge is shared with all members of the NSUN team.

The risk assessment should also take into consideration:

- The time of day
- The location of the meeting/visit
- Whether women are particularly at risk
- Any history and previous Risk Assessment
- Emergency procedures and effectiveness of communications systems.
- Whether personal protection equipment is required.
- The potential risk for violence and or aggression
- Access and exit points
- Purpose of meeting/visit
- Methods of working
- Duration of work (including travelling times)

## 7. Points for consideration

The procedures section of this document will address the issues relevant to the circumstances of each NSUN role; however there are some general points for consideration as to whether one person can adequately control the risks of a job:

- Is there a risk of harm including risk of harm to self?
- Is there a possibility of initial handling of a safeguarding incident?
- Is there a safe way in and out for one person?
- Are there any reasons why the individual might be more vulnerable than others and be particularly at risk if they work alone?
- Does the work involve lifting objects that are too large or heavy for one person?
- Is machinery involved in the work that one person can operate safely?
- Use your intuition and if a situation feels potentially unsafe, clarify why and act on this. This is known as a Dynamic Risk Assessment and is about considering risks that cannot necessarily be foreseen.

## 8. Reducing risk

There are some basic approaches that should reduce the risk posed by lone working:

- Office based staff should – when alone in the building – ensure that entrance doors are locked.
- Staff should leave details of their itinerary with a colleague at all times and complete the Shared Calendar providing location and contact details.
- All lone workers should have a management contact (**Managing Director mobile 07778 659 390 / NSUN Office 020 7820 8982**) who they will inform on commencing and finishing work and who can be contacting in case of incidents.

## 9. Lone working responsibilities

### 9.1 Staff

- Follow approved lone working procedures.
- Attend appropriate training identified for their particular role.
- Conduct an initial risk assessment for their activity and be aware of other potential risks as they arise.
- Alongside the generic risk assessment of each identified activity, it is the responsibility of each staff member lone working to consider the risks to individuals and share relevant information with their manager.
- Report any risk issues to their manager as soon as possible.

## **9.2 Managers**

- Ensure all lone working staff are able to carry out a risk assessment.
- Ensure risk assessments are carried out for all lone working situations.
- Ensure lone working staff are appropriately trained to work safely, understand their responsibilities under the risk management policy and to take appropriate action in the event of an adverse situation.
- Record accurate and timely documentation of any 'incidents' and submit accident/incident forms to the Team Leader/Office Manager as appropriate.

## **10. Policy review**

This policy will be reviewed annually and in line with any new legislation and good practice.