



Lone Working Policy

Bridges for Communities is committed to reducing the risks to all employees and volunteers who may be involved with lone working by:

- Identifying the risks associated with lone working ('risk assessment').
- Giving practical advice and clear guidance to managers, staff and volunteers on how to –avoid and manage risks associated with lone working.
- Developing the ability of staff and volunteers to anticipate risks and to manage and deal with them
- Encouraging proper reporting of incidents and near misses and ensuring that staff and volunteers do not avoid reporting them in the belief that they are not serious enough or that it may suggest failure on their part.

All individuals (employees and volunteers) share the responsibility for achieving these objectives. This document is intended for use as a reference guide and contains advice to help staff and volunteers work more safely.

This advice is not exhaustive, nor is it a substitute for safe systems of work and will be reviewed periodically by the trustees.

What is Lone Working?

Lone working describes any situation whereby someone is not working alongside or near to other staff or volunteers. Potentially this could include any employee or volunteer working with beneficiaries, partners or associates of Bridges for Communities.

Lone workers may be more vulnerable – for example to the threat of assault or abuse, or because they are unable to raise the alarm if they are in a fire or an accident. Therefore, the risks to lone workers are greater and more rigorous systems are needed to protect them.

Due to the nature of the work that Bridges for Communities does, there are likely to be frequent occasions when staff and volunteers will be working alone. Given some forethought and a few simple precautions, the risk of people putting themselves in a dangerous position can be reduced to a minimum.

Risk Assessment

Bridges for Communities has conducted a risk assessment for Lone Working which identified the most significant risks that staff and volunteers face, and the mitigating actions that they should take to minimise these risks. These mitigating actions are laid out in the Safe Working Methods Statement below.



Safe Working Methods Statement

Any employee or volunteer who is involved in lone working in the course of their role with Bridges for Communities is expected to do the following:

- Take every reasonable step to protect your own safety and that of others you are coming into contact with.
- Be familiar with the Lone Working risk assessments and comply with the Safe Working Methods Statement outlined below.
- Report any shortcomings in our systems of work to their Line Manager or to the Project Manager if they are a volunteer.

Lone Working at the office

Staff and volunteers are expected to:

- Keep the front door to the building locked until there is at least one other member of staff in the building. Only open the door if a person who rings the bell is known to them.
- Ensure that you know how to contact the Managing Director or other appropriate person, should you know or suspect that an intruder is present in the building. Do not confront the intruder, find a safe place and await the arrival of help.
- Ensure that any medical conditions which might be relevant to their working alone are fully discussed with their line manager and, if necessary, their own GP. Do not work alone if any such condition is assessed as putting them at increased risk.

Lone Working at home

Staff and volunteers are expected to notify their line manager that they are working at home that day

Lone Working in an external venue (e.g cafe, training venue etc)

Staff and volunteers are expected to notify their line manager where they are working.

Lone Working when visiting a beneficiary, partner or associate of BFC

- Staff must notify their line manager about who they are meeting, where and the approximate timings of the meeting. Volunteers must notify a trusted friend or family member of the same.
- If they are going in to somebody's home, they must notify the relevant person of the address they are visiting.
- Carry a mobile phone and ensure that it has sufficient battery and credit to make calls



- Consider whether there are particular risks relating to the location or activity they are undertaking (e.g. an unusually isolated house, adverse weather conditions for driving etc).
- Make an accurate note about any incidents which arose during the meeting, in accordance with the Safeguarding Policy.
- Make sure you have a clear line of escape from the property, in the event you feel threatened.
- Notify the relevant person when the visit is over.

Travelling by car

In the event that staff or volunteers need to transport a beneficiary or other person in their car they are expected to:

- Ensure the vehicle is in good order, has sufficient fuel and is appropriately insured
- Carry a mobile phone for emergency use (not to be used whilst driving)
- Ensure that passengers comply with UK laws about the use of seat belts and child car seats
- Park in a well-lit public place