



Langstane Housing Association

Lone Working Policy

Board of Management / Committee name	People Committee
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Version 1	13 December 2022	First issue

1. Introduction and Commitment

Our employees work in a variety of roles where lone working is a key aspect of the service delivery to our tenants and other customers. This process sets out how we approach the provision of a safe working environment and system of work for all employees who are seen to be Lone Workers, regardless of working hours or environment.

We believe the protection of our employees from violence, accidents, ill health and other risks when working in their role is of the utmost importance, especially when lone working. Suitable and sufficient control measures will be put in place to minimise these risks as far as is reasonably practicable. Whilst instances of such situations are rare, Langstane is committed to ensuring the health and safety of our employees at all times and this includes providing safe systems of work for our employees.

Langstane has chosen the Solo Protect Lone Working alarm system to support employees who have an element of lone working to their role.

Use of the lone working alarm system is mandatory for all lone working carried out outside an office environment and for some lone working within an office environment where dictated by the risk assessment for that activity.

2. Principles

The definition of Lone Working is:

where individuals are knowingly and foreseeably placed in circumstances in which they undertake work activities without direct or close supervision.

It is not where individuals experience transient situations in which they find themselves alone. Where employees are working from home, this will also be risk assessed in terms of any time where they are alone at home and a proportionate approach taken.

Employees working outside of an office environment are more susceptible to injury or falling ill without access to help. Lone working control measures are designed to safeguard those employees working alone in the community and tenant's homes in the course of their duties.

In practical terms, employees are considered to be lone working if they have neither visual nor audible communication with someone who can summon assistance in the event of an accident, illness or potential risk of harm.

The risk of lone working varies with the location, the type of work being performed and the potential for interaction with others.

The controls put in place will reflect the risks employees may face when working alone and are set out in the risk assessment for that activity. The risk assessment must be followed at all times.

This sets out:

- the lone working controls that are in place
- how employees must take responsibility for protecting their own safety
- that Line Managers are expected to identify and minimise risks associated with employees who are identified as lone workers, and provide all necessary equipment and practical support.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Line Managers are responsible for ensuring that:

- team specific lone working risk assessments are undertaken and:
 - reviewed regularly (at least every quarter)
 - kept up to date
 - shared with the relevant employees and
 - that their team understand the protocols in place, including any changes needed;
- lone working devices are issued to all relevant employees in their team and training is provided to ensure employees understand how to use the devices correctly, working with the People and Culture team to achieve this;
- the device is worn and used appropriately by these employees;
- they know how to use the lone working management portal, and the information is kept correct and up to date at all times (including the escalation process for emergencies);
- they review their team's device usage through the portal and discuss and rectify any identified non-conformance on a monthly basis.

Solo Protect Role

The lone working devices will be connected to an Alarm Receiving Centre which is manned 24/7. Use of the Solo Protect system enables:

- The user to activate an alarm discreetly which notifies the Alarm Centre;
- The Alarm Centre, once the alarm has been triggered, to remotely assess the situation and summon assistance based on what they hear via the device;
- An escalation protocol to be followed with the named Langstane Manager if further clarification on the situation is needed (the alarm must not be cancelled until it can be determined that the employee is safe);
- The 'man down' feature to be activated if it detects no movement for a specific period of time;
- Support for users with specific instructions on how to use the device and what to expect from the Alarm Centre.

Employees who are Lone Working are responsible for:

- their own safety whilst working alone; for making dynamic assessments of risk and reacting accordingly; not knowingly placing themselves in situations which expose them to additional risk by working alone

- making themselves aware of the operational control measures that have been identified in the risk assessment/s for their role;
- informing their Line Manager or People and Culture Manager if they have any concerns over the effectiveness and efficiency of the agreed measures and also if there are any reasons why they would not be able to work alone or continue to work alone in safety (e.g. a change in medical condition);
- ensuring their mobile phone is charged, fully working and accessible at all times;
- reporting any work-related incidents of violence, assault or abuse to their Line Manager as set out in the Acceptable Actions Policy;
- knowing how to properly use the device and undertake the training provided;
- ensuring their lone working device is fully charged and the device is worn and used correctly when working alone;
- making regular status checks on the device for battery, signal and GPS location;
- leaving alerts on arrival at their location;
- reporting any faults with the device immediately to the People and Culture Assistant.

When lone working, employees shall:

- Wear the lone worker device, and perform a dynamic assessment of the risks and act accordingly including activating an alert on the device where necessary;
- Where the Housing Management System identifies a history of challenging behaviour, or where a “two to attend” marker exists, employees shall take the additional steps of attending the appointment with a colleague and both employees will wear their lone working device as set out above.

4. Record Keeping

Records of any incidents involving abuse or violence at work will be handled as set out in the Acceptable Actions policy and, where relevant, our Accident Reporting process.

Records of alarm activations will be kept on the database of the lone working management portal. Langstane may access these records where a review of a serious incident is required and to ensure opportunities for improvement are acted upon.

5. Training and Communications

As well as the training for users, Line Managers will similarly receive training on using the portal and monitoring the performance measures set out above. This is all available within the Solo Protect portal.

Awareness of the requirements of the process the arrangements in place for each team will be overseen by the relevant departmental Director in conjunction with the People and Culture Manager.

6. Monitoring and review

The People and Culture Manager holds responsibility for monitoring and updating this policy as necessary. This will be undertaken at least every 3 years.