**1. Introduction**

Lone volunteering is when a volunteer carries out volunteering responsibilities on behalf of an organisation on their own and away from other volunteers or staff. This includes whether it happens on an occasional or regular basis.

Lone volunteering is not in itself unsafe, but it has the potential to increase risks. So, if you or someone in your team is lone volunteering you should follow this guidance.

**2. Useful links**

[HSE - Lone workers: how you should protect them](https://www.hse.gov.uk/lone-working/employer/index.htm)

[Peoplesafe - What is Lone Working?](https://peoplesafe.co.uk/blogs/lone-working-everything-an-employer-needs-to-know/)

**3. Actions**

* Review how and why your volunteers might lone work
* Review your systems and processes on keeping volunteers safe
* If required, action Appendix 1 and update staff/volunteers and relevant stakeholders

**4. Additional notes:**

For additional support, please contact:   
Hull CVS at [enquiries@hull-cvs.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@hull-cvs.co.uk) for Hull based organisations

HEY Smile at [volunteering@heysmilefoundation.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@heysmilefoundation.org.ukF) for East Riding based organisations

**5. Disclaimer:**

Whilst we have done our best to source appropriate links and best practice templates to support your organisation, please be aware that due to regulatory changes, these templates may not always be the best example.

We therefore strongly suggest thoroughly reading and amending templates as necessary and conducting periodic reviews of all policies within your organisation to ensure they still meet national guidelines and regulations.

**6. Appendix 1**

**Volunteer Personal Safety and Lone Working Policy Template**

Introduction

**[Insert organisation name]** takes seriously its responsibilities to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all volunteers who work alone either from home or out in the community without close or direct support or supervision.

We are committed to reducing the risks to volunteers and the purpose of this policy is to ensure that there are adequate systems in place to reduce the risks of lone working as far as is reasonably possible and practicable.

This policy applies to all volunteers who are undertaking activities on behalf of **[insert organisation name]**. The purpose is to help you think about and improve your personal safety, be aware of risks and to take steps to reduce and adapt strategies to keep you safe.

Definition

A lone worker is anyone who works away from other volunteers or paid workers without direct support or supervision. This may include volunteers undertaking roles such as:

* befriender
* fundraiser
* community worker
* events assistant

Responsibilities

Volunteers and **[insert organisation name]** share responsibility for health and safety matters.

**[Insert organisation name]** is responsible for:

* assessing the potential risks volunteers may face in their role and reduce these as much as is practically possible
* implementing procedures that help ensure health, safety and wellbeing of volunteers

It is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees to:

* regularly monitor and review policy and procedures

It is the responsibility of the Chief Executive to:

* ensure appropriate policies and procedures are in place and implemented to ensure the health and safety of volunteers

The project manager or volunteer’s supervisor is responsible for:

* making risk assessments
* maintaining contact with volunteers working alone either internally or externally
* ensuring systems are in place to identify volunteers who do not report back or return at the expected time
* raising an appropriate level of alarm if volunteer cannot be contacted or does not return within 2 hours of expected contact or return
* contacting the police if volunteer cannot be located
* ensuring all volunteers are aware of this policy and providing appropriate levels of training and guidance on lone working

Volunteers are expected to:

* take reasonable care of their own safety and that of others
* comply with any personal safety procedures detailed by **[insert organisation name]**
* raise any concerns with their supervisor immediately
* report any accidents, incidents, injuries or ‘near misses’
* report any safety practices that need to be improved or risks not otherwise identified

Reasonable precautions might include:

* checking directions for destination
* ensuring a vehicle is roadworthy and has breakdown cover
* ensuring someone knows where they are going and when they are expected home
* avoiding poorly lit or deserted areas
* taking care when leaving or entering empty buildings especially at night
* ensuring that equipment such as laptops or mobile phones are carried discreetly

Risk Assessment

Risk assessments will be carried out for all activities undertaken by volunteers and recommendations to eliminate or reduce any identified risk will be made and implemented wherever possible. Written records of assessments will be maintained and regularly reviewed.

Factors that will be considered as appropriate to the circumstances are:

* The environment – location, security, access
* The context – nature of the task, any special circumstances
* The individual’s concerns – indicators of potential or actual risk
* History – any previous incidents in similar situations

Any special circumstances

Where there is any reasonable doubt about the safety of a lone worker, consideration will be given to sending 2 volunteers or making other arrangements to undertake the task