

SOUTHEND AND LEIGH CIRCUIT SAFEGUARDING POLICY

Lone Worker and Volunteer Policy

This policy will work in conjunction with each church's risk assessment. Form and guidance can be found on the Methodist Church Website

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the safety and well-being of all staff and volunteers while carrying out activities as Lone Workers. Lone Workers are individuals who work alone without direct supervision. It is the responsibility of all Lone Workers to follow the guidelines below to mitigate risks and stay safe during work activities.

Scope

This policy applies to all staff and volunteers engaged in activities as Lone Workers, regardless of the location or type of work.

Responsibilities

While working alone, all staff and volunteers have a duty of care to themselves and others. The key responsibility lies with the individual to maintain awareness of potential hazards and take appropriate actions to reduce the risk of harm.

Lone Worker Safety Guidelines

1. **Risk Assessment**

Before beginning any Lone Working activity, a risk assessment must be conducted. Identify potential risks and put in place measures to mitigate them. This includes considering the environment, tasks, and any hazards that may be present.

2. **Communication**

It is essential to have a reliable means of communication. Ensure that you are able to contact someone in case of an emergency or if assistance is needed. Inform a colleague or supervisor of your whereabouts and estimated time of return before starting your work. Regular check-ins are recommended, particularly for high-risk activities.

3. **Emergency Procedures**

Familiarise yourself with emergency procedures specific to your work environment. Always have access to emergency contact numbers, and know the location of the nearest hospital or emergency services.

4. **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

Ensure that you wear any necessary PPE relevant to your tasks. This could include safety gear such as gloves, helmets, high-visibility clothing, or any other protective equipment necessary for your safety.

5. **Work Environment**

Assess the safety of your working environment. Ensure that it is secure, well-lit, and free from hazards such as uneven surfaces or unstable equipment. If you encounter a dangerous environment, report it immediately, and avoid proceeding until it is rectified.

6. **Training**

Lone Workers must undergo proper training to handle risks associated with working alone. This includes first aid training, emergency procedures, and task-specific safety training.

7. **Health & Well-being**

It is your responsibility to ensure you are fit to work alone. If you are unwell, tired, or not in a suitable state to work, you should inform a colleague and refrain from Lone Working until you are fit to do so.

8. **Incident Reporting**

Any accidents, near misses, or unsafe situations must be reported immediately to a supervisor or designated safety officer. Keeping an accurate record of any incidents ensures that necessary precautions can be taken in the future.

9. **Situational Awareness**

Be aware of your surroundings at all times. If you encounter an unsafe situation, remove yourself from the area and seek assistance immediately.

10. **Security Measures**

For Lone Workers operating in areas where security may be a concern, ensure you take necessary precautions such as locked doors, alarms, or additional security support.

Review and Monitoring

Regular reviews of Lone Worker activities, risk assessments, and safety measures will be conducted to ensure that this policy remains effective. Staff and volunteers are encouraged to raise any concerns or suggestions regarding Lone Worker safety with either the people responsible for Health and Safety/Safeguarding Lead or Minister in Charge.

Policy and Procedure Approved at the Belfairs Methodist Church - Church Council Meeting

Signed by..... Rev Steve Mayo

Date..... 11th October 2025