

Title of Document	Lone Working Policy
Name of Department	Quality

What type of document is this?	Policy	This sets out instructions for how a particular procedure in Helping Hands is to be routinely carried out	
Which Helping Hands POL/SOP/W.I does this document relate to?	N/A	Reference number of POL/SOP/W.I	N/A

Which Operational Priority/Priorities does this document link to?	Governance Framework	Superior Client Care	People, Performance & Culture	

Custodian of document	H&S Responsible Person	Committee/Group responsible for this document	Quality & Governance Committee
Approval date and committee chairperson signature	21.05.24	When is its next scheduled review?	21.05.27

Who does it apply to?	All Helping Hands staff					
	Does it apply to bank workers?	Yes	Does it apply to agency staff?	NA	Does it apply to third party contractors?	Yes

Purpose of the Policy	To outline how Helping Hands aims to reduce harm which can occur as a result the risks associated of lone working. This policy is applicable to all staff within the business and should be referenced when developing safe ways of working.
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ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Role	Responsibility
H&S Responsible Person	Company Responsible Person (RP) and to ensure that the policy remains aligned to regulation and legislation. To communicate change in regulation as necessary and give Health & Safety support across the estate
All Directors/Managers	To ensure that the policy is embedded within the teams and adhered too. To manage day to day Health & Safety provision for the company and ensure that all staff adhere to policy. To follow the processes of monitoring lone work within their teams.
All Staff	To adhere to this policy

1. Introduction

- 1.0 Lone Working is sometimes necessary or even preferred depending on the task being undertaken. In all circumstances it is the responsibility of Helping Hands to provide information, instruction, supervision, training, to ensure the safety of lone workers so far as is reasonably practicable, as described in the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974.
- 1.1 The aim of this policy is to outline Helping Hands approach to reducing the risk of harm to all staff that work alone. A lone worker is defined as someone who is identified as working by themselves without direct supervision.
- 1.2 It is our intention that all staff receive effective statutory basic instruction/training on lone working precautions were identified through Risk Assessment. The training will include understanding the effects of lone working, emergency situations, raising the alarm and incident procedures.
- 1.3 This policy intention is to meet as far as reasonably practicable, the requirements of the following legislation and guidance:
- 1.1.1 HSE Industry Guidance 73 – Protecting Lone Workers
 - 1.1.2 The Health and Safety at work Act 1974 Policy
 - 1.1.3 Management of Health & Safety at work Regulations 1999
 - 1.1.4 Provision and use of work Equipment Regulations 1998
 - 1.1.5 Control of substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1999 (COSHH)
 - 1.1.6 Reporting of Injuries, Diseases Occurrences Regulation 1995 (RIDDOR)

2. Scope

- 1.1 This Policy is applicable to all Helping Hands employees, including (not exclusively) Fixed Site Workers such as home / hybrid workers, branch staff and Mobile Workers such as field-based support staff, operations managers, carers and branch staff where they are identified at higher risk of harm due to Lone Working.
- 1.2 The policy is to alert line managers and lone workers to the possible risks presented by lone working, and outline Helping Hands approach to reducing risk of harm so far as is reasonably practicable.

3. Risk Assessment

3.1 Risk Assessment will be conducted by the organisation at both generic high level activity assessment, and on a bespoke level considering nuance in **activity, location** and **employee**. The purpose of risk assessment is to identify and evaluate hazards and reduce the risk of harm so far as is reasonably practicable.

When assessing the level of risk both likelihood and severity should be considered and reflected appropriately in the action taken to reduce the risk of harm so far as is reasonably practicable.

3.2 Risk Assessment is completed through the following processes by competent team members.

- 3.2.1 General Activity Risk Assessment – All standard activities are risk assessed at a high level, to dictate broad-stroke responses and mitigation actions.
- 3.2.2 Personal Lone Worker Risk Assessment – A Personal Lone Worker Risk Assessment is completed with all new starters to highlight individual capabilities and discuss mitigation in relation to role.
- 3.2.3 Environmental Risk Assessment – Part of the customers support plan includes an Environmental Risk Assessment. All activities should be risk assessed to clarify risk to both carer and customer, and appropriate levels of staffing, supervision and training should be assigned.

3.3 Identifying and Hazards and Assessing Risk

3.3.1 In relation to Lone Working, there are factors which should be given credence when considered in identifying hazards in relation to **Location**, such as

- Risk of violence & aggression
- Safe access & egress for one person
- Methods of contact, phone signal and availability of supervision or support
- Emergency response time & local contacts
- Security of the premises
- Disclosure of location
- Availability of first aid
- Availability of required equipment
- Adverse weather conditions

3.3.2 When assessing the level of risk both likelihood and severity should be considered and reflected appropriately in the action taken to reduce the risk of harm so far as is reasonably practicable in relation to the **activity**.

- Risk of injury
- Manual handling loads
- Stability of access equipment – ladders, hoist, lifts and wheelchairs (including personal equipment)
- Risks associated with equipment being used
- Requirement to handle essential controls for safe running of equipment.
- Specialist training required.
- Unpredictable or rare situations
- Availability of required equipment

3.3.3 In relation to Lone Working, there are factors which should be given credence when considered in identifying hazards in relation to the **Employee**, such as

- Mental Health & Wellbeing
- Physical capabilities
- Medical conditions or impairments
- Competence in the activity
- Required training
- Familiarity with the location
- Gender related risk
- Language capabilities
- Personal skills
- Individuals' current health, fatigue & wellbeing

4. Limitations

4.1 An effective control measure in lone-working risk mitigation is limitations.

Limitations should be applied to process and communicated through Training, Work Instructions and Standard Operating Procedures. The following types of limitation will be utilised in Helping Hands operations to reduce risk of harm in relation to Lone Working.

4.1.1 Location

- Locations should be assessed in terms of risk of violence, security, and minimum staff levels set as part of the risk assessment.
- Where working alone, minimum levels of contact will be stipulated.
- Adverse weather conditions should be considered in line with RAG rating and business continuity planning, prioritising safety of team members.

4.1.2 Activity

- Activities are clarified by quantity of staff required to complete safely
- Activities are clarified by level of supervision required to complete safely
- Activities are clarified by training required to undertake safely and without supervision

4.1.3 Employee

- Always adhering to HH equality and diversity policy, limitations may be set with the employee where adjustments are not reasonably practicable, dependant on role and responsibilities.
- Recruitment for roles involving lone working should be developed to include appropriate skills and attributes.
- Minimum levels of contact should be agreed with the employee where not already dictated by location.

5. Training

5.1 It is Helping Hands responsibility to provide instruction and training as is necessary to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety at work of our employees.

5.2 Training is delivered through either digital platform, webinar, or in-person training dependant on activity. The method of training should be appropriate to the complexity and risk involved in the activities being trained.

5.3 Regarding risks of lone working specifically, Helping Hands will ensure adequate training is provided where risks are identified, such as (but not limited to)

5.3.1 Personal Safety in the field

5.3.2 Managing violence –

- Identifying warning signs of risk behaviour (specialist focus on dementia)
- Handling aggressive behaviour & conflict resolution techniques
- Relevant interpersonal skills
- Safe ways of working and control measures
- Working with pets

5.3.3 Working with Display Screen Equipment

5.3.4 Acknowledging personal wellbeing

5.3.5 Lone working monitoring processes

5.3.6 Manual Handling

6. Management

6.1 It is Helping Hands responsibility to provide adequate supervision so far as is necessary to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety at work of our employees.

6.2 Line Managers are responsible for ensuring safe ways of working are followed and ensuring team members are aware of support available, and the processes to follow in an emergency.

6.3 Line Managers are responsible for making and realising suitable arrangements for communication with lone workers at appropriate intervals, as dictated by Standard Operating Procedures and risk assessments.

6.4 Monitoring should be conducted to ascertain safety and whereabouts, as well as to maintain contact and provide a forum for discussion.

6.5 This may include;

- 6.5.1 Clocking in / clocking out systems
- 6.5.2 Scheduled 1:1 meetings, observations, supervisions.
- 6.5.3 Regular checking-in calls

7. Statements & Clarifications

7.1 Homeworkers –

- 7.1.1 Helping Hands employees can request standard equipment for home working purposes to ensure a safe and sufficient working environment, requests will not be unreasonably withheld.
- 7.1.2 Helping Hands will provide office space where required, and homeworking is a choice (where permitted). It is reasonably assumed that employees' homes are suitable for habitation and support is limited to equipment and wellbeing. Where this is not the case employees should discuss with line managers.
- 7.1.3 Homeworkers should not disclose personal information such as address or phone number, deliveries should be made to local Helping Hands offices where required.

7.2 Lone Working in Branch –

- 7.2.1 Helping Hands branches should be equipped with thumb turn / latch locks on the front door to enable teams to restrict access when working in limited numbers or alone as appropriate. Key locks are restrictive in the event of a fire, and a security risk being removable.
- 7.2.2 Helping Hands branches should be equipped with well light routes of exit for locking up / entry.
- 7.2.3 Employees working alone in branch should maintain contact through the day with a line manager or neighbouring branch. It is the Area Care Managers responsibility to establish such routines.

7.3 Lone Working in the Field –

- 7.3.1 Customer not home – Should the employee find the customer is not present / available they should inform the office who can initiate the “No Response”, “Access to Property” or “Care Refusal” policy.
- 7.3.2 Support Plans – Support plans should contain useful information for the lone worker, referring to well-lit parking, hazardous areas / items, location of phone and exits.
- 7.3.3 Monitoring whereabouts –
 - Employees should make use of signing in and out in building registers where available.
 - Carers should check in and out of customer visits using available technology.

- Branch Team should make colleagues aware of planned excursions, making contact after each visit to confirm their safety. Where possible travel in pairs.

TRAINING

Is training required?	Yes
Details of training	<p>Learning Module System – “Health and Safety – Lone Working” (or modern equivalent) should be completed by all line managers supporting lone workers.</p> <p>Learning Module System – “Risk Assessor Training” should be completed by all team members completing risk assessments. Care Certificate Standards 1 - Understand your role – ensures that workers know what their role involves and ways of working.</p> <p>Care Certificate Standards 3 - Duty of care – ensures that workers know how to deal with incidents and difficult situations.</p> <p>Care Certificate Standards 13 - Health and safety – ensures the workers know their own responsibilities relating to health and safety including around risk assessment, moving and handling and managing stress.</p> <p>New Starter Orientation should include individual Lone Worker risk assessment completion and familiarisation with Lone Working processes and risk mitigation.</p> <p>Learning Module System - Display Screen Equipment should be completed by all desk workers.</p> <p>Site Inductions – All office staff should receive inductions explaining evacuation procedures, first aid provision, security arrangements and introduction to safety equipment.</p> <p>Face to face training such as; Prepare to Assess training and RAD day discusses Risk Assessment, Health & Safety in the Workplace.</p>

COMPLIANCE

How is compliance with the POL going to be monitored	<p>Compliance with the policy will be conducted through Quality Assurance audits and employee wellbeing surveys.</p> <p>The policy should be reviewed in the event of;</p> <p>Significant changes in the workplace, changes in legislation, incident occurs that requires improvement in practice.</p>
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EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND PROCEDURAL INFORMATION

	Yes / No	Comments
Does the document have a positive or negative impact on one group of people over another on the basis of their:		
• age?	N/A	
• disability?	YES	Positive with regards to addressing PEEP requirements Negative with regards to possible limitation of tasks
• gender reassignment?	N/A	
• pregnancy and maternity (which includes breastfeeding)?	YES	Positive with regards to pregnancy related assessment Negative with regards to possible limitation of tasks
• race (including nationality, ethnic or national origins or colour)?	N/A	
• marriage or civil partnership?	N/A	
• religion or belief?	N/A	
• sex?	N/A	
• sexual orientation?	N/A	
If you have identified any potential impact (including any positive impact which may result in more favourable treatment for one particular group of people over another), are any exceptions valid, legal and/or justifiable?	N/A	
If the impact on one of the above groups is likely to be negative:		
• Can the impact be avoided?	YES	Correct controls implemented
• What alternatives are there to achieving the document's aim without the impact?	N/A	
• Can the impact be reduced by taking different action?	YES	Without controls impact would increase
• Is there an impact on staff, client or someone else's privacy?	NO	<i>If yes, privacy impact assessment required</i>

What was the previous version number of this document?	Version 01	
Changes since previous version	Full restructure of content	
Author of the document	Compliance Co-ordinator for Health & Safety	
Who was involved in developing/reviewing /amending the POL?	HSQE Business Partner Quality Director	
How confidential is this document?	Public	Can be shared freely within and outside of Helping Hands
References	Health & Safety at Work Act (HASWA 1974) Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulation (COSHH) 2002 Display Screen Equipment Regulations 1992 revised 2002 Fire (Fire Safety) Order 2005 Risk Assessments – Management of Health & Safety at Work 1999 Regulation 3	
Associated Documents	HHH-POL-029 Home Working Policy HHH-POL-09 Fire Policy HHH-POL-08 Health & Safety Policy	

Controlled Document