



# Lone Working Policy, Procedure and Guidance

Charity Number: 1156481

## 1. Introduction

Sherborne Food Bank 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 Sherborne Food Bank, and the purpose of this policy to help all volunteers to think about and improve their personal safety, be aware of risks and to take steps to reduce and adapt strategies to keep them safe.

## 2. Definition

A lone worker is anyone who works alone from other Food Bank volunteers in either the depot, at home, purchasing or collecting supplies, or making food parcel deliveries.

## 3. Responsibilities

Volunteers and the Trustees of Sherborne Food Bank share responsibility for health and safety matters.

The Trustees and Depot Manager are 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
- regularly monitoring and reviewing policy and procedures
- 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

All Volunteers are expected to:

- take reasonable care of their own safety and that of others
- comply with any personal safety procedures detailed by the Trustees of Sherborne Food Bank
- raise any concerns with the Trustees or Team Leader 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

#### 4. **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.

#### 5. **Guidance on Lone Working**

This guidance applies to volunteers whose roles require them to work alone without direct support or supervision. Depending on the actual volunteering role, only some of this guidance will be applicable. Volunteer Team Leaders supervisors will ensure that volunteers are aware of what applies to them.

#### 6. **Working alone in the depot**

If working in the depot volunteers should:

- Take reasonable precautions to ensure their own personal safety
- Ensure that another responsible adult knows when they will be there
- Ensure they have an appropriate means of communication
- Ensure that the external door is kept closed/locked

#### 7. **Working alone from Home**

If working from home volunteers should:

- Take reasonable precautions to ensure that their personal addresses and telephone numbers remain confidential.
- All numbers including ex-directory and mobile numbers can show up on caller display and retrieved on 1471. To avoid access to landline numbers, dial 141 before dialling the number. To avoid mobile numbers being available please check the mobile phone's instruction manual
- Remain in regular contact with your Team Leader

#### 8. **Collecting supplies or making deliveries**

All relevant volunteers should:

- Ensure their Team Leader knows where they plan to go and approximate times involved
- Ensure they have an appropriate means of communication
- If taking a mobile phone, check it is fully charged and (for pay-as-you-go), has sufficient credit; leave it switched on; do not use it whilst driving
- Be able to produce relevant identification of being connected to the Food Bank
- Think about where they will be going and consider whether there are particular risks relating to that location or activity (e.g. an unusually isolated location, adverse weather conditions for driving).
- Contact their Team Leader to advise of any delays or changes to the schedule
- Make contact by telephone at specified times, if previously agreed to do this
- Inform their Team Leader about any incidents which arose during the trip.

- Ensure that the vehicle is in good order and that relevant insurance is in place
- Keep valuables and personal possessions out of sight
- Park in well-lit and public areas, if possible
- If subjected to road rage, it is important that nothing is done to escalate it further
- Be vigilant of dogs at all times

#### 9. **Aggression or violence**

This includes aggressive or inappropriate physical contact which may or may not result in pain and/or injury or offence and other non-physical abuse including verbal, racial or sexual abuse, threatening behaviour, gesturing, swearing, shouting, insults, innuendo, intimidating behaviour causing fear or emotional upset.

Volunteers must:

- Protect themselves before protecting the property of Sherborne Food Bank
- Contact their Team Leader immediately after an incident and advise them of what has occurred
- Report the incident to the Police
- If they find themselves in danger and unable to speak freely, they should emphasise to the antagonist that they are expected to call in to their Team Leader at a pre-determined time, and that if they don't, the alarm will be raised.

Trustees of Sherborne Food Bank  
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