



## **IN FOCUS EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT CiC**

### **LONE AND MOBILE WORKING POLICY**

**Community Interest Company Limited by Guarantee: 13044034**

#### **IN CASE OF EMERGENCY CONTACT:**

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<b>FINAL – 01/12/2021</b>	
<b>Subject: Lone and Mobile worker policy</b>	<b>Issue Number: 1</b>
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Distribution: All employees.	
Issued by: Xavier Fiddes: Company Director 'Head of Operations'	Issue date: December 2021
This policy sets out In Focus's approach to lone and mobile workers' safety. If you have any comments, suggestions or amendments please put these in writing to the person issuing this policy.	

## **Policy Statement**

Where tasks or working practices require team members to work alone, both the individual and the Company Directors have a duty to assess and reduce any risks involved.

This Policy should be read alongside In Focus Education & Development's (*In Focus*) Health & Safety Policy and its Safeguarding Policy & Procedures.

## **Purpose**

This policy alerts team members to the risks presented by lone working, to identify the responsibilities of each person and to describe procedures that minimise risks. It provides a framework for ensuring employee welfare wherever they are working.

## **Definitions**

Lone working refers to situations where team members are working and physically isolated from colleagues or without access to immediate assistance including First Aid provision. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) defines lone workers as "those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision".

Mobile working refers to situations where team members are working during travel and journey times such as on a train. It also involves moving between meetings at locations away from your usual base.

Home working refers to any work that takes place in a domestic environment either occasionally or routinely.

## **Scope**

This policy applies to all team members (including subcontractors) who may be working alone, at any time, in any of the situations described in the context listed below.

Team members under 18, interns, trainees and apprentices are not required or permitted to work alone at any time.

## **Driving for business**

Team members are not permitted to use hand-held mobile phones, tablets or other electronic devices for any reason whilst driving or stationary when the engine is switched on. This is illegal and breach of this law will result in disciplinary action for Gross Misconduct. In Focus does not require Team members to use computer or communication devices during travel and so does not provide hands-free devices.

Team members that routinely drive for business reasons should ensure:

- business use is covered on your personal vehicle insurance
- your vehicle is kept legally compliant in a reliable and safe condition with a valid MOT, road tax and appropriate insurance – you may be asked to produce this documentation for inspection

Trainees, interns, and apprentices are not required or permitted to drive for business reasons.

## **Context**

Lone and mobile working may occur because team members are:

- working outside of office hours due to flexible working patterns
- working from other non-office locations
- working from home due to the nature of their work
- working from home due to their personal circumstances and preferences
- working during journeys e.g. to meetings

In Focus has a commitment to supporting team members in establishing and maintaining safe working practices this includes:

- recognising and reducing risk
- providing appropriate support for Team members
- providing appropriate training for Team members
- providing mobile phones or reimbursing the cost of phone calls for Team members whose role requires lone working on a regular basis

### **Lone working in the In Focus office**

The In Focus office (Suite 2.9a, Freedom Works – Fairways House, Southampton SO140QB) has telephone access (02380 225 683 ~ *phone is in the main office near the WiFi Router*), a first aid kit and fire extinguishers. Individuals working from these offices are briefed on evacuation procedures.

Each of the main office spaces are monitored by 24h CCTV that capture sound and vision.

### **Lone working guidance**

Lone working can have benefits for some Team members as it can provide a quiet, focused opportunity to complete tasks including planning and reflective work.

Lone and mobile working practices are also useful tools for Team members with agreed flexible working hours and patterns. It can support effective time management and give time for tasks to be prioritised however it is only permissible for low-risk activities – this includes most of the work In Focus carries out but does not include manual handling or working at height.

For some Team members mobile working can be a cause of work-related stress usually when the amount of travel seems excessive, where there is a perceived expectation to be always working during business journeys, or because of frustrations caused by technology not working properly or quickly enough. For others lone working can be an experience that results in feelings of isolation and detachment, and this can result in stress.

### **Guidelines for safe lone working**

1. All lone workers must have a working, charged mobile phone on their person
2. Team members are responsible for updating their own calendars to indicate their working location if this is different to their usual work base. This should include journey times and methods of travel when travelling for business.
3. External doors should be kept secured when working alone in office spaces. Any visitors or suppliers that enter the office space should show a valid ID cards and sign-in, in the correct way.

4. If there is any indication that any office space or equipment within it is unsafe or could compromise personal safety, team members should leave the office for a safe location and inform a Company Director.
5. When the office alarm system is turned on/off a notification will be sent to Xavier Fiddes. He also has live access to all CCTV devices in the office, that are on 24hours a day. These notifications and monitoring ensure that someone knows where you are should you not leave the office at the planned time due to ill health, an accident or incident.
6. Team members with a temporary or long-term health condition or disability that may result in additional risks when lone working should speak to a Company Director to arrange a risk assessment. This will identify if any additional measures need to be put in place. In some circumstances, restrictions to lone working may be appropriate especially where it is not required for the job role and other adjustments will be discussed and considered instead.

Team members under 18, interns, trainees and apprentices are not required or permitted to work alone. Additionally, they may not be key holders.

### **Tips for Lone Working**

- take regular breaks away from a computer and move around
- try to keep to regular office hours
- check you have mobile phone signal and that the Company Directors knows how to get hold of you if it is urgent
- make sure your calendar is up to date, so the team knows where you are working. This must include the address of the location and a contact telephone number unless you are working from home – if you don't want to be disturbed for a period of time then add "no calls please" with a time frame, to the calendar entry
- arrange any external meetings in a public place
- report any incident or concerns you might have no matter how minor they seem
- if you are unwell and working from home or travelling for work you should still inform a Company Director.
- consider your working environment at home or whilst traveling in the same way you would if you were in the office and take steps to ensure risks are minimised
- ensure you programme emergency contact information into your mobile phone e.g. transport police 0800 40 50 40 or text 61016
- carry computer equipment separately to personal items such as mobile phones, money, and keys

### **Tips for Home Working**

- Routine – aim to start and finish at similar times every day and schedule breaks
- Separation - try and keep a separate working space from your living space. If you don't have a separate room or area, clear everything away and put all work-related things in a cupboard / out of sight when you finish each day

- Open - all the windows and let fresh air blow through your working space on dry days for 10 minutes either first thing in the morning or just after lunch. Keep moving if you feel cold
- Increase - the font size or zoom setting for documents / as the default in word/excel/outlook
- Practice 20:20:20 - every twenty minutes look at something 20 feet away for 20 second. This will help maintain your eye health
- Stop, stand, move - it's easy to keep going when busy. Make time for breaks and some time in fresh air and sunshine
- Build – wellbeing activities into every day even if this is just for 15 minutes
- Talk – to those around you in your household about your work needs before they become frustration e.g. internet use, scheduled meetings, quiet time
- Talk – to colleagues, customers and participants by using the chat, call or video functions in Teams rather than lengthy email chains
- Update – your calendars and your line manager if you working patterns change e.g. due to health or caring responsibilities

**Do not undertake:**

- any tasks that require 2 or more people
- work late into the evening
- meetings in private homes or in isolated locations
- mobile phone conversations in public places or at home which could be overheard that may reveal sensitive personal information about a partner, colleague or young person or commercially sensitive information

**Under no circumstances should individuals put themselves as risk. If a situation arises that you are unfamiliar with or in which you feel unsafe, you should immediately move to a safe public location and seek advice and further guidance.**

**Working with young people** (at external settings or in the In Focus Office)

1. Specific risk assessments should be undertaken for working in host organisations where young people or vulnerable groups are present.
2. Team members should familiarise themselves with the risk assessment and evacuation procedures for the programme venue they are visiting.
3. Team members should arrange meetings in a public space or in the host organisation and follow the good practice guidance in In Focus's Safeguarding Policy & Procedures.
4. Prior to all meetings, team members should ensure their mobile phone is charged and in good working order. They should also be aware of alternative transport options and routes.

5. On arrival at meetings in host organisations, team members should ensure they sign in and sign out again on departure.
6. Follow the safeguarding protocols for remote technology when working 1:1 with learners or during group training
7. Do not leave at the same time as young people, make sure they have left the building before you leave.

### **Unforeseen circumstances**

Where lone working occurs due to unforeseen circumstances, the individual should inform their line manager who will be responsible for assessing whether that individual should continue working or whether alternative arrangements should be made.

Should any incident or near miss occur whilst Team members are lone or mobile working, they should report it to a Company Director as soon as is practical and within 24 hours. An incident report form should be completed, and further action taken as required. Following review, a revised risk assessment may result in revised procedures and guidance put in place.

### **Dynamic Risk Assessments**

A dynamic risk assessment is the continuous process of identifying hazards and the risk of them causing harm and taking steps to eliminate or reduce them in the rapidly changing circumstances of an incident. All Team members lone or mobile working should be able to carry out a dynamic risk assessment:

- identify yourself with the emergency exit and evacuation route in any new venue you visit
- monitor local conditions including staying alert to weather advice (MET office), transport network disruptions and local news
- be alert to warning signs that a situation may escalate
- try to remain calm and focused during an incident to make rational judgements
- carry out a quick risk assessment; if individuals feel there is a risk of harm to themselves, they should leave immediately. Ask yourself:
  - are there physical hazards in front of me, behind me, above me or below me?
  - are there other environmental risks such as low lighting levels, confined spaces, extreme weather conditions, smoke, or fumes?
  - is anyone around me behaving in a threatening or agitated manner, showing signs of aggression, or carrying anything that could be used as a weapon?
  - where is my nearest exit and how do I get there safely and quickly?
  - is there an alternative exit I could also use?

### **Agreement Checklist**

- I understand and fully accept my responsibilities when working alone or mobile for In Focus Education and Development CiC.

I understand In Focus Education and Development CiC's responsibilities to me when I work alone or mobile for them.

**If I am a key holder**, I fully accept that it is my responsibility to look after my set of keys and inform a Company Director if they go missing or are damaged in any way. I am also aware that there is a cost involved in replacing my set of keys. (please see key sign-out sheet)

**Signed** *(on behalf of In Focus Education & Development CiC)*

**Date:**

**Signed** *(on behalf of 'team member')*

**Date:**