



Bespoke Professional Development and Training Limited

Lone Working Policy

Updated: June 2021

Next renew due: June 2022

Version Number	Last Amended	Amended By-
v1	July 2019	Tracey Carter
v2	July 2020	Tracey Carter
v3	June 2021	Tracey Carter

Lone Working Policy Statement

Bespoke Professional Development & Training Ltd (BePro) recognises that as a training company, a large proportion of our employees may at times be working alone. This policy is designed to alert employees to the risks presented by lone working, to identify the responsibilities each person has in this situation and to describe procedures which will minimise such risks. It is not intended to raise anxiety unnecessarily, but to give employees a framework for managing potentially risky situations. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Health and Safety Policy.

Purpose of this Policy

This policy and accompanying procedural guidance is designed to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that employees who work alone are not exposed to risks to their health and safety, and to outline the steps to reduce and improve personal safety to staff who work alone by:

- Identifying the responsibilities each person has in this situation.
- Describing procedures that employees can follow to minimise such risks.

Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all staff who may be working alone, at any time, in any of the situations described in the definition below.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) defines lone workers as 'those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision'. This means that Tutors, Assessors and other staff who work unaccompanied for large periods of time are classed as lone workers. This can include employees who work by themselves in the following situations:

- Work outside normal working hours e.g. working with or observing learners/apprentices in the evening, at night, during weekends and bank holidays.
- Observing learners/apprentices in their work environments or external venues.
- Travelling to external venues and learners' work places.
- Using their home as a base.
- Using their car as a base.

BePro recognises that following employees can be considered as lone workers as although they do not work in complete isolation all the time, they do on occasions:

- Employees required to attend meetings and who may travel alone.
- Office based employees who may be alone for parts of the working day.

- Office based employees who may work late or work at weekends.
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Employees and learners/apprentices can encounter a number of problems associated with these situations, for example:

- Being accosted by people on the street in quiet areas during darkness
- Parking in unlit, isolated areas
- Car accidents or car breakdowns
- Hazardous driving conditions
- Theft
- Accidents
- Manual handling problems
- Sudden illness

Responsibilities

Directors and Line Managers

BePro's Directors are responsible for ensuring that:

- The procedures are followed by all employees.
- Systems are put in place for lone workers to identify their locations whilst on duty.
- Systems are put in place to enable employees who work alone to make themselves safe.
- Systems are regularly evaluated to ensure that they are still valid.
- If a risk cannot be made safe, then two workers carry out the task.
- Lone workers are supervised regularly.
- If an employee does not report in as expected, line managers should check on the situation and then to respond as appropriate, using emergency contact information if necessary. Arrangements for contacts and response should be tailored to the needs and nature of the team.
- Where employees work alone for extended periods and/or on a regular basis, managers must make provision for regular contact, both to monitor the situation and to counter the effects of working in isolation.

Employees

Employees have responsibilities under Health & Safety legislation to:

- Take reasonable care of their own and other people's safety.
- Inform their line manager of any medical conditions that may impact on lone working.
- Have an awareness of their surroundings and the possible threat to their personal safety when working alone.

- Be involved in ongoing assessment of risk and identifying safety measures required.
- Leave the working environment if there is an imminent danger to their safety.
- Undertake and follow training provided to ensure their safety and follow guidance issued.
- Follow BePro's Policies and Procedures set up to protect their safety.
- Use equipment in accordance with the training given and not misuse it.
- Tell their line manager when safety measures are not adequate.
- Tell their line manager when they have encountered a 'near miss' or have identified additional risks to their safety that were previously unidentified.
- Report to the employer any actual accidents or incidents that occur, using proper organisational procedure.
- Employees working away from the office should ensure that they have access to a mobile phone at all times. Staff may use their work phone or own mobile phone for this purpose. Employees are responsible for checking that the mobile phone is charged and in working order.
- If employees have a medical condition that may affect them while working alone, they should make this known to their line manager so that any necessary provisions can be put in place.

Lone Working Policy Implementation – Procedures

Risk Assessments

At learners' and employers' premises the employer is responsible for carrying out a risk assessment. At external venues used for training, BePro uses the venue's own risk assessment. Any significant findings from risk assessments will be reported and management will meet to discuss the implications and resulting processes to minimise risk.

Security of BePro Buildings

Line Managers and their employees must ensure that:

- All appropriate steps are taken to control access to the building, and that emergency exits are accessible.
- When working alone they are familiar with exits and alarms.
- There is access to a telephone and first aid kit.
- If there is any indication that the building has been broken into, they call for assistance before entering.
- External doors are locked to avoid unwanted visitors if working alone.
- Sign in and sign out procedures are followed.

Working alone at another building/ location

Line Managers and their employees must ensure that:

- All appropriate steps are taken to control access to the building/room and that emergency exits are accessible.

- They are familiar with the fire and, if applicable, intruder alarm procedure and know the location of both exits and alarms.
- When making a booking at a venue there will be somebody else present in the building (i.e. Building Manager or Caretaker) and that this person can be contacted in the event of an emergency.
- There is access to a telephone and first aid kit.
- If there is any indication that the building has been broken into, they call for assistance before entering.
- Staff are familiar with the no-smoking rules and procedures.
- Whenever possible that they park in a well-lit and busy area.
- Sign in and sign out procedures are followed.

Personal Safety

Employees are responsible for taking care of their own safety by:

- Avoiding working alone if not necessary.
- Not assuming that having a mobile phone and a back-up plan is a sufficient safeguard in itself. The first priority is to plan for a reduction of risk.
- Taking all reasonable precautions to ensure their own safety, as they would in any other circumstances.
- Before working alone, carrying out an assessment of the risks involved in conjunction with the Line Manager if appropriate.
- Ensuring that they sign in and out of building registers.
- All employees who are not 100% office based should use the Calendar function in Outlook and ensure their line manager has the correct permission to access this. This ensures others know where they are working from.
- Office based employees should inform their line manager of occasions where they will be working alone, giving accurate details of their location and following an agreed plan to inform that person when the task is completed. This includes occasions when a staff member expects to go home following an external commitment rather than returning to their base.

All staff should take 'reasonable precautions'. This might include:

- checking directions for the destination
- ensuring your car, if used, is road-worthy and has breakdown cover
- ensuring someone knows where you are and when you are expected home
- avoiding where possible poorly lit or deserted areas
- taking care when entering or leaving empty buildings, especially at night
- ensuring that items such as laptops or mobile phones are carried discreetly

Lone Worker Guidance

There are generally 4 main hazards to consider when you are working alone:

- Illness
- Injury

- Aggression
- Violence

Working alone can be isolating and sometimes the public can behave aggressively towards employees.

Be aware of yourself

- Think about your body language.
- Think about your tone of voice and choice of words.
- Think about what you are wearing. Is it suitable for the task? Does it hamper your movement?
- In potentially risky situation, does a scarf or tie offer an opportunity to an assailant?

Be aware of other people

- Take note of their non-verbal signals
- Don't crowd people – allow them space
- Make a realistic estimate of the time you will need to do something, and don't make promises which can not be kept, either on your own or someone else's behalf.
- Listen to them and show them you are listening

Walking alone

Although walking is good exercise it can leave you vulnerable to assault, violence, verbal abuse and robbery.

- Dress appropriately – wear clothes and shoes that are easy to move in.
- Try to keep at least one hand free – if you are laden down with bags, you are less mobile.
- Use your senses and be aware of your surroundings, wearing earphones will dull your hearing.
- Try to keep to well-lit streets and walk facing oncoming traffic.
- Avoid poorly lit subways, car parks, deserted buildings, waste grounds or alleyways.
- Don't be tempted to take short cuts through potential danger spots, especially if you are in a hurry.
- Be on guard with strangers, be wary of cars parked with engines running and people sat in them.
- If trouble does arise try to get away. If you think that someone is following you, check by crossing and re-crossing the street. If they persist, move quickly to the nearest place with people and phone the police.
- If a vehicle stops next to you and you feel threatened, turn and move in the opposite direction – you can turn faster than a car.

Cycling

Cycling can be hazardous as there is little protection when cars or people come into contact with the bike. This could lead to injuries from falling to the ground etc. Adverse weather and road conditions can present additional hazards.

- Keep your bike in good order: check lights, brakes and tyres regularly.
- Dress to be seen and be safe: helmet, luminous stripes, toe clips etc.
- Be sure you can hear.
- Have mirrors and a loud piercing horn.
- If a route is new to you, plan it before you leave home.
- Avoid short cuts, even if you are in a hurry.
- Ensure you cycle responsibly and account for other road users.

Lone Working Process

If any member of staff is working in the evening, seeing a learner onsite or are staying overnight at a hotel, they are required to follow these steps;

- Let the Designated Safeguarding Lead know in advance of any out of hours working, giving the name of the learner (if applicable), full address details of their destination along with a contact telephone number for the site and means of travel. They also need a rough estimation as to the time they are expected to arrive.
- They will then need to make contact with the Designated Safeguarding Lead once they have arrived at their destination.
- If the Designated Safeguarding Lead does not hear from the member of staff within 20 minutes of their expected time of arrival, they will call them.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will call them again a further 2 times up to an hour after their expected time of arrival.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead will then call the site to try and establish the staff member's whereabouts.
- If they still cannot make contact and establish their whereabouts, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will call the staff member's emergency contact.

Communication is key, so if a staff member believes they are going to be late arriving at their destination or there is a cancellation, then they need to let the Designated Safeguarding Lead know as soon as possible to avoid escalation.

All emergency contact details have been shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead along with their personal mobile telephone numbers so that they have as many points of contact as possible should they need them in the event of an emergency.

Illness, Accidents and Emergency

If a member of staff suffers an illness, accident or emergency then BePro's Health and Safety Policy and Sickness and Absence Policy should both be followed.

On a learner's or employer's premises, their own company safety procedures should be followed. Employers will always have a first aid kit on site and the majority will have a first aider in attendance.

If an employee has an accident or emergency while lone working or travelling to a place of work, the incident should be reported as detailed below.

All employees with a company mobile phone should carry this at all times when carrying out BePro work or travelling to and from BePro work. This phone should be kept charged and in working order at all times.

Reporting Incidents

BePro requires staff to report all incidents, accidents, emergencies and near misses so that we can ensure robust procedures and make improvements wherever necessary to reduce risk.

If an incident occurs while lone working, employees should first take appropriate action to ensure their own safety and wellbeing. When it is safe to do so, employees must report the incident to their line manager. This will be recorded in BePro's Accident, Near Miss & Incident Record.

All incidents will be discussed at a management meeting and where appropriate, procedures will be put in place to minimise future risk.

Further Information and Training

If any employee feels they need further training or instruction on safe lone working practices, they should contact their line manager immediately. Appropriate training and procedures will be explained. If any employee does not feel safe working alone for any reason, this should be highlighted to their line manager at the earliest opportunity.

Provisions will be put in place to minimise lone working where possible. If there is a certain environment the employee feels is unsafe, managers will take steps to either remove the risk or remove the need to attend that location.

Review

This policy will be reviewed at intervals of 1 year to ensure it remains up to date and compliant with the law.

The policy was last updated June 2021 and is due for review May 2022

BePro Lone Working Policy June 2021 Ref LWP03 Review date May 2022

The policy may also be reviewed if legislation changes or if monitoring information suggests that policy or practices should be altered.

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