



Forest Voluntary Action Forum (FVAF)

Lone Worker policy

General statement of intent

The *Health and Safety at Work Act 1974* requires FVAF to provide a safe environment, safe equipment and safe systems of work for its employees and volunteers and others who may work on its premises. These requirements are applicable to all work situations and particular attention must be paid to situations where staff are working alone or outside normal working hours.

Working alone can introduce or enhance hazards, e.g. lack of assistance if needed, first aid cover, emergency situations, violent attack etc. There are inevitably tasks where staff will work by themselves and frequently this lone working may occur in the evening and at weekends

Policy Statement

FVAF acknowledges that there may be an increased risk to the health and safety of its employees when working alone. It is also likely that volunteers could be involved in lone working. Suitable assessments of the risks involved shall be undertaken to identify risks to the lone worker and measures shall be introduced to minimise those risks wherever reasonably practicable.

Staff shall be provided with information, instruction and training as appropriate in order to minimise risk when working remote from colleagues or other persons and / or outside normal working hours.

Responsibilities

Overall and final responsibility for health and safety in the organisation is that of the FVAF Management Committee.

The FVAF Manager is responsible for this policy being carried out at the FVAF offices in Cinderford and where staff and volunteers are working away from the home base and for ensuring the preparation, implementation and review of risk assessments and safe work practices.

It is the responsibility of all staff and volunteers to bring to the attention of the Manager any deficiencies in safety arrangements but to ensure that they maintain vigilance around their personal safety at all times.

It is hoped that this policy will ensure that staff and volunteers can work as safely as is reasonably practicable and this policy and the way in which it has operated will be reviewed on a regular basis.

Assessing the risk

As with all risk assessment it is a case of identifying what the risk is, assessing the likelihood of a problem arising and being aware of the likely consequences of that problem arising. Staff and volunteers must take responsibility for all aspects of their working alone and pay particular attention to the following :-

- a) assessing whether lone working is appropriate (is it a one person job?)
- b) the location of the workplace (remote / isolated)
- c) any problems of communication (including the places where mobile phones do not work)
- d) the possibility of intruders to the workplace
- e) the nature of possible injury
- f) emergency egress (locked doors, fire exits etc)

Control measures

All staff must take responsibility for ensuring that :-

- a) the office diary is up to date with details of where you are going, time of meeting (start and end if possible) and who you are seeing including contact details for them
- b) if driving or walking ensure their vehicle is well maintained, routes planned appropriately and basic principles of personal safety are adhered to
- c) they have the means and knowledge to contact either work colleagues, family or other appropriate person should the need arise
- d) they maintain a professional relationship with all work contacts
- e) they avoid telling anyone outside family or work that either they, or a colleague, are working alone

- f) they report any incident however trivial it may seem – others could be affected by a failure to report
- g) **NO** appointment is made in a private house or in a contacts place of work outside their work hours
- h) meetings away from the FVAF office are arranged for a public place
- i) meetings in the FVAF office are arranged when work colleagues or others are around and due care taken over the person being met with. This may include leaving the door ajar but be aware of client confidentiality
- j) valuables and portable equipment are kept out of sight to discourage casual visitors and intruders
- k) when working alone in the office the closed sign is displayed, the door is locked and the fire door is easily accessible

Be open to suggestions about how to improve personal safety and remember

Never assume you are not at risk

June 2016