



**LONE WORKING POLICY:** aktPolicy\_Operations009

Version	3.0
Date approved	June 2024
Date of last review	June 2024
Date to be reviewed	June 2025
Policy owner/s	Director of People and Operations
Author	Holly Budgett (Operations Manager)
Reviewed by	SMT, People and Culture Committee
Approved by	Board of Trustees

## Contents

Revision Record.....	3
Introduction .....	4
Purpose .....	4
Supporting Documents.....	4
Scope and Definitions .....	4
Role and Responsibilities .....	5
The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) .....	5
Directors and Senior Managers.....	5
Health and Safety Officers.....	5
Managers.....	5
All Staff .....	6
Students & Volunteers .....	7
Assessing Risk .....	7
Safe Systems of Work.....	9
Monitoring .....	9
Review .....	9

## Revision Record

Date	Description of Change	Revision Status	Revised By
Unknown	Document published	1.0	
Sep 2012	Document published	2.1	Lucy Bowyer
Feb 2024	Full review and redraft of Lone Working Policy	3.0	Holly Budgett
<i>Do not amend without authority from the document owner. Amendments must be noted on the above revision sheet</i>			

## Introduction

We aim to give staff and volunteers a safe and secure workplace. This policy guides and supports managers, staff, and volunteers to promote the safety of those who are lone workers. This policy outlines roles and responsibilities for all managers, staff, and volunteers. It sets out the system through which lone working risk must be managed.

## Purpose

Health and Safety legislation does not prevent us from lone working, but a lone worker should not be at more risk than other staff. akt has a general duty under Section 2(1) of the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974, to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of staff and volunteers whilst undertaking the work of akt.

Health and Safety legislation requires employers and managers to assess risks to staff whilst lone working and make ensure effective planning, organisation, control, monitoring and review.

This policy deals with lone working for service delivery staff as well as general workers and outlines who is responsible for managing the risks associated with lone working in the specific context of akt's work. Directors and managers must work with their teams to assess the risks of lone working within their specific areas of responsibility.

## Supporting Documents

This document should be read with the Health and Safety (2023) and Safeguarding (2023) policies and any relevant guidance and risk assessments.

## Scope and Definitions

This policy is aimed at staff, students and volunteers whose work and support is carried out alone, or without direct access to someone else for help. It also applies to sessional workers or contractors who may work alone.

Lone working is defined as: "Any situation in which someone works without a colleague nearby, or when someone is working out of sight or earshot of another colleague."

Examples of lone working could include:

- one-to-ones with a young person with no other staff in the same room
- meeting a young person offsite, such as at a café or public park
- traveling to and/or attending an event on behalf of akt
- working from home/ remotely
- working in the office alone
- offsite meetings/ training.

## Role and Responsibilities

**The Chief Executive Officer (CEO)** is responsible for all Health and Safety and risk management. This includes lone working. The CEO is also responsible for making sure that there is enough resource for the policy to be effective.

**Directors and Senior Managers** are responsible for making sure that risk reporting, assessments, and management processes to protect lone workers are in place, and that lone working risk assessments are complete and are monitored.

**Health and Safety Officers** (People and Operations Director and Operations Manager) will ensure that akt has up-to-date policies and procedures for the safety of lone workers. With managers and directors, they will ensure that these are shared with all lone working staff. The Health and Safety Officers, with support from akt's Health and Safety Advisors (Citation), will:

- advise on systems, processes, and procedures to improve safety of lone workers and make sure that proper measures are in place.
- advise on physical security, technology and support systems to improve safety of lone workers.
- ensure that this is appropriate, proportionate and meets the needs of the organisation and lone worker.
- play an active part in helping managers with identifying hazards, completing the lone working risk assessments, and managing risks. They will also advise on the proper security provisions needed to mitigate the risks and protect lone workers.
- support the training and setting up of users on any lone working systems akt chooses to implement.
- be involved in incident reports, working with managers to identify issues and learn from them, ensuring that measures are taken to reduce the risk of future issues.

**Managers** must supervise safe systems of work, provide access to appropriate training for the roles they manage and ensure, where reasonably possible, all policies and procedures are observed. Managers will:

- ensure that this policy and all other relevant policies and procedures are shared with their staff team.
- identify all staff who are lone workers, based on recognised definitions.
- ensure that a proper lone working risk assessment is done (in consultation with the Health and Safety Officers) to ensure that all risks from lone working are identified

and that proper control measures have been introduced to reduce or mitigate the risks before staff begin lone working.

- log and store all lone working risk assessments for quality assurance and audit purposes.
- ensure that lone workers are provided with sufficient information, training, instruction, and supervision before entering a lone-worker situation or when using a lone-worker device or system.
- ensure that all the relevant staff undertake regular reviews of risk assessments to ensure that all measures are still effective.
- create space within supervisions and 121's to ensure that lone working issues can be discussed.
- report any staff concerns to their director, or Health and Safety Officers.
- where an incident has occurred, ensure that the appropriate response procedures have been followed and that the employee completes an incident report as soon as possible.
- where someone has been verbally or physically assaulted, ensure that the incident is reported immediately using the correct mechanisms (e.g., Inform for services staff or relevant emergency procedures for all other staff) incidents and that they receive access to support.

**All Staff** who are working alone must ensure they adhere to akt policy, risk assessments and safe systems of work. It is everyone's responsibility to do all they can to ensure their own safety and that of their colleagues whilst lone working and must ensure the following:

- they should seek advice from their line manager, action guidance, procedures, and instruction to avoid putting themselves or their colleagues at risk.
- attend any training specific to them, requested by their manager.
- attend regular team meetings, where issues related to lone working can be raised and addressed.
- will plan prior to a visit and risk assess during a visit using a dynamic approach. Staff should never put themselves or their colleagues at risk. If they feel at risk, they should leave straight away and seek further advice or support from their manager.
- where given an akt approved lone working device or software, staff must ensure they are trained in how to use it.

- where staff have a device that supports safe lone working, they must ensure that it is used as they've been trained, and in keeping with manufacturer guidance. It must be switched on when lone working and devices must be tested at least once a week.
- will inform their line manager of any health issues that may need further consideration under the lone work policy. Any changes in health should be reported to and discussed with their line manager, along with any increase in risk this may present.
- must report all incidents where safety was compromised including 'near misses' to enable appropriate follow-up action to be taken

**Students & Volunteers** who are permitted to lone work must adhere to the akt policy. When lone working, students and volunteers must ensure the following:

- only lone work if their supervisor and manager have expressly granted permission and sufficient information (including contact details) have been provided
- follow procedures and action any instruction given by their supervisor or a member of akt staff
- attend any training specific to them, requested by their supervisor
- raise any concerns with their supervisor immediately
- report any safety practices that need to be improved or risks otherwise identified
- will plan prior to a visit and risk assess during a visit using a dynamic approach. Students and Volunteers should never put themselves at risk. If they feel at risk, they should leave straight away and seek further advice or support from their supervisor.
- will inform their supervisor of any health issues that may need further consideration under the lone work policy. Any changes in health should be reported to and discussed with their line manager, along with any increase in risk this may present.
- must report all incidents where safety was compromised including 'near misses' to enable appropriate follow up action to be taken.

## Assessing Risk

The risk assessment process follows the framework agreed as part of akt's broader Health and Safety Framework. Risk assessments in the context of lone working may require more

frequent and dynamic review to assess if new control measures need to be added when a higher risk is identified.

Managers need to identify and assess risks to the health and safety of staff and/or students and volunteers who are lone working. They must complete a lone working risk assessment in all areas of work where working alone poses risks. Specific roles that should be assessed include but are not limited to:

- Caseworkers
- Youth Engagement Workers
- Volunteer Mentors
- Social Work Students

When completing risk assessments managers must follow [akt's risk assessment guidance](#), and use the [templates](#) agreed and owned by akt's Operations Team. The risk assessment must identify the hazards and risks associated with the work tasks or activities of the role. It must identify who may be affected and how, and the actions which are needed to remove or reduce the risk to the lowest level.

The risks faced by lone working staff and/or volunteers depends on their role, duties and tasks. Some staff (trans, BBPOC and disabled staff) may face safety issues that others would not, and these specific risk factors must also be considered when assessing lone working practices. Hazards may include:

- violence or threatening behaviour towards them
- working in remote areas, particularly after dark and outside normal working hours
- encountering intruders
- competence and experience of the individual
- stress and other health factors.

When completing risk assessments, the following should always be considered:

- where the workplace/ working area is
- any risk of communication problems
- how the lone worker will be supervised.
- whether it is suitable for a role type to work alone, e.g., students, volunteers or new members of staff
- how the lone worker will get help in an emergency.
- the likelihood of an attack
- whether there is first aid

All lone worker risk assessments will be [logged](#), securely [stored](#) and reviewed each year, or as a change in job description or incident dictates.



## Safe Systems of Work

Managers with the support and approval of Directors and Health and Safety Officers, are responsible for implementing safe systems of work/ standard operating procedures for their teams and areas. These systems will likely vary depending on the nature of the work and where that work is taking place.

akt has standard safe systems of work/ risk mitigation measures that should be implemented when staff are working alone:

- [Lone Working Guidance for Services Staff](#)
- [Lone Working Guidance for Non-Services Staff](#)
- [Services Handbook](#)

This list of control measures should not be considered exhaustive, and where necessary, or where not sufficient additional measures should be considered and implemented.

## Monitoring

Lone working incident reports will be analysed to help monitor how effective this policy is.

All Managers must ensure that specific procedures are in place within their services/ team and provide copies of any documented safe systems of work to Health and Safety Officers for audit purposes.

The Health and Safety Officers will audit all lone worker procedures at least once annually, and work with managers to decide any areas of improvement.

Any akt approved lone worker devices/ software system use will be monitored by managers to ensure that if team members are not using their device, this is picked up in time to ensure their safety and that the lone working risk assessment remains compliant.

Non-usage of devices will be addressed directly with that user.

## Review

This document will be reviewed annually, unless organisational changes, legislation, guidance, or non-compliance prompt an earlier review.