



Children's Services Lone Working Information

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Introduction

There are a range of roles within Children's Services that can require lone working, such as visiting people in their homes or working alone in the office.

This guidance is for all Children's Services colleagues and supplements the corporate BCP policies and procedures in the [BCP Health and Safety library](#).

The following corporate policies and procedures must be read and understood by all colleagues, especially managers.

[Lone Working Procedure \(P012\)](#)

[Lone Working Systems Guidance \(G012a\)](#)

[Risk Assessment Procedure \(P001\)](#)

[Violence and Threatening Behaviour Procedure \(P002\)](#)

[Safer Driving for Work Procedure \(P008\)](#)

Roles & responsibilities overview

Service Directors

- Must be satisfied that Service Managers and Team Managers have appropriate lone working systems and procedures in place
- Check at least annually that these arrangements are being regularly monitored and evaluated

Service Managers and Team Managers

- Read and understand the BCP Lone Working Procedure and the Lone Working Systems Guidance, as well as other relevant guidance in the BCP Health and Safety Library, as listed above and required
- Identify colleagues in their teams who carry out lone working and complete a risk assessment with them
- Ensure lone workers are aware of known/potential hazards and the associated risks
- Establish lone working procedures and agree these with their teams using the BCP Lone Working Systems Guidance using one of the methods such as the 'buddy system' or the 'calendar or whiteboard system.'
- Ensure the team (including sessional workers and volunteers) are aware of relevant procedures and guidance and that they feel they have been appropriately trained

- Ensure there are contingency plans for any breakdown in communications or other emergency
- Ensure the workplace is safe by carrying out safety inspections of the workplace and access areas periodically
- Ensure the team are provided with phones, alarms, and other equipment as appropriate, and are trained in their use
- Discuss concerns in supervisions and in team meetings as appropriate
- Regularly review team lone working procedures to ensure the team are safe
- Report accidents, incidents and near misses in accordance with BCP Health and Safety procedures
- Ensure you have access to your teams emergency contact information should it be required and have a method in place for accessing this quickly

All Colleagues

- Read and understand the BCP Lone Working Procedure and the Lone Working Systems Guidance, as well as other relevant guidance in the BCP Health and Safety Library, as listed above and required
- Understand and follow your team's lone working procedures
- Keep your personal details up to date on Dynamics F&O, including your emergency contact details
- Complete necessary risk assessments in supervisions with your manager
- Report any incidents, accidents, or near misses to your manager
- Attend training as identified in risk assessments
- Ensure your phone and/or device is in good working order. If a work-issued phone has a fault, then the user should log a ticket with ICT in Self Service using the keyword "mobile-problem"
- Make yourself aware of risk assessments and other information regarding the person or site you are visiting including checking BCP cautionary contact lists
- Carry out your own dynamic risk assessments whilst lone working, be vigilant
- Always ensure your electronic calendar (such as Outlook) is up to date
- Phone in between visits and after last visit

Colleague when acting as a 'buddy'

- Ensure you are always available for contact when acting as a buddy
- Ensure you have the lone workers phone number and details to hand of the person they are visiting
- Arrange for someone to take your place if you are unable to act as a buddy, and inform the lone worker if possible
- Know the escalation process used within your team in case you need to use it

Personal Safety

See [Violence and Threatening Behaviour Procedure \(P002\)](#) for more information.

Consider risks to ensure you are always putting your safety first

Before you make a home or site visit, you must check the Cautionary Contact List ([CCL](#)) as well as any Children's Services case management systems for any warnings. For example, as a precaution you may need to arrange for an interview or meeting to be held at council premises or to visit with a colleague. Where a precaution has been given, such as the need for police attendance, these precautions must be followed.

Where visits are undertaken to areas of poor mobile or radio reception, a dynamic risk assessment should be undertaken to determine if the perceived benefits of entering a building outweighs the risks. See [Risk Assessment Procedure \(P001\)](#) for more information.

Driving as a Lone Worker

See [Safer Driving for Work Procedure \(P008\)](#) for more information.

Children's Services colleagues must only transport people who draw on our services in their own vehicle where there is no other alternative. Transporting people as a lone worker is discouraged where other options are available.

If it is essential to transport a person in your own car this must be risk assessed with your manager; consider placement of the person and whether a colleague should accompany, you. In an emergency seek support from emergency services. Inform your manager or buddy if you choose to transport the person. You must also ensure you have appropriate business insurance cover to transport people for work. Managers must ensure staff that are transporting people are aware of the policy, have all correct documentation, and have completed the required form [F008a Driver Declaration and Licence Check Authorisation](#).

The risk assessment must be completed with any additional requirements relating to the child, young person or adult passenger being taken into account. See [F008b General Risk Assessment for Work Related driving.docx \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

See Tips for Lone Working for more advice on personal safety and driving as a lone worker.

Example Systems

See [Lone Working Systems Guidance \(G012a\)](#) for more information and additional systems. Any system used should have an Escalation Procedure in place.

Buddy system

The operation of a buddy system relies on one person checking on the whereabouts and safety of another person. It is essential that the following is done:

- decide the buddy in advance of any visits
- agree the process for escalating calls
- agree a timescale for escalating calls, for example if the lone worker is 30 minutes late then the buddy will try to contact them for five minutes, after which they will escalate to their line manager
- agree a code word or phrase in case the lone worker is unable to say that they need help
- ensure that contact numbers for the lone worker, buddy and line manager are easily available and kept up to date

Calendar system or 'whiteboard'

Calendar systems and whiteboards by themselves must not be relied upon for those lone working. They are only effective if kept up to date and monitored so it is recommended that they are used alongside the buddy system as a minimum. Where provided, it is the responsibility of colleagues to keep information up to date on their whereabouts.

The electronic calendar should show the:

- nature of visit, for example site visit or team meeting
- timings of meeting or visit
- name of the person that you are meeting or visiting or if a service user or customer their surname and reference number
- building or site being visited

The whiteboard or similar arrangement should show:

- if you are in or out of the office
- whereabouts of colleagues including annual leave, training and sick
- estimated arrival time in the office if making a visit direct from home
- time expected back at the office
- how you can be contacted in an emergency such as your mobile telephone number
- name of your nominated buddy

Whilst colleagues may keep an eye out for each other there does need to be a formal system for monitoring and checking on the safety of others.

Tips for Lone Working

See [Lone Working Procedure \(P012\)](#) for more information.

There are general rules that you should follow when working alone if possible, which include:

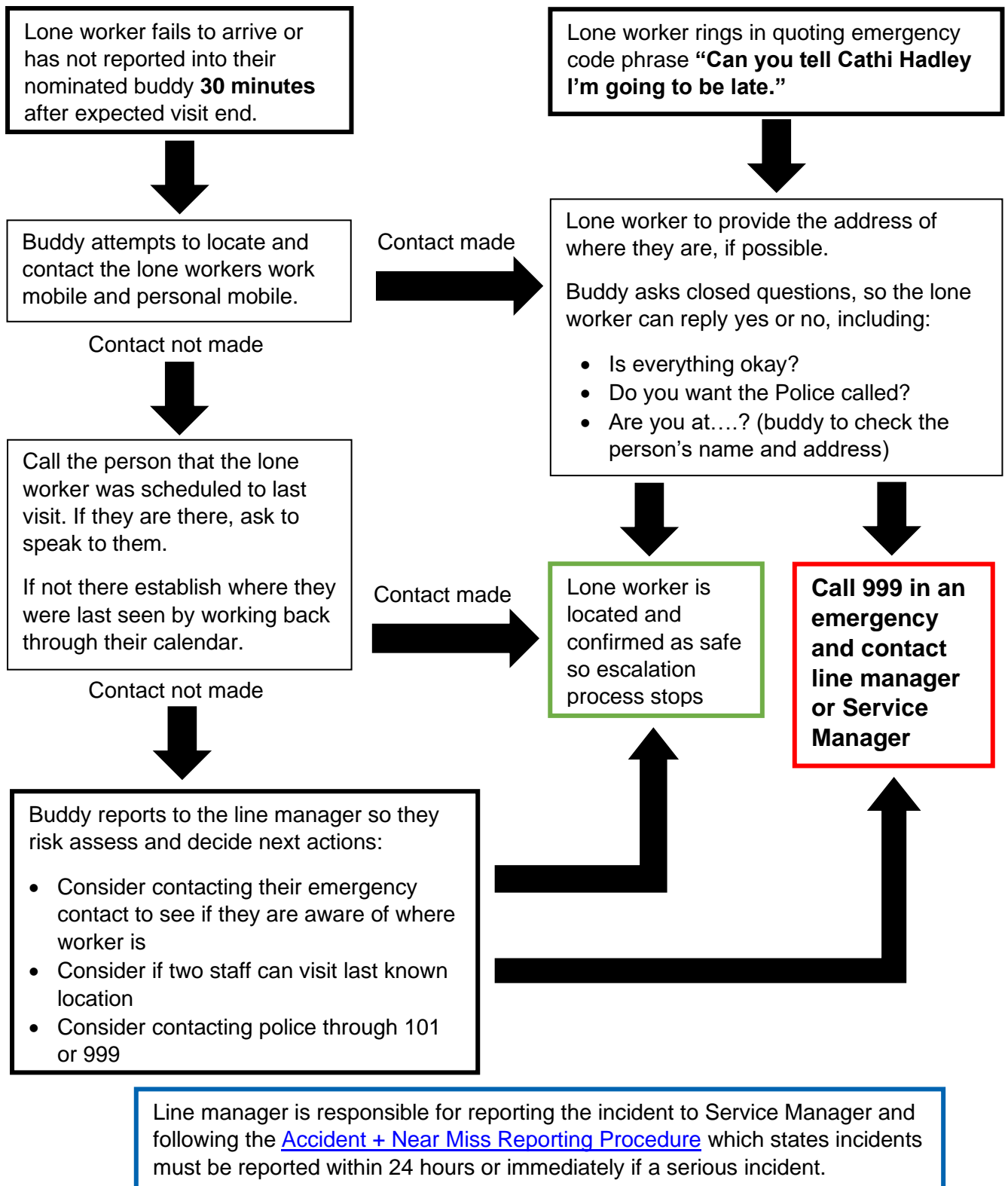
- planning ahead, including your route
- making sure that you know where you are going and how to get there
- ensuring someone always knows where you are, how you are getting there, how long you will be and what you are doing
- keeping your mobile telephone on you when working alone, ensuring it is fully charged
- when walking sticking to busy well-lit streets whenever possible avoiding danger spots like quiet or badly lit alleyways, subways or isolated car parks
- staying alert, keeping your mind on your surroundings, especially if you are using a mobile telephone or carrying equipment such as a laptop
- keeping yourself between the exit and the person that you are visiting or meeting
- be aware of the nearest exit and how to open doors
- always assessing the situation
- be alert and trust your instincts – if you feel uncomfortable, get out immediately
- be aware of what to do in an emergency
- never assume that it will not happen to you

Driving as a Lone Worker

Some risks may increase whilst traveling or lone working within a vehicle. A risk assessment should be undertaken, giving consideration to the following aspects:

- ensure your vehicle is road worthy and has sufficient fuel
- try to travel during daylight hours and on main roads as much as possible
- ensure that someone knows your route and schedule
- confirm parking and meeting arrangements prior to travel
- ensure your resources are reliable with up to date sat nav or maps; if you do need to ask for directions use someone in an establishment rather than a stranger on the street
- in the event of a breakdown try to find an appropriate place to stop that is busy and well-lit
- stop at places that are busy and well-lit; look for locations that have other people around
- be cautious of anyone who signals that there is something wrong with your vehicle (unless you know they are right and it is dangerous to proceed)
- do not stop to provide assistance; get to a safe place and then call for help
- consider locking your doors whilst driving, do not leave valuables on view on the front seat
- if you need to talk to someone, only roll the window down a few centimetres
- don't drive distracted; ensure that you are physically and mentally fit and in-vehicle entertainment volume is not too loud
- park in a secured car park that is well lit, with restricted entry and exit points and CCTV
- if possible, reverse into a parking space, close to the exit and away from pillars
- make a mental note of your car location and have your keys ready when returning

Example Escalation Process



Useful Links

- [Health and Fire Safety - Home \(sharepoint.com\)](#)
- [Health and Fire Safety - P009 Accident + Near Miss Reporting Procedure.pdf - All Documents \(sharepoint.com\)](#)
- [F001a General Risk Assessment.dotx \(sharepoint.com\)](#)
- [Cautionary Contact List \(sharepoint.com\)](#)
- [Lone Working Procedure \(P012\)](#)
- [Lone Working Systems Guidance \(G012a\)](#)
- [Risk Assessment Procedure \(P001\)](#)
- [Violence and Threatening Behaviour Procedure \(P002\)](#)
- [Safer Driving for Work Procedure \(P008\)](#)
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