



# Safety & Wellbeing Policy Arrangement

## Section 28 - Lone & Vulnerable Workers

## Arrangement Section 28 – Lone & Vulnerable Workers

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Further guidance on this matter can also be obtained from the Safety team at [healthandsafety@northlan.gov.uk](mailto:healthandsafety@northlan.gov.uk)

### 1. Introduction

There is a general duty under the Health and Safety at Work Act to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of employees. There is a further expectation within the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 to assess the risks that employees may be exposed to when undertaking a work activity. It is within this legal context that the interim guidance detailed below is issued.

North Lanarkshire Council provides services to many thousands of people and the delivery of those services will vary according to individual circumstances. As a consequence of the diverse manner of service delivery, it is acknowledged that employees may work alone or indeed feel vulnerable. Lone working is not illegal, however the risk assessment process needs to be used to ensure that all reasonably practicable steps have been taken to manage the risks that may be associated with the work tasks.

This guidance is aimed at providing general guidance on the steps that can be taken to reduce the risks that lone and vulnerable workers may face. It cannot examine all circumstances, instead it offers a number of potential "tools" that can be used in order to reduce any identified significant risks.

## **2. Types of Lone/Vulnerable Workers**

Lone Workers can essentially, be described as any employee who is separated by a significant physical distance from his or her colleagues all, or part, of the time.

However, vulnerable workers may not always be lone workers so it is important to also make provision for those members of staff who are not "separated by a significant physical distance" but, due to their working environment, can be vulnerable workers.

The following are examples of job types that are deemed to have some lone working implications either in whole or in part.

a) People in fixed establishments where:

- Only one person works on the premises, e.g. in small workshops, petrol stations, kiosks, shops and also home workers;
- People work separately from others, e.g. in factories, warehouses, some research and training establishments, leisure centres or fairgrounds;
- People work outside normal hours, e.g. cleaners, security, special production, maintenance or repair staff, etc.

b) Mobile workers away from their fixed base:

- On construction, plant installation, maintenance and cleaning work, electrical repairs, painting and decorating, vehicle recovery, etc.;
- Agricultural and forestry workers;
- Service workers, e.g. postal staff, social workers, home support workers, pest control workers, drivers, engineers, architects, surveyors, tenancy support workers, housing officers, environmental health officers and similar professionals visiting domestic and commercial premises.

### 3 Risk Exposure, Identification and Assessment

The issues that are often associated with Lone/Vulnerable Workers are numerous but would include, for example:

- Early Morning/late Evening Work;
- Sudden illness;
- Interviewing;
- Aggressive or violent behaviour.

It is obviously of paramount importance that the identification and control of the risks to Lone/Vulnerable Workers is effectively managed via the risk assessment process. Records should be maintained, and identified controls should be scheduled for action within a reasonable time scale.

Risk assessments should take place in accordance the standards established within AS4 – Risk Assessment and the controls outlined within appendix 1 can be considered as options to control any significant risks identified.

Risk assessments for lone worker must consider the following factors:

- The length of time staff may be working alone;
- The time of day or night staff may be working alone;
- The location and type of workplace and if travel is involved;
- The nature of the work, the equipment to be used and whether both can be carried out/used safely by one person;
- The risk of violence both verbal and physical – can tasks be redesigned to minimise the risk of violence for example the elimination or reduction of the amount of cash handling; constant changes of route if transporting valuables;
- Whether particular staff may be more at risk eg new and inexperienced staff;
- Any medical conditions of the lone worker, which may increase the risks of working alone - does the job impose any extra demands on the lone worker's physical or mental stamina? Does the lone worker suffer from any illness that might increase the risks of the job?;
- Ensuring staff know what action to take in an emergency and who to contact;
- Ensuring precautions are in place for normal work and foreseeable emergencies such as a fire, equipment failure, illness or accident/incident;
- Ensuring staff have had the relevant training, information, instruction, supervision and possible protective equipment;
- Maintaining regular contact between staff and supervisor or 'buddy', and the relevant use of telecommunications systems, radios, mobile phones, pagers, personal alarms, and the Voice connect system;
- Arrangements for monitoring lone workers to ensure they remain safe including ensuring that the lone worker has returned to base or home on completion of the task.

Where a job location/activity involves a degree of remoteness and isolation then some additional considerations are required, these include:

- How long should the work take and how frequently should the worker report in?
- Has the worker a safe means of travel to and from the location?
- Is there access to adequate rest, hygiene, refreshment, welfare and first aid facilities?
- Could emergency services approach the location without hindrance?
- Procedures for responding to “worst case” emergency scenarios should be in place.

#### **4 Areas to Address**

The risk assessment process will ultimately lead to the development of a procedure or safe system of work. Together with local issues, the system of work should address the following core issues:

- Legal duties of Employers;
- Role of the Service Plans, Risk Registers, and Risk Assessments (*i.e. appropriate staffing levels, workplace conditions, etc.*);
- Geographic remoteness and isolation;
- Interview and visiting practices and procedures;
- Supervision / “reporting in” practices;
- Out-of-hours working;
- Home working;
- Communications, ICT and technology;
- Level of information, instruction and training required by those working

One solution will not address all these issues, and indeed the same issue may require different approaches in different circumstances. It will therefore be necessary to utilise a number of different “tools” in order to manage the identified significant risks.

This guidance offers a “tool box of controls” that can be utilised to address the various issues. Appendix 1 suggests a non-exhaustive list of the possible issues associated with lone or vulnerable working, together with an indication of the tools that may be appropriate. Appendix 2 gives further description on the tool. Appendix 3 aims to help managers introduce the topic of lone working to those it might affect.

#### **6 Further Assistance and Information**

It is important to ensure that the Lone/Vulnerable Workers also operate in conjunction with, other relevant policies and guidance, for example, Occupational Road Risk, Violence in the Workplace, Use of Interview Rooms, etc.

Further assistance is available to all services in the preparation of systems of work that will aid in the protection of lone and vulnerable workers. More detailed guidance on some of the tools may be available by contacting the Health and Safety team on email [healthandsafety@northlan.gov.uk](mailto:healthandsafety@northlan.gov.uk)

## The Tool Box

To follow are a number of "tool boxes", each box relates to an issue that is often associated with lone and vulnerable workers. Examine the issues that you wish to address and then consider how the tools within each of the associated tool box may help reduce identified risks.

It is important to note that not all tools will be appropriate, and that there may well be other tools that can be used but are not contained within the tool boxes selected below. The tool box is intended to be a guide capable of supplementing/supporting the risk assessment process.

Early Morning/ Late Evening	1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personal Safety Training (general)</li> <li>Alarm Telephone</li> <li>Local Procedures</li> <li>Communications Procedures</li> <li>Support Policy</li> <li>Lone Worker Ring Round</li> <li>2<sup>nd</sup> Person Risk Assessment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personal Safety Training (focused)</li> <li>Mobile Phone Tracking</li> <li>Personal Safety Information Cards</li> <li>CCTV Systems</li> <li>Personal Alarms</li> <li>Mobile Support System</li> <li>Co-ordination Centre</li> </ul>

Client/Staff Interaction in difficult or stressful situations	2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personal Safety Training (general)</li> <li>DVLA Registration</li> <li>Interview Layout Guidance</li> <li>Local Procedures</li> <li>Communications Procedures</li> <li>Client Risk Assessments</li> <li>Support Policy</li> <li>Customer Care/Counselling Training</li> <li>Posters</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personal Safety Training (focused)</li> <li>Mobile Phone Tracking</li> <li>Reception Area Guide</li> <li>Personal Safety Information Cards</li> <li>CCTV Systems</li> <li>Client Contract</li> <li>Personal Alarms</li> <li>2<sup>nd</sup> Person Risk Assessment</li> <li>Front End Telephone Messaging</li> </ul>

Abusive Phone Calls	3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personal Safety Training (general)</li> <li>Personal Safety Information Cards</li> <li>Customer Care/Counselling Training</li> <li>Media Advertising</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local Procedures</li> <li>Support Policy</li> <li>Receptionist Guide Book</li> <li>Posters</li> </ul>

Travelling	4
Personal Safety Training (general) Local Procedures Communications Procedure 2 <sup>nd</sup> Person Risk Assessment	Mobile Phone Tracking System Personal Safety Information Cards Support Policy Co-ordination Centre

Lone Working	5
Personal Safety Training (general) Mobile Phone Tracking System Personal Safety Information Cards Client Risk Assessments Client Contract Personal Alarms Media Advertising Telephone Warning Cascade 2 <sup>nd</sup> Person Risk Assessment	Alarm Telephone Local Procedures CCTV Systems Communications Procedures Support Policy Customer Care/Counselling Training Lone Worker Ring-round Mobile Support Service Co-ordination Centre

Cross Service Alert	6
Personal Safety Training (general) Personal Safety Information Cards Support Policy Co-ordination Centre	Local Procedures Communications Procedures Telephone Warning Cascade

Theft of Tools/Equipment	7
Personal Safety Training (general) Personal Safety Information Cards CCTV Systems Personal Alarms	Local Procedures Communications Procedures Support Policy Safe Keeping Systems

Call outs to break ins etc	8
Personal Safety Training (general) Local Procedures Communications Procedure Personal Alarms Telephone Warning Cascade 2 <sup>nd</sup> Person Risk Assessment	Mobile Phone Tracking System Personal Safety Information Cards Support Policy Customer Care/Counselling Training Mobile Support Service Co-ordination Centre

Money Handling	9
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personal Safety Training (general)</li> <li>Mobile Phone Tracking System</li> <li>Personal Safety Information Cards</li> <li>CCTV Systems</li> <li>Personal Alarms</li> <li>2<sup>nd</sup> Person Risk Assessment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personal Safety Training (Focused)</li> <li>Local Procedures</li> <li>Communications Procedure</li> <li>Support Policy</li> <li>Safe Keeping Systems</li> </ul>

Front Line Public Contact Office Based)	10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personal Safety Training (general)</li> <li>Alarm Telephone</li> <li>Interview Layout Guidance</li> <li>Local Procedures</li> <li>Communications Procedures</li> <li>Client Risk Assessments</li> <li>Support Policy</li> <li>Customer Care/Counselling Training</li> <li>Media Advertising</li> <li>Posters</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personal Safety Training (focused)</li> <li>Mobile Phone Tracking</li> <li>Reception Area Guide</li> <li>Personal Safety Information Cards</li> <li>CCTV Systems</li> <li>Client Contract</li> <li>Personal Alarms</li> <li>Receptionist Guide Book</li> <li>2<sup>nd</sup> Person Risk Assessment</li> </ul>

Behavioural Problems	11
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personal Safety Training (general)</li> <li>Mobile Phone Tracking</li> <li>Personal Safety Information Cards</li> <li>CCTV Systems</li> <li>2<sup>nd</sup> Person Risk Assessment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personal Safety Training (focused)</li> <li>Local Procedures</li> <li>Communications Procedures</li> <li>Support Policy</li> </ul>

Front Line Public Contact (Home Based)	12
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personal Safety Training (general)</li> <li>Alarm Telephone</li> <li>Interview Layout Guidance</li> <li>Local Procedures</li> <li>Communications Procedures</li> <li>Client Risk Assessments</li> <li>Support Policy</li> <li>Customer Care/Counselling Training</li> <li>Media Advertising</li> <li>Posters</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personal Safety Training (focused)</li> <li>Mobile Phone Tracking</li> <li>Reception Area Guide</li> <li>Personal Safety Information Cards</li> <li>CCTV Systems</li> <li>Client Contract</li> <li>Personal Alarms</li> <li>Receptionist Guide Book</li> <li>2<sup>nd</sup> Person Risk Assessment</li> </ul>



Interviews	13
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personal Safety Training (general)</li> <li>Alarm Telephone</li> <li>Telephone Front End Messaging</li> <li>Personal Safety Information Cards</li> <li>CCTV Systems</li> <li>Client Contract</li> <li>Personal Alarms</li> <li>Receptionist Guide Book</li> <li>2<sup>nd</sup> Person Risk Assessment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personal Safety Training (focused)</li> <li>Interview Layout Guidance</li> <li>Local Procedures</li> <li>Communications Procedures</li> <li>Client Risk Assessments</li> <li>Support Policy</li> <li>Customer Care/Counselling Training</li> <li>Media Advertising</li> <li>Posters</li> </ul>

High Crime Areas	14
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personal Safety Training (general)</li> <li>Mobile Phone Tracking System</li> <li>Personal Safety Information Cards</li> <li>CCTV Systems</li> <li>Personal Alarms</li> <li>Personal Alarms</li> <li>2<sup>nd</sup> Person Risk Assessment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DVLA Registration</li> <li>Local Procedures</li> <li>Communications Procedure</li> <li>Support Policy</li> <li>Safe Keeping Systems</li> <li>Telephone Warning Cascade</li> <li>Co-ordination Centre</li> </ul>

Transporting clients/goods	15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personal Safety Training (general)</li> <li>Mobile Phone Tracking System</li> <li>Personal Safety Information Cards</li> <li>Client Risk Assessments</li> <li>CCTV Systems</li> <li>Personal Alarms</li> <li>Personal Alarms</li> <li>2<sup>nd</sup> Person Risk Assessment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DVLA Registration</li> <li>Local Procedures</li> <li>Communications Procedure</li> <li>Client Contract</li> <li>Support Policy</li> <li>Safe Keeping Systems</li> <li>Customer Care/Counselling Training</li> <li>Co-ordination Centre</li> </ul>

### **Toolbox Content Explanation**

Each of the following “tools” has been included within the toolboxes outlined in Appendix 1. The general concept being that these “tools” can be used as necessary either at service, section or individual level

#### **A) Personal Safety Training (general)**

This amounts to general awareness training that includes how to deal with irate members of the public/service users. More information on the training opportunities available within North Lanarkshire Council can be obtained from the Training Section, by telephone or via the Council intranet homepage.

#### **B) Personal Safety Training (focused/tailored)**

This type of training is intended to be more specific i.e. how to deal with particular clients, e.g. in day care centres. More information on the training solutions available within North Lanarkshire Council can be obtained from the Training Section.

#### **C) DVLA Registration**

Concern has been expressed that, for the payment of a small fee to the DVLA, anyone can obtain the name and address of any car owner. By registering the car at the workplace then an employee’s home address is less accessible. This type of tool is particularly useful for enforcement officers such as trading standards, EHO, building control etc, who may be exposed to aggressive action from persons unhappy with actions being taken against them.

#### **D) Alarm Phone**

This particular product is a wired phone with an integrated remote alarm that can be used to send a pre-recorded message to other phones. It also affords an opportunity to those receiving the alarm call to listen into the conversation in the room and determine what type of remedial action may be required. May well be a cost-effective alternative to fixed wired push button alarms used in areas such as interview rooms.

#### **E) Mobile Phone Tracking System**

Various mechanisms exist to monitor lone workers via their mobile phones, often involving a call centre or central computer system that monitors the agreed visit times. Effective management systems are required to overcome user apathy. Some systems are voice based whilst others are text based.

Some systems can be linked to GPS and give switchboard operators a location when an emergency button is pressed

There can be considerable costs involved in some of these systems.

#### **F) Interview Room Guidance**

Many interview rooms are set in a manner that does not promote staff safety. The physical layout, decoration and general environment can all contribute to aggravation felt by service users. A Service standard should be established in relation to interview rooms and the circumstances in which they are used. More information can be obtained on this matter from arrangement section 14, entitled Violence in the Workplace, of the Health and Safety Policy or from Safety And Wellbeing on [healthandsafety@northlan.gov.uk](mailto:healthandsafety@northlan.gov.uk)

## **G) Reception Area Guidance**

Receptions are one of the most important aspects of any customer-focused organisation, and can often be the point of first contact with the customer. It is important that the layout is considered in a similar way to the interview room and that the competence requirements of the staff are clearly defined, e.g. a new trainee with a few days experience is not likely to recognise potential difficulties or may not be able to quickly deal with the enquiry before it develops in to a more difficult situation. Services are encouraged to establish their own service standards for reception areas to include layouts, egress and experience/training of those providing a reception service.

## **H) Local Procedures**

In the unlikely event that a lone worker related alarm or event occurs, there needs to be locally based guidance to permit the required support to be provided to the staff members experiencing difficulty. A model local action procedure should be considered and made available to establishments.

Local procedures should also include paper/computer based systems to monitor the "out of office" work being undertaken. Such systems would generally note the locations being visited and the expected time of return, particular care is required to ensure systems take account of staff going directly home from site as they should ensure someone knows they have actually finished work. Emergency action procedures need to be developed in association with such systems.

## **I) Telephone front end messaging**

For particular services, it may be desirable to place a front-end message on their phone lines. Such a system is similar to an answer phone in that when a customer phones in, a pre-recorded message will tell them that abusive language is not acceptable and that staff have been given the authority to terminate calls that feature abusive and threatening language. The call is then forwarded to the original dialled number. This may only feature on nominated lines such as published help lines.

Some hardware alterations would be required to the relevant telephone systems to permit this to occur.

## **J) Personal Safety Information Cards**

In order to raise the awareness of the do's and don'ts of personal safety, information cards can be produced and issued to appropriate staff. Such cards will contribute towards an increased awareness.

## **K) Communications Procedures**

Systems to promote the transfer of information between employees need to be established to ensure that employees have access to all the information they need to have to make a proper assessment of the risks.

A central database of information may well facilitate this, e.g. violent warning markers system.

## **L) CCTV Systems**

CCTV systems can be used to monitor higher risk areas. They can act as a deterrent, however, there are a number of factors to be considered when introducing CCTV.

## **M) Client Risk Assessments**

There are occasions where an assessment of an individual client may be appropriate. The assessment will then identify particular mechanisms that should be used to reduce the risk of violence or aggression to vulnerable staff.

## **N) Client Contracts**

The use of client contracts in which the level of acceptable behaviour and the conditions under which interaction with staff will take place can also be appropriate in some special circumstances.

## **O) Support Policy**

It is important that, after an incident, staff feel that they receive support from their line managers. The provision of Service and/or section standard that outlines the expected levels of support and management action further to an incident should be considered.

Such a standard should also clarify the legal support an employee can expect from the service. Leaflets indicating general expectations on managers and employees can be obtained via the Health and safety pages on the Council's intranet.

## **P) Personal Alarms**

The provision of personal alarms may be appropriate in some circumstances. The provision of these alarms needs to be in conjunction with appropriate information/ instruction and the provision of local procedures.

## **Q) Customer Care/Counselling Training**

It has been recognised that frustration on the part of a customer or staff members can lead to the development of violent or abusive incidents. The training of appropriate staff in customer care skills, product knowledge and/or counselling skills should be seen as a useful tool to combat this.

## **R) Receptionist Guide Book**

In a similar vein to the item above, a guidebook for reception staff accompanied with appropriate training will serve to reduce frustrations amongst clients and staff alike.

## **S) Media Advertising**

A local campaign can be used to advise the local population that violent and abusive behaviour will not be tolerated. Poster campaigns, adverts in the press, radio adverts etc. can all be used.

## **T) Lone Worker Ring Round**

One mechanism that can be used to promote the safety of such employees is the use of a ring round system. Lone worker A phones lone worker B, who in turn phones lone worker C, with C phoning A, all at agreed times. When a phone call does not materialise then investigation back through the "circle" into the well being of a colleague can start.

## **U) Telephone Warning Cascade**

In the event of a particular incident, it may be prudent to quickly alert other employees of the council to withdraw from particular locations or to adopt alternative work methods. An agreed telephone or e-mail cascade system can be developed at Service or section level to enable the transfer of such information. It would also be appropriate to include contractors such as MPC in any such cascade system

## **V) Safe Keeping Systems**

In order to keep valuable items safe, and reduce the ability of opportunistic theft, systems that will allow locked storage of certain equipment should be considered, e.g. lock safe systems in vans.

## **W) Mobile Support.**

Staff that are called out to a suspected break-in can wait considerable times for police support before entry to the building can be undertaken, indeed it is not uncommon in some circumstances for staff to enter such buildings without police support. Alternative provision of support can be considered, such as contracts with security companies, call out other staff etc.

## **X) 2nd Person Risk Assessment**

There may be occasions where particular work tasks need to be undertaken by more than one person. Services should consider this during the risk assessment process

## **Y) Co-ordination Centre**

Many of the individual tools outlined elsewhere in this document may well benefit from co-ordination. This would use a 24 hour "staffed" resource to facilitate for example the monitoring of lone workers, the provision of information to facilitate activity risk assessment, the cascade of information etc.

## **Z) Posters**

A visible demonstration to the public and staff that violence will not be accepted within establishments or towards Staff. Such posters are already in circulation and available via the Health and Safety pages on the Council's intranet.

## Information Sheet - Lone Working

### What is lone or vulnerable working?

There are many definitions for a lone worker exist in a variety of guises but may, essentially, be described as:

*“Any member of staff who is separated by a significant physical distance from his or her colleagues all, or part, of the time.”*

However, vulnerable workers may not always be lone workers so it is important to also make provision for those members of staff who are not “separated by a significant physical distance” but, due to their working environment, can be vulnerable workers.

The Health and Safety Executive suggest that the following list is indicative of the job types that are deemed to have lone working implications either in whole or in part.

#### a) People in fixed establishments where:

- Only one person works on the premises, e.g. in small workshops, petrol stations, kiosks, shops and also home workers;
- People work separately from others, e.g. in factories, warehouses, some research and training establishments, leisure centres or fairgrounds;
- People work outside normal hours, e.g. cleaners, security, special production, maintenance or repair staff, etc.

#### b) Mobile workers away from their fixed base:

- On construction, plant installation, maintenance and cleaning work, electrical repairs, painting and decorating, vehicle recovery, etc.;
- Agricultural and forestry workers;
- Service workers, e.g. postal staff, social workers, home support workers, pest control workers, drivers, engineers, architects, surveyors, tenancy support workers, housing officers, environmental health officers and similar professionals visiting domestic and commercial premises.



The law requires the Council to identify all significant risks associated with work activities. This is achieved through the risk assessment process. Employees are required to assist their employer in undertaking such assessments and it will be helpful if you let your line manager know of any concerns you have in relation to your work.

Your line manager will arrange for an assessment to be undertaken and it will examine a range of factors to include early morning/late evening work, sudden illness, interviewing and the likelihood of aggressive or violent behaviour.

## **General Principals about Staying Safe**

It is important that you follow the specific guidance you are issued in relation to the working activities and locations you undertake. The following is offered as generic guidance and should not be viewed as an exhaustive list.

Nearly half (49%) of people have been made to feel uncomfortable by the behaviour of someone they've come into contact with while working alone

### **- On the Road – Public and Private Transport**

It's important when travelling to plan ahead, so that you know where you're going, can keep relaxed about your next step, and arrive at your appointment at the expected time. It's also a good idea to let someone know where you're going and when you expect to be back; a simple step that many of us can often forget also consider the following:

- When you're using public transport, try to have your money or ticket to hand when you need it, so you're not fumbling around with your wallet or purse in public.
- If you end up in a train carriage with just you and one other person or group and you don't feel comfortable, don't be embarrassed to move to another seat or carriage. The same applies if you feel that someone's behaviour is threatening in any way, like uncomfortable stares or putting their feet up on the seats next to you.
- If you are driving and have to park in an area that appears secluded then make sure that no personal possessions are visible from the outside of the car – even if they're of little value, it's best to put everything in the boot or take it with you. Look out for street lamps and junctions and park nearby so that the car can be seen easily.

### **- Walking**

Walking through an area that you're not familiar with – particularly during periods or darkness – can be slightly intimidating. Some simple rules that will help minimise any risk are to keep items like your mobile phone or MP3 player in your pocket or bag, and stick to streets with good lighting and lots of people, whenever possible. You should also:

- Avoid passing stationary cars with their engines running and people sitting in them
- Walk facing oncoming traffic to avoid kerb crawlers and, if a vehicle pulls up suddenly alongside you, turn and walk in the other direction – you can turn much faster than a car
- Keep your mind on your surroundings – remember if you're wearing a personal stereo for example, you might not hear trouble approaching
- If you think someone is following you then try crossing the road to check that they are following, more than once if necessary. If they are still behind you, head for somewhere that you know is going to be busy, and where you'll be able to get some help if you need to. If you're heading back to an empty home/office, try to change your plans and go to a friend's house or somewhere public like a pub or garage, where you can be with other people

- If there's a group of people nearby who are being rowdy and seem quite threatening then move away to avoid the situation if possible – for example, cross the road or take a short detour.
- If you think that someone else's safety might be in danger, look for a safe place to stop and then call the police.

### **- Home and Customer Visits**

Most people will, at some point in their working life, have to meet someone new in an unfamiliar setting. Additionally, for some Council services it's necessary to make house calls or visit other people's offices on a regular basis. Consider the following suggestions:

- If you receive unwanted or inappropriate personal attention then, if possible, move away from the person demonstrating the behaviour. If this is not possible consider:
- If you're alone in someone's home or office and don't know the person you're with but feel confident enough, an assertive 'take your hands off me' or a very clear 'no' may make the person stop. If there are other people around, this might also alert them to what's going on
- If you know the person showing you unwanted attention, it's important that you appear to be in control of the situation. Remember, you have a right to say 'no', and that 'no' means 'no'
- If you have an alert tool, activate this as soon as you feel uncomfortable to raise the alarm
- It's a good idea to have a 'code word' with your friends and colleagues. That way, if you have a problem with someone you meet, you can make an excuse to call one of your contacts and let them know that you need help, without alerting the person you're with
- If none of the above is successful and you still feel uncomfortable, leave the premises and report what happened to your line manager – that way, if another visit needs to take place for any reason, colleagues will not visit alone and will be prepared

### **Council Guidance**

A number of guidance documents and training courses exist to help you work safely. These are available on CONNECT. If you do not have access to CONNECT then speak to your line manager or your Service health and safety team.

### **Other Available Resources**

IS2 – Employee Leaflet on Violence in the Workplace  
 IS4 – Violence and Aggression Poster (1) & IS5 – Violence and Aggression Poster (2)  
 IS29 – Safety for Reception Desk Staff  
 IS33 – Interview Rooms  
 IS34 – Visiting Clients' Homes  
 IS35 – Visiting Uninhabited Accommodation  
 AS14 – Violence in the Workplace & AS28 – Lone and Vulnerable Workers



**Impact Assessments**

**Document Title:** Health and Safety Policy - Arrangement Section 28 – Lone and Vulnerable Workers

**Environmental Impact Assessment:** This document has been assessed for significant environmental impact; no detrimental impact has been identified

**Equality Impact Assessment:** This document has been assessed for significant equality implications; no significant issues have been identified.

**General Comments:** This document is the arrangement section, relating to the risk assessments needed to support those working as lone or vulnerable workers. It is provided in association with the Council's health and safety policy required by the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. The general aims of the council are to ensure a healthy and safe working environment for all persons that work for or make use of Council Services. Nothing in the document serves to have any negative impact on either equality issues or the environment. In general, associated documents will encourage positive consideration of both these areas to ensure all members of the workforce and community are afforded access, so far as is reasonably practicable, to the same opportunities for a healthy and safe workplace as well as a sustainable environment.