Lone Working Policy

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Related Documents	Health & Safety Policy

Scope

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and work placement students. It forms an integral part of Farmlife West Cumbria CIC Health & Safety Policy and applies along with specific guidance on lone working. The policy applies to all situations involving lone working arising in connection with the duties and activities of anyone working at, or on behalf of, Farmlife West Cumbria CIC.

Purpose

This policy aims to:

- Increase staff, volunteers and work placement students' awareness of safety issues relating to lone working.
- Make sure that the risk of working alone is assessed in a systematic and ongoing way and that safe systems and methods of work are put in place to reduce the risk so far as is reasonably practicable.
- Make sure that appropriate training is available to staff, volunteers and work placement students in all areas that equips them to recognise risk and provides practical advice on safety when working along.

- Make sure that appropriate support is available for staff, volunteers and work placement students who find themselves in a position of lone working.
- Encourage full reporting and recording of all adverse incidents relating to lone working.
- Reduce the number of incidents and injuries to staff, volunteers and work placement students relating to lone working.

Policy Statement

Farmlife West Cumbria CIC takes the health, safety and welfare of all staff, volunteers and work placement students extremely seriously. It recognises that occasionally staff and volunteers will be in the position of working by themselves for periods of time without close or direct supervision in the community or in isolated work areas. The purpose of this policy is to enable to meet its obligation to protect such staff, volunteers and work placement students so far as is reasonably practicable from the risks of lone working.

Definition of Lone Workers

Farmlife West Cumbria CIC defines lone workers as: ‘staff, volunteers and work placement students whose working activities involve situations where they are without any kind of close or direct supervision’.

Identifying Lone Workers

Lone workers within the work of Farmlife West Cumbria CIC are likely to be found in a wide range of situations. Examples include:

- Travelling from site to site
- Working away from the main education centre
- Weekend or evening animal feeding duties
- Occasional collection of beneficiaries from their homes

Responsibilities

Lone working environments present a unique health & safety problem. Although there is no specific guidance on working alone, under the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health & Safety Regulations 1992, we organise and control the health and safety of lone workers.

Farmlife West Cumbria CIC Trustees are responsible for:

i. Making sure that there are arrangements for identifying, evaluating and managing risk associated with lone working
ii. Providing resources for putting the policy into practice
iii. Making sure that there are arrangements for monitoring incidents linked to lone working and that the Trustees regularly review the effectiveness of the policy

The Health and Safety Officer is responsible for:

i. Making sure that all staff, volunteers and placement students are aware of the policy
ii. Making sure that risk assessments are carried out and reviewed regularly
iii. Putting procedures and safe systems of work in practice which are designed to eliminate or reduce the risks associated with working alone
iv. Making sure that staff groups and individuals identified as being at risk are given appropriate information, instruction and training, including training at induction, updates and refresher training as necessary
v. Making sure that the appropriate support is given to staff, volunteers or placement students involved in any incident
vi. Managing the effectiveness of preventative measures through an effective system of reporting, investigating and recording incidents

All staff, volunteers and placement students are responsible for:

i. Taking reasonable care of themselves and other people who may be affected by their actions
ii. Co-operating by following rules and procedures designed for safe working
iii. Reporting all incidents that may affect the health and safety of themselves or others and asking for guidance as appropriate
iv. Taking part in training designed to meet the requirements of the policy
v. Reporting any dangers they identify or any concerns they might have in respect of working alone

Assessing Risk

Lone workers should not face any more risks than other staff within the organisation.

Setting up safe working arrangements for lone workers is no different to organising the safety of other staff, volunteers and placement students, so we follow the general principles of risk assessment.

If a risk assessment shows that it is not possible for the work to be done safely by a lone worker, other arrangements will be put in place. Risk assessments will take into account both normal work and foreseeable emergencies such as fire, illness and accidents.

The risk assessment process is summarised below, separated into five distinct stages and action points to support effective assessment of risks involved in lone working.

Process	Action Point
Identifying lone workers	Establish and identify lone workers for each work area
Identifying associated hazards	Isolate the range of dangers associated with whole work areas and/or work processes. Review a generic risk

	assessment to make sure you have included these issues
Assessing the degree of risk for generic or individual situations	Review the generic risk assessments and complete individual or local risk assessments if necessary. Then prioritise the level of associated risk.
Putting control measures in place and developing safe systems of work	Assess how effective the existing control measures are and update them, if appropriate. Develop local procedures or action plans if necessary.
Evaluating and review	Evaluate and record how effective the control measures are. Review when the assessments or controls are no longer required,

Risk assessments will be carried out in all areas of work where working alone poses an actual or potential risk to staff, volunteers or placement students. The risk assessment will involve identifying all potential dangers and the risks associated with specific work tasks or activities. It should identify who will be affected and how the control measures which are needed to get rid of or reduce the risk to the lowest reasonably possible. Details of the risk assessment are recorded.

Information from the risk assessment is passed to staff, volunteers and placement students. Risk assessments are reviewed and updated each year (or sooner, should circumstances change).

Managing the risks of lone working

The risk which lone workers face should be reduced to the lowest level that is reasonably practicable. Using safe systems of work depends largely on local circumstances and local procedures or protocols should be in place that provide specific guidance for staff, volunteers and placement students in relation to lone working and the associated risk reduction. Examples of safe systems of work at Farmlife West Cumbria CIC include:

- Joint working with others for high-risk activities
- Using checking-in and monitoring systems (e.g. location and expected duration of work)
- Communication systems in the event of an incident or emergency
- Using personal protective equipment or mobile phones
- All staff and volunteers undertaking lone working must have an enhanced DBS
- Mitigate the chance of allegations by considering each beneficiary individually

Reporting and Recording

Staff, volunteers and placement students report all incidents (including near misses) to a member of staff at Farmlife West Cumbria CIC at the earliest opportunity. These are recorded in writing and the Health and Safety Officer investigates all reports.

Monitoring and Reviewing

In order to monitor the implementation and effectiveness of this policy and associated local protocols, local statistics and incident reports are reviewed regularly at Trustee meetings. The review process includes:

- Collecting and monitoring all reported incidents
- Every year, report to Trustees on how we are following the policy, outcomes of risk assessment and details of training provided and make recommendations for the coming year

Equality

Consideration is given to the protected characteristics of all people groups identified in the Equality Act 2010. The protected characteristics are gender, age, race, disability, sexual orientation, religion/belief, pregnancy and maternity, and marriage/civil partnership.

This policy and all other associated policies and documents take this into account.