

East Sussex Community Voice

Lone Working and Personal Safety Policy

Policy Schedule

Version	Date of next review by ESCV Board	Date of adoption by ESCV Board
1	n/a	16 th June 2022
2	June 2024	
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1 Lone Working Definition

1.1 The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) defines [lone workers](#) as those “who work by themselves without close or direct supervision”.

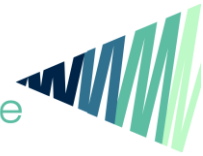
1.2 They may include:

- people working separately from others in a building
- people who work outside “normal” hours which are Monday to Friday from 08:00 to 17:00
- people who work away from their fixed base without colleagues e.g. visiting people in their homes
- people who work at home

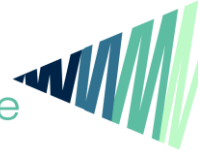
2 Introduction and Purpose of the Policy

2.1 The scope of this policy is to promote an active safety culture and the adoption of good practice in the context of lone working for all employees, Board members and volunteers of ESCV.

2.2 This policy is designed to alert staff, Board Members and volunteers to the risks presented by lone working, to identify the responsibilities each person has in this situation, and to describe procedures which will minimise such risks. It is not intended to raise anxiety unnecessarily, but to give staff, Board Members and volunteers a framework for managing potentially risky situations.

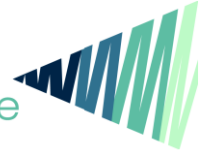


- 2.3 East Sussex Community Voice (ESCV) fully accepts its responsibility to the health and safety of its staff, Board members and volunteers. In so doing it understands that there are times where individual members of staff, Board members and volunteers may be required to work alone and at these times there may be an increased risk to personal safety. This policy is designed to help identify such risks, control and report potential or actual violent or abusive incidents
- 2.4 This policy applies to all staff, Board members and volunteers employed by or working on behalf of East Sussex Community Voice, either directly or indirectly and all situations involving lone working in connection with their duties and work activities.
- 2.5 Lone working occasions may arise in unusual situations or as part of the normal working pattern of an employee, Board member or volunteer. Situations falling within this definition may include:
- Employees, Board members or volunteers who work outside of normal working hours, which are Monday to Friday from 08:00 to 17:00
 - Employees, Board members or volunteers who work in isolated locations
 - Employees, Board members or volunteers, placement students or interns involved in work that entails discussing or listening to sensitive issues with members of the public
- 2.6 Where possible, the default position for Employees, Board members or volunteers in such situations will endeavour not to be alone, but to arrange to work in a pair or accompanied by others.
- 2.7 All staff, Board members and volunteers have a responsibility to ensure that appropriate security measures and procedures are observed at all times.
- 2.8 Managers will take a lead role in promoting and developing a security and safety conscious environment. It is the responsibility of each manager where staff and volunteers undertake lone working to ensure that the procedures developed, or which are in place, are applied and adhered to.
- 2.9 ESCV fully supports staff, Board members and volunteers if they “walk away” from a situation in which they feel uncomfortable or threatened. This is considered to be one of the most successful forms of violence prevention.



3 Policy Statement

- 3.1 Under the [Health & Safety at Work Act 1974](#), every employer and employee has rights and responsibilities, to ensure the provision of a safe working environment supported by safe systems of working.
- 3.2 Working alone is not in itself is not against the law and it will often be safe to do so. However, ESCV fully accepts the obligations placed upon it by the various Acts of Parliament to ensure the safety of its employees and volunteers.
- 3.3 Where the conditions of service delivery or its associated tasks require staff, Board members and/or volunteers to work alone, the individual staff member, Board member and/or volunteer and the ESCV Director have a duty to assess and reduce the risks which lone working presents.
- 3.4 This policy should be read in conjunction with the [ESCV Health & Safety](#) and [Safeguarding](#) policies.
- 3.5 Within this document, 'lone working' refers to situations where staff, board members and volunteers in the course of their duties work alone or are physically isolated from colleagues and without access to immediate assistance. This last situation may also arise where there are other staff, board members and volunteers in the building but the nature of the building itself may essentially create isolated areas.
- 3.6 ESCV will consult with staff, board members, and volunteers and will review working practices on a regular basis to ensure that they feel safe in the course of their duties and that they are not knowingly exposed to circumstances where this may be in doubt. Any concerns will be discussed in supervision and team meetings, as well as at Board level.



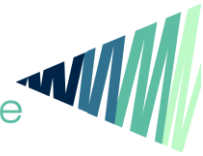
4 General procedures and precautions

Working in the Office - Barbican Suite, Greencoat House, 32 St Leonards Road, Eastbourne BN21 3UT

- 4.1 For the majority of office working time (Monday to Friday, 08:00 to 17:00) there will usually be other staff present. However, there will be times when working alone is the only option. The following applies where staff are working alone:
- 4.2 Staff should inform their line manager if they plan to work alone outside of normal working hours and any in person appointments should not be made when you are alone (see 10.1).
- 4.3 ESCV are allocated two underground parking bays with a locked gate policy at all times imposed by BPE. Staff should take note of and adhere to the parking policy at Greencoat House at all times.
- 4.4 Staff should keep the ESCV office door locked if they are working alone.
- 4.5 Outlook diaries must be kept complete and up-to-date, identifying the location in which people are working.
- 4.6 Communication with any callers should be through a door entry system and not by opening the door, and the inner office door should be secured to prevent casual or unplanned callers entering. Ad-hoc visitors and enquirers to Greencoat are not encouraged.
- 4.7 Staff working alone in the office should ensure that they have a quick and easy system to summon help e.g. a mobile phone charged and switched on. If in any doubt over the safe exit from the office, Police assistance should be summoned.

5 Working outside of the main office/working at home

- 5.1 Where staff work alone for extended periods and/or on a regular basis, employees, line managers and the Executive Director must make provision for regular contact, both to monitor the situation and to counter the effects of working in isolation.



- 5.2 Staff, board members and/or volunteers must inform the Executive Director or other identified person when they will be working alone, giving accurate details of their location and follow the risk assessment plan that has been set up for any event in which they are participating. This includes occasions when the staff, Board member and/or volunteer expects to go home following an external commitment rather than returning to the office.
- 5.3 If a member of staff, board member and/or volunteer does not report in as expected, the agreed plan should be put into operation, initially to check on the situation and then to respond as appropriate using emergency contact information if necessary.
- 5.4 Any external meetings not at formal offices or places of work should be in a public place such as a coffee shop etc. If the meeting is of a confidential nature, then it must be held with two members of staff present at all times.

6 Working at Home

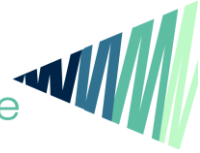
- 6.1 Staff, Board members and volunteers are reminded when working from home that they are still 'on duty' and should ensure their own safety at all times.

In particular:

- Staff, board members and volunteers should inform ESCV office if they change their plans and leave home to keep an appointment during the working day.
- Staff, board members and volunteers should not give out their home or personal mobile phone number to people outside of the organisation and when using their home or personal mobile telephone should dial 141 before dialing to ensure that their number cannot be traced.

7 Public Events

- 7.1 ESCV frequently undertakes promotion activities and events involving the general public as well as service users and staff. Before undertaking such events the Manager/Director will consider any potential risks and will have a risk plan in place if appropriate.
- 7.2 If the event is external the Manager/Director should contact any appropriate bodies (e.g. Council) regarding any permits/risk assessments required e.g. public marches, rallies.



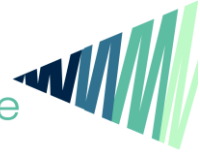
- 7.3 The Manager/Director should also check with ESCV Insurance company to ensure the activities within the event are covered by our policy.
- 7.4 Young volunteers (Under 18years) attending public events need to be supported by two adult members of staff. Consent from parent/guardian for participation must be obtained and travel arrangements in place need to be documented.

8 Security in other buildings

- 8.1 When making a booking at an external venue, staff must ensure that there will be an appropriate person present in the building during the event, (i.e. Building Manager or Caretaker) and that this person can be contacted in the event of an emergency.
- 8.2 All appropriate steps must be taken to control access to the building/room and that emergency exits are accessible.
- 8.3 Staff, board members and volunteers should ensure that they are familiar with the fire and, if applicable, intruder alarm procedure and know the location of both exits and alarms.
- 8.4 There is access to a telephone and first aid kit.
- 8.5 If there is any indication that the building has been broken into, they call for assistance before entering.
- 8.6 Whenever possible that you park in a well-lit and busy area.
- 8.7 Ensure sign in and sign out procedures at venues are followed.

9 Personal Security when undertaking ESCV activity in the community.

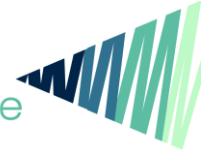
- 9.1 Each activity will be risk assessed. Staff, volunteers and any board members participating should familiarise themselves with any identified risk(s). Attention should be adhered to taking only essential personal items only on the activity.
- 9.2 Do not attempt to protect money/valuables, property or possessions over your own safety.



- 9.3 Have access to a mobile phone at all times. Staff, Board members and volunteers are responsible for checking that the mobile phone is charged, in working order and that all relevant contacts are listed i.e. ESCV office, colleague mobiles, venue contact person, vehicle breakdown, In Case of Emergency (ICE) details.
- 9.4 Wear any equipment such as high-viz jackets provided.

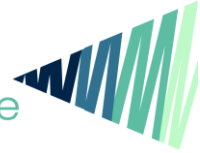
10 Home Visiting

- 10.1 It is not anticipated that any ESCV staff, board member or volunteers will need to undertake home visits of members of the public or service users.
- 10.2 If a need for this arises the staff member or volunteer should discuss it with the project manager, their line manager or the Executive Director, and the visit approved in writing.
- 10.3 If a home visit is deemed necessary, all risks will be mitigated by taking the following actions:
- Ensuring all efforts are made to obtain as much information as possible about each situation and the people involved.
 - Where a visit is being made to someone who causes concern, the time and place of the visit and the name of the person should be advised to the Administrator. The Administrator should be advised when a visit has ended, with Line Managers standing in if the Administrator is not available.
 - Staff should use common sense, trust their instincts and if a situation feels threatening - leave, saying for example, that they are going back to get something from the car.



11 Visiting Care Homes, Inpatient, Forensic or Prison Facilities

- 11.1 Managers must be familiar with the safety and security procedures of any residential facilities that ESCV staff, board Members and volunteers are likely to enter and should ensure they are made aware of these procedures as part of their training and induction process.
- 11.2 This may at times mean staff, board Members and volunteers attend training supplied by the facility concerned, particularly in the case of prisons and secure forensic facilities. ESCV staff, board Members and volunteers should adhere to safety and security procedures of any facilities they visit.
- 11.3 However, ESCV staff, board Members and volunteers will not learn or use physical restraint methods but will adhere to breakaway measures when appropriate.
- 11.4 ESCV staff, board Members and volunteers should seek to find a designated appropriate area in any facility they meet clients in. This could be a meeting room, an interview room or any room affording a degree of privacy bearing in mind issues of client confidentiality, but also personal safety.
- 11.5 ESCV staff, board Members and volunteers will avoid meeting clients in bedrooms /prison cells unless the health or mobility limitations of the client make this the only possible setting. In this instance ESCV staff, board Members and volunteers will make staff on the unit aware, leaving the bedroom/cell door ajar and locate themselves in close proximity to the door to allow a quick exit if necessary.
- 11.6 In secure facilities ESCV staff, board Members and volunteers should visually locate the panic button in the room in which they meet with the client, and then locate their own seating within easy reach of it.
- 11.7 ESCV staff, board Members and volunteers should seek meeting clients in forensic psychiatric, secure psychiatric or prison settings and must obtain information concerning any safety or security watches clients may be under.
- 11.8 If clients are on a level 1 or a level 2 watch, it may be necessary to negotiate with clinical staff as to appropriate procedures for conducting a meeting. Some suggestions may be to leave the door ajar and ask clinical staff to carry out regular walk by checks.



- 11.9 If a client is on a level 3 watch and it is a necessary for a member of the clinical team to be present, ESCV staff, board members and volunteers should seek should try and ascertain which members of the team the client is more comfortable with. They may be able to negotiate with the facility staff on this, or alternatively on whether a member of staff could be present but not within earshot.
- 11.10 ESCV staff, board members and volunteers should seek a degree of privacy whilst respecting any necessary safety and security measures the care team feel are important

12 Travelling

- 12.1 Travelling to and from work and visiting different areas for meetings affects all staff, board members and volunteers. Risks in these circumstances can be unpredictable and not usually within the power of ESCV to control. Staff, board members and volunteers should make every effort themselves to reduce the possibility of being a victim of aggressive or violent acts.
- 12.2 If you are undertaking activity outside your normal working hours, alert your line manager when you set off, arrive at your destinations and return home again.
- 12.3 If needed discuss different forms of transport (e.g. taxis) with your line manager.
- 12.4 Take reasonable precautions which might include:
- Checking directions for the destination
 - Ensuring your car, if used, is road-worthy and has break-down cover
 - Ensuring someone knows where you are and when are expected home
 - Avoiding where possible poorly lit or deserted areas
 - Taking care when entering or leaving empty buildings, especially at night
 - Ensuring that items such as laptops or mobile phones are not visible when being carried
 - As far as is practical avoid using mobile phones when alone outside.
 - If you use public transport, have your fare and ticket separate from your wallet/purse, sit near the driver, guard, or other passengers.
 - Check bus/train times to avoid unnecessary waits.

13 Reporting Incidents

13.1 Each Employee, board members or volunteers is expected to report all incidents of violence, verbal abuse, or the threat of either. This information is required to allow ESCV to accurately monitor incidents and to take the necessary action; any such abuse, whether in person, or by written or oral communication, must be appropriately recorded.

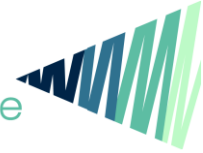
13.2 ESCV is required to record all incidents of violence or aggression in the workplace. Keeping records helps build up a picture of problems or weaknesses in the procedures that could affect others. Requiring staff and volunteers to report all incidents, whether they are minor or more serious, encourages good practice and promotes an open and supportive environment for all staff and volunteers and especially those who may experience violence.

13.3 A reporting system for incidents and ‘near misses’ is in place.

Within the first 24 hours	Provide medical assistance (if needed) Police attendance Contact next of kin/family Debrief Escort home if necessary
1 - 7 days	Reporting on incident Counselling if appropriate Support from colleagues/Director
7 + days	Follow up with police Continued counselling if appropriate Legal advice and support for the individual where necessary

13.4 Staff and volunteers are required to complete the incident report form detailing the incident or near miss within 24hrs of the incident taking place and send these to the Administrator. Forms are available on the shared drive in the ESCV Governance Health & Safety file.

13.5 The incident should also be reported to the Line manager and/or Executive Director as soon after the incident as possible, usually within 24hrs. They are responsible for overseeing any aftercare that staff, board members and volunteers may need and is also required to record the outcome of the incident and any follow-up action.



13.6 All information is confidential and staff, board members and volunteers affected will not be named in any general staff and volunteers feedback session. However, the details of the incident will be used for recording and monitoring purposes.

13.7 If the event takes place at the office then BPE to be notified on the out of hours phone (available 24/7) on 01323 403563.

14 Responsibilities

14.1 The Board of East Sussex Community Voice has the ultimate responsibility to implement and review this policy.

14.2 The East Sussex Community Voice Executive Director holds the day-to-day responsibility for ensuring that the Lone Working and Personal Safety Policy is implemented. The Executive Director will:

- Advise, inform and consult with staff, volunteers and service users in order to progress and monitor lone working within the organisation.
- Monitor and report to the East Sussex Community Voice HR Sub-Committee (quarterly) and Board (annually) on lone working practice within the organisation.
- Ensure staff, service users' and volunteers' awareness and understanding of lone working and personal safety issues and practice via training and development.

15 Monitoring of this Policy

15.1 The organisation will monitor its Lone Working and Personal Safety Policy and the progress in achieving its objectives.

15.2 This policy will be reviewed and updated on a two-year rolling basis by the East Sussex Community Voice HR Sub-Committee and Board. This policy may be revised sooner if there is a change in working premises, conditions or laws directly affecting equal opportunities or any other aspect embedded in the document.