

Stoneygate Baptist Church Lone Workers Policy

Policy Statement

Stoneygate Baptist Church is committed to protecting the safety of all those who work and volunteer on its behalf, and recognises that this requires the observance of specific practices and procedures in relation to lone workers.

Purpose

This policy is designed to give awareness of 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 applies to all who work alone on behalf of the church, including those working on a voluntary basis.

Context

Lone workers face the same risks as anyone else, as well as those directly related to their lone working. This policy is therefore part of a wider overall policy, which includes policies relating to Health and Safety and Safeguarding, and the same principles apply. These include a commitment to establishing and maintaining safe working practices, recognising and reducing risk, a commitment to the provision of appropriate support, priority being placed on the safety of the individual over property, and a commitment to providing appropriate training and equipment

Procedures

- Lone workers should ensure someone else knows where they are. This could be a family member or other church worker, and may be done verbally or via a shared electronic calendar.
- Lone workers should always have a clear line of exit and means of communicating in case of an emergency.
- When working from the church, lone workers should ensure the building is secure, and will not ordinarily admit unknown and unexpected persons.
- Lone workers should not undertake high risk activities such as heavy lifting or working at height, and should be familiar with the locations of fire exits and first aid boxes in the event of an emergency.
- In order to keep lone working to a minimum there should always be two church workers onsite while external doors are open.
- Church workers should not be alone with children or young people, and must take steps to ensure visibility and accountability.
- Lone workers should arrange for meetings in public spaces where this is possible and appropriate, particularly when meeting an individual for the first time or where there is a potential concern.
- Where home visits are undertaken, thought should be given to particular risks which may arise, such as travel and pets.
- It is good practice to keep notes of meetings and visits, so that there is a record the lone worker can refer back to if questions are raised later.
- Where there is reasonable doubt about the safety of a lone worker, consideration should be given to sending a second worker or appointing an individual for the worker to check in with.

Assessment of Risk

All lone workers should make risk assessments, consulting others where necessary, in order to ensure they take relevant precautions, including but not limited to those above. In drawing up and recording an assessment of risk the following issues should be considered, as appropriate to the circumstances: the environment (location, security, access); the context (nature of the task, any special circumstances); the individuals concerned (indicators of potential or actual risk including previous incidents); any other special circumstances. All available information should be taken into account and checked or updated as necessary.

Reporting

Should an incident occur, a report should be made immediately and shared with the deacons, and a debrief should occur at the nearest available time. If the incident has safeguarding implications, the procedures laid out in the Safeguarding Policy should be followed.

Monitoring and Review

The ongoing implementation of the Lone Working Policy will be monitored by the deacons. Lone working and risk assessment will be regular agenda items for deacons meetings. Any worker with a concern regarding these issues should ensure that it is discussed as appropriate. The policy will be reviewed as part of the regular cycle of reviews, unless changing circumstances require an earlier review.

Support

The Suzy Lamplugh Trust is a leading charitable authority on personal safety. The Trust are a registered charity, and a leading authority on personal safety: <http://suzylamplugh.org>. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has published a range of guidance and support materials to help employers manage the risk of work-related violence to staff. This includes a set of case studies demonstrating good practice in managing the risks to Lone Workers. These are all available on the HSE website at: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/violence>.