Shield Service Group Ltd

LONE WORKING POLICY

Policy Statement

Where the conditions of service delivery or its associated tasks require staff to work alone, both the individual staff member and managers have a duty to assess and reduce the risks which lone working presents.

Purpose

This policy is designed to alert staff 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.

Scope

This policy applies to all staff who may be working alone, at any time, in any of the situations described in the definition below.

Context

Lone workers face the same risks as anyone else, as well as those directly related to their work. Within Shield Service Group's overall policy to safer working practices, support for lone workers is an essential part, and the same principles apply, particularly:

- a commitment to supporting staff and managers both in establishing and maintaining safe working practices
- recognising and reducing risk
- a commitment to the provision of appropriate support for staff a clear understanding of responsibilities
- the priority placed on the safety of the individual over property a commitment to providing appropriate training for staff
- equipment such as mobile phones, personal alarms and torches will be made available as appropriate.

Definitions

A lone worker is an employee who performs an activity that is carried out in isolation from other workers without close or direct supervision. Such staff may be exposed to risk because there is no-one to assist them and so a risk assessment may be required.

Mandatory Procedures

Personal Safety

- Staff must not assume that having a mobile phone and a back-up plan is a sufficient safeguard in itself. The first priority is to plan for a reduction of risk.
- Staff should take all reasonable precautions to ensure their own safety, as they would in any other circumstances.
- Before working alone, an assessment of the risks involved should be made in conjunction with the area/regional manager.
- Staff must inform their area/regional manager or other identified person when they will be working alone, giving accurate details of their location and following an agreed plan to inform that person when the task is completed. This includes occasions when a staff member expects to go home following a visit rather than returning to their base.
- Area/regional managers must ensure that there is a robust system in place for signing in and out, and that staff use it.
- If a member of staff does not report in as expected, as agreed plan should be put into operation, initially to check on the situation and then to respond as appropriate.
- Arrangements for contacts and response should be tailored to the needs and nature of the team. Issues to take into account include:

  ◦ staffing levels and availability
  ◦ the identified risks
  ◦ measures in place to reduce those risks

- Where staff work alone for extended periods and/or on a regular basis area/regional managers must make provision for regular contact, both to monitor the situation and to counter the effects of working in isolation.
- Staff working in the community should be issued with a mobile phone; they are responsible for checking that it is charges, in working order, and with sufficient credit remaining with the relevant provider. Personal alarms may also be provided.

Assessment of Risk

- In drawing up and recording an assessment of risk the following issues should be considered, as appropriate to the circumstances:

  o the environment – location, security, access
  o the context – nature of the risk, any special circumstances

- o the individuals concerned – indicators of potential or actual risk history – any previous incidents in similar situations
  - o any other special circumstances

- All available information should be taken into account and checked or updated as necessary.
- Where there is any reasonable doubt about the safety of a lone worker in a given situation, consideration should be given to sending a second worker or making arrangements to complete the task.
- While resource implications cannot be ignored, safety must be the prime concern.

Planning

- Staff should be fully briefed in relation to risk as well as the task itself.
- Communication, checking-in and fall back arrangements must be in place.
- The area/regional manager is responsible for agreeing and facilitating these arrangements, which should be tailored to the operating conditions affecting the team.

Reporting

- Should an incident occur, the reporting and de-briefing should be carried out by the area/regional manager.
- The identified person should debrief in the first instance; if this is not the staff member's area/regional manager, that area/regional manager should be informed as soon as practicable, and continue the process.

Monitoring and Review

- The ongoing implementation of the Lone Working Policy will be monitored through the supervision process.
- Lone working and risk assessment will be regular agenda items for team meetings.
- Any member of staff with a concern regarding these issues should ensure that it is discussed with their area manager or the whole team as appropriate.
- The policy will be reviewed as part of the regular cycle of reviews, unless changing circumstances require an earlier review.
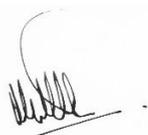
Signed: Date: 1st May 2021

Malcolm Rose, Chief Executive Officer - On behalf of Shield Service Group Ltd