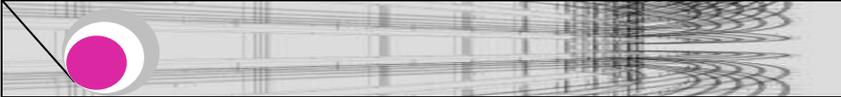


<i>'Providing you with the home that you need.'</i>	Protection Of Lone Workers	Control ID	TPP ID P 200021
		Effective Date	4 th January 2010
		Revision Date	Annually
		Revision Number	1
		Approved By	<i>P. Woodcock</i>

T.P Properties (TPP) has a legal and moral responsibility to effectively manage the risks associated with individual members of staff working on their own. The Company must ensure the safety of employees who work alone, whilst carrying out their duties for the organisation. The Company recognises its obligations under the 'Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974' and 'The Management of Health', 'The Corporate Manslaughter and Corporate Homicide Act 2000' and 'Safety at Work Regulations 1999'. The policy's intention is to ensure the safety of staff, as far as is reasonably practicable, who sometimes work alone, by minimising the risks that they face through development of a bank of safety measures.

DEFINITION

Lone workers are those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision. These may include employees from the administration staff and employees performing visits off site.

ORGANISATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The Managing Director has overall responsibility for the discharge of this policy and development of risk assessments.
2. Managers are responsible for:
 - a. Ensuring that all personnel are aware of the policy through provision of the 'Policy and Procedures Manual' and discussion as required.
 - b. Monitoring effectiveness.
 - c. Scoping work tasks to identify potential hazards, where necessary.
 - d. Ensuring sufficient resources are available to support the application of lone worker systems across the Company.
 - e. Ensuring staff are appropriately trained through tool box talks, supervisions, discussion or formal training sessions.
 - f. Making sure that all records of monitoring and incidents involving lone workers are reported to the Managing Director to enable the systems to be reviewed and revised.
 - g. Not insisting on staff lone working where they are not confident of their safety or in doing so they may be compromised.
2. All staff must:
 - a. Ensure they have read the policy and any supporting documentation.
 - b. Undertake all relevant training including conflict resolution training (as required) and use the specific training before entering a lone worker situation.
 - c. Conduct proper planning prior to undertaking a visit and utilise continual dynamic risk assessment during. Staff should never put themselves or their colleagues at risk; should they feel at risk they should withdraw immediately and seek further advice or assistance.
 - d. Properly use all appropriate technology which has been provided for their own personal safety, such as mobile telephones (keeping them appropriately charged, information texted as required and on their person) and vehicle tracking systems.
 - e. Ensure that they have read the outcomes of any risk assessment and have access to copies.
 - f. Inform their manager if they have any concerns about the policy, practice or risk assessments.

- g. Ensure they adhere to any systems developed for their protection whilst working alone (defined within this document.)
- h. Take personal responsibility for sharing information regarding their whereabouts.
- i. Report any 'near misses' and actual incidents or matters of concern, using the Company's 'Potentially Hazardous Visit Form.'
- j. Ensure that their personal information held with the HR systems is up to date at all times.

SITUATIONS WHERE LONE WORKING IS PROHIBITED

The following examples specify systems of work that legally require more than one person:

1. Entry into confined spaces including tanks, manholes, pipes, flues, ducts, ceiling voids, enclosed basement rooms and other spaces where there may be inadequate natural ventilation.
2. The use of ladders which cannot be secured and require 'footing' by a second person.
3. Erection of scaffolding.
4. Working on or near live electrical cables.
5. Performing works in the home of a known 'high risk' individual.
6. Working on roofs.

Should staff be faced with any off the above scenarios when tackling a task, they are to cease it immediately and contact their line manager for advice.

MEDICAL FITNESS AND ILLNESS

Staff must inform their line manager if they feel unwell or they have a medical condition that means that lone working would place them at unnecessary levels of risk. The line manager can then consider the nature of any redeployment of the employee to an alternative position, should one be available.

In the event of a staff member feeling unwell, they are to contact their line manager at the earliest opportunity to allow the level of risk to be ascertained depending upon the sickness matter. Employees are to take this direction seriously as it is intended to prevent a lone worker falling ill to such an extent that they cannot summon assistance. Staff should also seek the support of the householder, business provider or fellow sub-contractor, should they be in an emergency situation where immediate support is required.

SUPERVISION

Although lone workers are not subject to constant supervision, they are to use their mobile telephones in the event of any concern, question or change in schedule. In addition, contact with their line manager is maintained through the lone workers telephoning when they arrive at a 'job', and on its completion. The Company's meeting, supervision etc. structures, and its belief in 'walk around management' should present a lone worker with opportunities for contact.

NAME BADGES

It is not perceived that the use and wearing of name badges presents any risk to an employee as no incidents of difficulty or harassment have ever been logged. Therefore, personnel are to continue to use these as a means of assuring identity. Should this circumstance change a revision of this directive will be made subject to the staff member making a full disclosure of events to the Managing Director.

LONE WORKERS IN AN OFFICE

Where there is a situation where members of staff are in a lone working scenario, they should where possible ensure most/all of the following items are adhered to:

1. Ensure that they have control over access to the building or room.
2. Lock themselves in whilst ensuring that they can get out quickly in the event of an emergency.
3. Only give access to others if they are sure that they know who they are.
4. Arrange for someone to telephone at a predetermined time to check that they are all right.
5. Check on means of escape from the building in an emergency, e.g. fire doors.
6. Check the access to a telephone.
7. Attempt to plan appointments etc. so that other people are also in the building. Should this not be possible and a meeting is scheduled in the office, the employee is to make a call soon after the visitor has arrived, telling the person at the other end of the line that they will get back to them at a certain time, after the visitor, Mrs X etc. has left. This acts as both an information call and a deterrent.
8. Keep valuables such as handbags, cases, equipment etc. out of sight.
9. If they are assaulted or threatened they must contact the Police immediately on 999.
10. If they are verbally abused or receive indecent telephone calls they are to report the matter immediately to their line supervisor / manager who in turn must report it to the Managing Director. For all incidents (no matter how insignificant) staff must complete an 'Accident, Incident and Dangerous Occurrence Form.'
11. Report any matter of concern to line management who in turn must report it to the Managing Director.

GENERAL ADVICE FOR LONE WORKERS UNDERTAKING SCOPING EXERCISES, LOCATION AND CLIENT VISITS

Both managers and staff have a responsibility to ensure working arrangements are as safe as possible. A key factor in this is the manager (or other staff) knowing where staff plan to be, and for there to be the means of two way communication whenever possible.

During these lone worker scenarios each employee should, where possible, ensure most/all of the following items are adhered to:

1. Check the 'Potentially Hazardous Visit Record' to see if any historical difficulties have occurred.
2. Plan the route. Staff should know where they are going and how to get there. If a staff member has to use public transport they are to find out the times to avoid waiting for long periods at bus stops or stations. Only licensed taxi cab firms can be used and with prior approval from the Managing Director.
3. Stay alert and keep their mind on their surroundings.
4. Try to visit in daytime or where the task allows, with someone else.
5. Always carry a charged mobile telephone, which is kept on and held on the person.
6. Telephone the line manager/lone worker appointed company on arriving at the venue and indicate how long the task will take.
7. Read any job sheet which may highlight any concerns, risks or hazards, and adhere to any directive given.
8. On arrival at a location for work, should an employee meet with a situation that they did not expect, they should leave, make other arrangements, and contact their line manager.
9. Staff are to always complete any location signing in procedure and ask the representatives of the other business of any risks, should these colleagues be available.
10. Staff should never enter a house or venue if they are suspicious.
11. If a task takes significantly longer than anticipated, the employee should contact their line manager to explain why.

12. Domestic pets and other animals can present problems. Should a staff member feel unsure or unsafe they are to ask the animal's owner if it can be removed to another room.
13. Try to keep both hands free and do not walk with hands in pockets.
14. Try to avoid passing stationary vehicles with their engines running and people sitting in them.
15. Whenever practicable staff should walk facing oncoming traffic to avoid curb crawlers.
16. If a staff member is approached when they are stopped in a vehicle, they are to lock all doors. The window can be opened a fraction to allow conversation. Assistance can be called for the other person from the employee's mobile telephone, whilst they remain in the vehicle.
17. Avoid walking in isolated or poorly lit places or in subway, whenever possible (e.g. deserted streets, dark parks and alleyways.)
18. Do not wear headphones or use a mobile when walking down the street alone, as this prevents any danger signs from being heard.
19. Do not keep all valuables in one place. Instead place valuables such as wallets in an inside pocket or use a money belt.
20. If an incident is viewed ahead, then the staff member should cut off or turn around before getting to it, and head to the nearest safe place such as a garage, Police station or anywhere else where there will be lots of people.
21. If a staff member encounters an aggressive situation they are to try and stay calm and talk their way out of it. Physical defence should only be a last resort. In particular an aggressive stance should be avoided (crossed arms, hands on hips or a raised arm) as this is perceived as challenging and confrontational. Staff should avoid looking down on anyone or touching someone unnecessarily, as well as providing good personal space.
22. Avoid using unlit or isolated cash machines.
23. If a staff member sees someone else being attacked, it is not always the best idea to offer assistance as this could escalate the problem and cause them to be attacked too. It may be better to stand back at a safe distance and call loudly for help, using the mobile telephone to contact the Police. It is thought that once an attacker sees these actions they are more likely to stop, whilst leaving the worker safe.
24. Should a staff member think they are being followed, they are to trust their instincts and take action. As confidently as they can, they are to cross the road turning to look to see who is behind them. If the following continues they are to keep walking and head for a busy area, where they are to tell people what is happening.
25. If they are verbally abused or receive indecent telephone calls they are to report the matter immediately to their line manager who in turn must report it to the Managing Director. At the end of the incident a full report must be made on the Company's 'Accident, Incident and Dangerous Occurrence Form'. A copy of this form must be held on the file concerning potentially hazardous visits and the excel system modified to highlight this location or person as one of concern should a 'job' be allocated.
26. Report any 'near miss' and actual incidents or matters of concern using the Company's 'Potentially Hazardous Visit Form' or 'Accident, Incident And Dangerous Occurrence Form'.

PERSONAL SAFETY AND VEHICLES

A lot of lone worker circumstances require the use of a vehicle. The following guidelines are offered to staff to prevent an incident. Employees should, where possible, ensure most/all of the following items are adhered to:

1. Avoid having to stop to check maps etc. by planning the route beforehand.
2. Try to park in open, well lit places. Wherever possible, choose a manned car park and park as closely as possible to the attendant.
3. Reverse into the space.
4. Keep valuables out of sight in the vehicle, ideally locked in the boot or rear.
5. Make sure the interior light is working. Shut all windows. Lock all doors. Note exactly where the vehicle is parked.
6. If workers collect a ticket on entering the car park, they should not leave this in the vehicle (unless indicated to do so) as this will make it easier for a thief to steal the vehicle.
7. When returning to a vehicle it is important to have the key ready and enter quickly.
8. Before entering scan the back seat or rear to check that no one has climbed into the vehicle.
9. Lock the doors and close the windows as a routine when getting into a vehicle and drive off safely but quickly.
10. Remove the ignition key on every occasion the vehicle is left, even if this is just briefly.
11. Stereo systems should be stowed according to manufacturer's instructions.
12. Never leave any documents (bar manuals etc.) in a vehicle. In particular the registration document, MOT and insurance as these will help a thief sell the vehicle.
13. Credit cards should never be left in a vehicle (one in five credit card thefts occur from unattended vehicles.)
14. Employees are to keep vehicle doors locked when travelling. (Should they be involved in a vehicle accident, the emergency services will have no difficulty in opening the doors to complete a rescue.)
15. Staff should never tamper with any vehicle tracking devices as these allow the exact location of a vehicle to be known in the event of an incident.

PERSONAL SAFETY ON THE INTERNET

Whilst employees are to consult with the Company's policy on 'The Use Of Computers, E-Mail And The Internet' for more advice, the following provides some key information:

1. Do not use websites which have an over 18s warning.
2. If any offensive emails are ever received the staff member should inform their line manager immediately who in turn will inform the Managing Director. A full report must be made on the Company's 'Accident, Incident and Dangerous Occurrence Form'.
3. Employees are not to give out personal information like name, address, telephone number etc.
4. Passwords are to be kept private (though no Company issued passwords can be changed without authorisation.)
5. Workers are to be mindful that people that they have an Internet business relationship with might not be who they say they are. Should there be any concern the employee's line manager should be informed. Likewise, should a meeting be arranged with an Internet/E-mail business source, this should always be in a busy, public area or in the Company office.
6. Personnel are to remember that viruses can be spread through email attachments, and only open those which are received from people who are known. All uncertain E-Mails should be deleted. Extreme care should be taken in respect of emails with attachments.

HOUSING DEVELOPMENT SPECIFIC SAFETY ADVICE

Lone workers should not be put at any more risk than any other employee. In order to achieve this, the following measures must be adhered to:

1. Only experienced staff are allowed to undertake any scoping activity.
2. Should a member of staff be feeling unwell, they are to inform their line manager to consider the appropriateness of undertaking lone worker tasks.
3. When undertaking scoping a hard hat, overalls, work boots and a high visibility vest must be worn. Should drug paraphernalia be visible, suitable gloves should also be adopted.
4. Staff should wear any PPE indicated on the work sheet or as defined for the safe use of the tools required (see 'Equipment Use') or task completion.
5. Check to ensure the provided mobile phone is charged and is on their person, and they have used it according to any lone worker system i.e. logging in an appointment and duly logging out.
6. Should a staff member be working in an unknown household they are to assume that it is 'high risk' unless otherwise informed.
7. When arriving on location ensure that the access and egress points are known and are free from hazards.
8. Should there be fire risks the worker must take into their work space a suitable fire extinguisher.
9. Staff should always carry a first aid kit, and bring this into the venue when starting the task. In the event of an accident line management must be contacted immediately.
10. An initial quick review of the area where work is to be performed must be undertaken to ensure that nothing has changed since scoping or to identify key concerns prior to scoping.
11. A development exercise may require the employee to identify all hazards to inform for future correct job planning.
12. Staff must ensure that they are capable to handle any temporary access equipment, trestles, machinery and goods. Should they have any concern they are to contact their line manager for advice.
13. Personnel are to use equipment in line with manufacturer's guidelines (see 'Equipment Use'.)
14. Manual handling manoeuvres should be assessed and undertaken in line with good practice guidelines (see 'Manual Handling' policy.)
15. Should the employee perceive a risk of violence, they are to leave the venue immediately and contact their line manager (see Company policy on 'Violence and Aggression'.)
16. Young, pregnant and disabled workers may not always be able to work alone depending upon a review undertaken by line management.
17. Chemical or hazardous substances must always be used in line with manufacturer's recommendations (see 'COSHH' policy and related COSHH sheets.)
18. If a two person job has been decided upon due to the fact that the task has to be undertaken in a 'high risk' client environment, staff should be mindful in having one person to act as a back up or alarm raiser in the event of an incident.
19. Staff performing any out of hours work must text/contact line management or lone working partner organisation with the following:
 - a. Who is being visited;
 - b. Where the 'job' is (full address);
 - c. The duration;
 - d. The expected time of return to home.

Staff should always consider any historical information before making the visit; carry their mobile, and not enter the building if they feel unsafe but contact line management. Employees are to text/contact the chosen party on the completion of the task.

FAILURE TO MAKE CONTACT OR CONCERN FOR STAFF MEMBER

Should a staff member be feared missing, the following response will be initiated:

1. Telephone the mobile phone.
2. If contact is made the following script may prove useful if it is suspected that the employee is in a 'hostage' or aggressive circumstance:
 - a. *'Are you ok?'*
 - b. If they are able to answer and in trouble, they must reply, *'Yes, can I have extension 1234?'*
 - c. The manager is then to say, *'Extension 1234? Right away!'*

Should the script be used and the risk identified, the manager must dial 999 giving the Police as much information as possible.

Staff may also use this ring to alert colleagues or their manager if they are in difficulty and not able to speak freely.

3. Inform the Managing Director.
4. Telephone the staff member at home (up to date personal information is vital.)
5. Check any vehicle tracking log and any lone working partner agency.
6. Contact the 'jobs' that they were to undertake in reverse order (last known backwards) or the one nearest any vehicle tracking point.
7. Call the Police.
8. At the end of the incident a full report must be made on the Company's 'Accident, Incident and Dangerous Occurrence Form'. A copy of this form must be held on the file concerning potentially hazardous visits and the Excel system modified to highlight this location or person as one of concern should another 'job' be allocated.