

## Lone Worker Policy

### Introduction

JK & Associates Therapy Services Ltd acknowledges that it has a duty of care to everyone involved in its work, whether staff, volunteers or administrators.

The JK & Associates Therapy Services Ltd also recognises that there will be times when volunteers and counsellors may be working on their own, either in the counselling room at Steeple View or external premises. The JK & Associates Therapy Services Ltd will endeavour to ensure that counsellors and volunteers feel safe in their surroundings as well as being safe.

This policy sets out the JK & Associates Therapy Services Ltd aims and objectives for the management of health and safety with regard to lone working.

The Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and regulations made under the Act place a number of duties on the JK & Associates Therapy Services Ltd and its staff and volunteers, including lone workers.

Lone workers are defined as those people who work by themselves and without close or direct supervision.

The policy will apply to all JK & Associates Therapy Services Ltd staff or volunteers in the following situations:

- People who work away from their base in a fixed establishment
- People who work outside normal hours
- Mobile workers working away from their home base
- Homeworkers

## Policy

The JK & Associates Therapy Services Ltd will carry out a risk assessment of all premises to be used by JK & Associates Therapy Services Ltd Staff or volunteers BEFORE allowing JK & Associates Therapy Services Ltd staff or volunteers to work on those premises

JK & Associates Therapy Services Ltd will take all practical steps to eliminate, reduce or minimise any risks identified and introduce appropriate control measures

Control measures will include instruction, training, supervision, protective equipment and communication procedures

All control measures will be checked for their effectiveness and to ensure they are being properly implemented

JK & Associates Therapy Services Ltd volunteers/workers will be encouraged to discuss specific incidents and problems to share experiences and concerns with view to eliminating risks or to introduce more effective controls

## Risk Assessments

When planning work activities which may involve lone working, The JK & Associates Therapy Services Ltd will consider the following:

- Can the risks of the job be adequately controlled by one person?
- Does the workplace present a special risk to lone workers?
- Is there safe access and egress?
- Does the work involve lifting objects too large or too heavy for one person?
- Is there a risk of violence against the lone worker?
- Are women especially at risk?
- Are young persons especially at risk?
- Is the individual medically fit and suitable to work alone?
- What training is required for the lone worker?
- How will the lone worker be monitored and supervised?
- What arrangements will be necessary should the lone worker become ill, have an accident, or if there is another type of emergency?

## Control Measures

All counsellors/workers will receive relevant training on personal safety and/or violence prevention

All incidents affecting the Health & Safety of lone workers must be reported to the JK & Associates Therapy Services Ltd manager or supervisor

## Working in external premises/venues

- If a member of staff is concerned about particular premises/venues they should discuss their concern with the JK & Associates Therapy Services Ltd manager or supervisor.
- A mobile telephone and/or a personal alarm will be provided to all staff who work at external premises/venues
- The whereabouts of staff will always be known to the JK & Associates Therapy Services Ltd manager.
- Regular contact will be made by the lone worker and the JK & Associates Therapy Services Ltd manager (or authorised deputy)
- JK & Associates Therapy Services Ltd will have a procedure in place to check that a lone worker has returned to their home safely

## Lone workers should;

- NOT go into a situation if you feel at risk
- use conflict resolution or defusing tactics that includes: being aware of non-verbal communication, how to behave in a non-confrontational way, the importance of being polite and listening to clients
- Be aware of surroundings at all times and be aware of the situation you are in. Be aware of your own actions and how others may perceive you
- If you feel threatened, make an excuse and leave. Ensure you can leave the premises quickly if you need to.
- NOT offer lifts to clients

## Monitoring and review of the policy

This policy will be reviewed annually by the JK & Associates Therapy Services Ltd Board of Directors and recommendations for change will be implemented immediately

- Appeals against a disciplinary sanction (for paid staff) are outlined in the Disciplinary Procedure
- Appeals by a complainant about the process shall be dealt with as outlined in the Complaints Policy and Procedure
- Appeals by an alleged harasser against the decisions made following an investigation will be dealt with under the Complaints Policy and Procedure

## Records

Where a complaint is informal and resolved at this stage, no record will be kept on personal files.

Following a formal complaint, where a claim is found to be unsubstantiated, no records will be retained

Where a complaint is substantiated or partially substantiated but does not lead to disciplinary action (for staff) or other sanctions (for volunteers or contractors), a letter confirming the actions taken (including meetings which have happened to deal with the incident) will be retained, with a copy given to the alleged harasser.

Where the matter proceeds to disciplinary or another policy and procedure, the record keeping will be in keeping with that policy and procedure.

In all cases, details of the incident and the outcome will be recorded in the incident records, which are kept confidential.