

TO:	Governance Sub-Committee
PREPARED BY:	Linda Sichi (Deputy CEO)
SUBJECT:	LONE WORKING POLICY
DATE OF MEETING:	26 March 2025
APPROVED BY:	Paul Martin (CEO)

LONE WORKING **POLICY**

LS/MARCH.2025/REF.P33



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Registration No. HCB 161 SC Registered: Financial Conduct Authority - 1818 R(S).
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LONE WORKING POLICY

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1. MILNBANK HOUSING ASSOCIATION (MHA) STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

MHA's mission is to provide excellent homes and services in a thriving community. We believe that people living in the MHA community should:

- Have warm, safe, and affordable homes, and receive excellent services from MHA.
- Live in neighbourhoods that are clean and well cared for, with real community pride.
- Have access to opportunities and services that promote a good quality of life.

2. MHA's VALUES

Working as 'One Milnbank' so that we offer the same quality of services, support and housing to all tenants and residents.

3. LEGAL & REGULATORY COMPLIANCE

The Management Committee leads and directs MHA to ensure good outcomes for its tenants and other service users. MHA adheres to the Scottish Housing Regulator's Regulatory Framework Financial & Regulatory and to all relevant legal employment requirements associated with this policy.

Although there is no single piece of legislation that explicitly applies to LW, the following apply indirectly:

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- The Corporate Homicide Act 2007
- The Management of Health at Work Regulations 1999,
- Protection from Harassment Act 1997

4. POLICY INTRODUCTION

MHA aims to limit lone working (LW) as is reasonably practicable. Where LW is necessary, we will take all reasonable steps, in accordance with our duty of care towards staff to ensure employees are safe while working for MHA. In line with our duty of care, staff should not be put at any greater risk if LW compared to colleagues who are not. MHA have a duty to assess LW risks and take any reasonable, practical measures to reduce and eliminate these as much as possible. This will be done via our risk assessment process which staff are expected to co-operate and follow these measures as this assists in keeping employees safe. (This policy also applies to MHA volunteers).

5. DEFINITION OF A LONE WORKER

5.1 There are many definitions of a LW; for MHA purposes, we will use the HSE definition: a lone worker is someone who:

"Works by themselves without close or direct supervision". This means that within MHA, a LW is likely to include the following:

- Working outwith normal office hours, even on a one-off basis.
- Working with customers on your own or away from colleagues (out of sight or earshot)
- Working on your own in an office, at home or some other location.
- Working in others' homes or premises.
- Travelling alone as part of your job (this does not include commuting).

- Working in the reception area alone, or in another area isolated from the rest of MHA.
- Working in the office but away from colleagues.
- Any other situation identified through the risk assessment process.

This above list is not exhaustive.

6. EMPLOYER RESPONSIBILITIES

6.1 As an employer, MHA has a responsibility to make sure staff are safe while working and this includes any time staff are LW. To do this MHA will:

- Ensure risk assessments are carried out and reviewed regularly or as and when required.
- Provide procedures for working safely while LW.
- Make sure staff are provided with appropriate and relevant training to understand our procedures and risks associated with LW.
- Have reporting systems in place to record, investigate and review any near misses and incidents.
- Inform HSE using RIDDOR procedures (if required)
- Provide appropriate aftercare and support (in the event of any incident)
- Involve employees when considering potential risks of any incident
- Involve staff when considering potential risks with LW and reasonable control measures.
- Make sure staff are issued with a copy of this policy.
- Review this policy and update it as is appropriate.

7. EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITIES

Employees also have responsibilities which we expect to be fulfilled. These are as follows:

- Adhere to MHA LW procedures and speak to a manager if unsure.
- Not knowingly put themselves at risk.
- Remove themselves from any situation they do not feel comfortable and/or safe in.
- Report all LW incidents and near misses, by following our reporting procedures.
- Attend training when this is provided.
- Take part in our LW risk assessment process.
- Whilst in a LW situation carry out an informal/dynamic risk assessment.
- Know, understand and follow this policy and the procedures.
- Ensure the details of the emergency contact people is provided in line with our procedure.

8. MANAGING RISKS

8.1 The overall purpose of risk management is to identify, eliminate, reduce and control risks. It is recognised that LW can present increased risks to staff. It is, therefore, the responsibility of both MHA and staff to manage these.

8.2 In practice this means that MHA will carry out LW risk assessments which will identify any potential risks. MHA will also consider the following during the exercise:

- the remoteness of the workplace.
- potential communication problems.
- the likelihood of a criminal attack.
- potential for verbal and physical abuse.
- consideration of LWs' potential feelings of isolation, stress and depression.
- whether or not all equipment, materials, etc can be handled safely by one person.
- whether or not the person is medically fit and suitable to work alone.
- how the LW will be supervised.
- how the LW will obtain help in an emergency such as an assault, vehicle breakdown, accident or fire.
- whether or not there is adequate first-aid cover.

8.3 In conducting the lone working risk assessment MHA will:

- consider the additional risks to expectant mothers and young persons.
- where practical have the person that owns the risk conduct the risk assessment, where this is not possible or practical they will as a minimum be involved in the process and in the development of safe working methods.
- maintain a file of all LW assessments.
- Ensure those working alone are provided with adequate information, instruction, and training to understand the hazards and risks and the safe working procedures associated with working alone.

8.4 A formal risk assessment will take place prior to all known LW situations however, it is important that staff are aware and are comfortable to undertake a dynamic risk assessment in any LW situation they may find themselves in. If staff feel that they require guidance on this, please speak to your line manager.

9. **REMOTE WORKING**

Often employees who are remote working will be alone in their homes which can bring with it lone working risks. Lone workers may also be required to travel, visit sites and deal with normal workloads. Increased risks for lone workers associated with remote working will be addressed through the risk assessment process and control measures will be communicated to employees. Control measures may include the following:

- Regular communication and supervision
- Clear direction, management and support over work expected and workloads
- Provision of training in the work required and any technology (e.g. video conferencing)
- Ensuring employees are competent to deal with the work and the working conditions
- Information on HR issues and how to raise concerns
- Information on general homeworking H&S
- Ensuring opportunities for employees to engage with their colleagues on an informal basis are in place

10. **NEAR MISS AND INCIDENT REPORTING**

It is vital that staff report any LW near miss or incident as soon as possible to their line manager. If it is not possible to report immediately, the incident must be reported within 12 hours of it occurring. On reporting the incident, the line manager must act in accordance with MHA reporting procedures as detailed in our Health & Safety Manual and they will update staff accordingly.

All near miss and incident information must be reported to the Maintenance Co-ordinator, and a near miss/incident form should be completed (APPENDIX A). The form is available from the shared Health & Safety teams file.

11. LONE WORKING PROCEDURE

Where LW is necessary staff will follow MHA's safe working arrangements which are as follows:

- make reasonable steps to ensure your own safety.
- remove yourself from any situation you feel unsafe or uncomfortable and move to a place you feel safe and report to your line manager.
- Inform your line manager/assessor of any near misses, incidents or safety concerns.
- follow the emergency procedures below when lone working if required.
- make sure you know, have read and understood the lone working risk assessments and all the control measures in place.
- ensure arrangements are in place so that someone else is always aware of your whereabouts.

12. TRAINING & INFORMATION

All employees will be trained in line with our lone working procedures and control measures identified through the risk assessment to make sure they are aware of potential risks and procedures to reduce and eliminate these.

All employees will receive a copy of the lone working policy and procedures along with the risk assessment. This will be covered for new employees during the induction period, prior to any lone working taking place.

13. EQUALITY & HUMAN RIGHTS

MHA's is committed to equal opportunities, and we will respond to the different needs and service requirements of individuals, and we will not discriminate against any individual for any reason outlined in Equality & Human Rights Legislation.

14. DATA COLLECTION

MHA will manage all personal data in accordance with our obligations under the GDPR regulations and the Association's Policy.

15. POLICY MONITORING & REVIEW

The Lone Working Policy will be reviewed by the Governance Sub-Committee every 2 years or in line with EVH updates, or as otherwise deemed necessary.

Additional Information

- The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) published guidance on how to Working alone: Health and safety guidance on the risks of lone working.
- ACS
- Health & Safety Systems Control Manual

APPENDIX A

NEAR MISS & INCIDENT REPORTING FORM

Location of Near Miss		
Description of Near Miss		
	Yes	No
In your view, could a re-occurrence result in an injury?		
Are there any actions you believe would prevent a re-occurrence? (list below)		
NAME:	DATE:	
SIGNATURE:	TIME:	

Task	Lone Working				Completed by Reviewed by	Herbert Gusta Steve Campbell CMIOSH			
Location	Various Projects Across G31, G33 & G4 Postcode Areas				Date Completed	22/11/2024	Review by Date	22/11/2025	
Hazard (potential to cause harm), hazardous effect and potential injury.		Persons at Risk	Risk Pre-Controls		Control Measures	Residual Risk			
			Severity	Likeliho		Risk	Severity	od Likeliho	Risk
Ill health, collapsing with a medical condition. Fatality.		E	4	4	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Managers are to be aware of the need for lone workers to be fit and healthy when instructing them to work alone for significant periods.Manager keeps in regular contact with lone workers			
Slips, trips or falls caused by not noticing slip, trip or fall hazards due to poor lighting or unfamiliar with the environment. Sprains, strains or potential broken bones.		E	3	3	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Employees who are expected to carry out lone working are all in possession of a mobile telephone.Lone workers are to keep to areas with good lighting as far as is reasonably practical.			
Physical violence, being attacked by a member of the public. Serious or injury or death.		E	3	3	9	<ul style="list-style-type: none">In the event of any display of violence whether physical or verbal, the worker is to immediately withdraw from the situation and report the event to a Senior Manager.In the event of the lone worker feeling that there may be a threat of violence they are to withdraw from the situation.			

Any risks not accounted for on this risk assessment MUST be added and adequately controlled prior to works being carried out.