

## **LONE WORKING POLICY**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **Purpose of this policy**

A proportion of Monitor Group personnel work alone with the greater percentage employed in cleaning duties. Monitor Group is responsible for the health, safety and welfare at work of its employees and the health and safety of those potentially affected by its activities. These responsibilities however cannot be transferred to employees just because they work alone or work without close supervision. The company is therefore under a duty to organise and control solitary workers. Employees equally have responsibilities to take reasonable care of themselves and other people affected by their work and to co-operate with the company in order for it to discharge its legal obligations.

This document gives general guidance on solitary working and the duties imposed upon any client in whose premises company personnel enter either as visitors or workers on their own.

#### **Legal Responsibility**

The following statutes apply:

- The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974: Section 2 – Employers duties to their employees; 4 – Duties of persons in control of premises to persons other than their employees; 7 – Duties of employees.
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.
- Some legal requirements specify systems of working which require more than one person, namely:
  - a. The confined Space Regulations 1997
  - b. Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992, Work at Height Regulations 2005 -use of ladders and stepladders.
  - c. Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 – certain fumigation work and other work with substances hazardous to health.

### **EMPLOYEE TYPES LIABLE TO WORK ALONE**

#### **Types**

Company employees liable to work alone include the following:

- Sales Consultants
- Senior Managers
- Health & Safety Coordinator
- Project supervisor(s) and Operatives(s)
- Cleaners/Hygiene Operatives

Such employees may work alone during the day and night and in certain circumstances may not readily be able to contact others at a moment's notice.

### **SAFE WORKING ARRANGEMENTS FOR WORKING ALONE**

#### **Precautions**

The general rule is that solitary workers should not be exposed to significantly more risks than employees who work together.

Precautions will therefore take account of normal working conditions and foreseeable emergency situations, e.g. fire equipment failure, illness and accidents. However, as the sites and nature of duties undertaken on them will differ. The company will carry out risk assessments relative to each particular situation as necessary and appropriate procedures will derive as a result. These procedures will be in addition to this 'generalised' procedure which should cover for most situations.

## **CRITERIA TO BE CONSIDERED**

### **Risk Assessments**

In assessing hazard and risk by site and to individual employees, the following criteria must be considered:

1. Does the workplace present any special risk to the worker?
2. Is there safe access and exit from the site by one person? Can one person safely handle any temporary access equipment which is necessary, such as portable ladders, trestles, etc?
3. Can all the plant, substances and goods involved in the work be safely handled by one person?
4. Is there a risk of violence, fire, emergency, accident/incident?
5. Has the solitary worker any medical condition which might make them unsuitable for working alone? Consider both routine work and foreseeable emergencies which may pose additional and physical or mental burdens on the individual.
6. What is the extent of any current supervision, i.e. site checks, progress checks, telephone calls, etc? Are other procedures required?
7. Has the employee received training on the precautions to be taken whilst working alone, i.e. emergency, fire, escape route from client and Monitor's site assessments? Has this been recorded?
8. Is the employee in a position where a friend or relative can raise the alarm should they not return home after completion of their work?

## **THE EXTENT OF SUPERVISION**

### **Control of the work**

Although solitary workers cannot be subject to constant supervision, Monitor Group is under a statutory obligation to provide appropriate control of their work. Supervision complements information, instruction and training and helps to ensure that employees understand the risks associated with their work and carry out the necessary safety precautions. It can also provide guidance in situations of uncertainty.

The extent of supervision required depends upon the risks involved and the proficiency and experience of the employee to identify and handle safety issues. Employees new to the job, undergoing training, doing a job which presents special risks or dealing with new situations may need to be accompanied at first. The extent of supervision required is a management decision (down to contract/site manager level). However, it will not be left to individuals to decide that they require assistance. Safety supervision can generally be carried out when supervisor visits are made to check progress and quality of work and may take the form of periodic site visits coupled with discussions in which issues are assessed.

## **CHOICES OF CONTROL**

Once having assessed the hazards and risks associated with solitary work or its various sites of operation, the company has various means of control at its disposal. In all circumstances,

however, the company will ensure the following (responsibility down to contract/site manager level):

### **Location**

It is aware at all times of the location of its solitary workers, what time they are travelling to work (normally), their working on specific sites and when they should be leaving work.

Such information must be recorded either on a display board or in note form to which the supervisor/manager/colleagues has immediate access.

For peripatetic workers, a record must be made as to their likely order of visits, estimated start/finish times and travelling times. If once underway there is any alteration to the original intended pattern of visits, then their manager/supervisor must be notified by telephone as soon as practically possible.

For both lone and peripatetic workers, in relations to their intended work places or visits, telephone numbers where they can be reached must be given to their manager/supervisor in advance of their work commencing.

### **Signing In**

In some establishments a signing in/out register is available for visitors/contractors to sign. Where this is the case the register must be signed by the employee.

### **Checks on Employee**

Where deemed necessary, the company may check on the employee to ensure their continuing safety in any of the following ways:

- Periodic/ad hoc visits by the employee's supervisor/manager at the employee's worksite.
- Periodic/ad hoc communication by telephone between the employee and his/her supervisor/manager.

### **Arrangements to Cover for Emergencies**

In the event of any emergencies arising which are liable to occur at any time, the company will ensure so far as is reasonably practicable that the following arrangements are put in place to cover for such an eventuality so that help may be provided:

- The employee has a mobile phone and it is kept fully charged.
- That they have their manager/supervisor and nominated family member/friend on speed dial in case of emergency.
- That the employee has made the arrangement that should he/she not return home from work at an expected time then a member of their family or friend (waiting for them) will contact that employee's manager/supervisor by telephone indicating that they have not returned home.
- The friend/family member will in this case be provided with the telephone number of that employee's manager/supervisor to affect this arrangement.

The company will also ensure that at least one of the following emergency arrangements are in place;

### **Where no on-site telephone is available**

The employee provides or is provided with some means of raising the alarm by an electronically operated device or their own mobile telephone. The mobile phone must be kept fully charged and in credit for this purpose.

The employee then telephones either:

- Their manager/supervisor
- A family member or friend previously provided with the telephone number of the employee's manager/supervisor.
- The emergency services (police/fire/ambulance as appropriate).

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- Their manager/supervisor
- A family member or friend previously provided with the telephone number of the employee's manager/supervisor.
- The emergency services (police/fire/ambulance as appropriate).
- The manned reception in the building or on site where he/she is working.

**IN ALL CASES THE EMPLOYEE'S SUPERISOR/MANAGER SHOULD BE ABLE TO ACCESS A DUPLICATE SET OF KEYS TO THAT PROVIDED TO THE EMPLOYEE FOR THE BUILDING IN WHICH THEY ARE WORKING. THIS WILL ALLOW ACCESS BY THE MANAGER/SUPERVISOR AND EMERGENCY SERVICES WHERE NECESSARY.**