

**Merton Mencap**

**Lone working  
Policy & Procedure**

**March 2014**



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**LONE WORKING  
POLICY & PROCEDURE**

**This policy and procedure has been adopted by Merton Mencap through its Executive Committee which remains responsible for its review.**

**Original signed version is kept at the Merton Mencap office.**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Chair of Executive Committee**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Chief Executive**

**Record of adoption and review of this policy and procedure:-**

**Adopted:** 1 July 2010  
**Reviewed:** 28 June 2011  
**Reviewed:** 11 March 2014

# Merton Mencap

## Lone working policy & procedure

### Introduction

The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 places a duty of care on every employer to ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of employees. Additionally, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 places a duty on employers to consider the hazards and reduce the risk of injury and ill health to employees.

Lone workers are those who spend some of their time working by themselves, often conducting home visits or working from home. Changing work patterns at Merton Mencap mean that more staff could be working alone.

This document sets out the charity's policy and procedure for lone workers.

### Policy

Establishing safe working procedures for lone workers is no different from assessing the safety of our other activities. The Chief Executive will consider the circumstances relating to the tasks lone workers are required to do and will complete a risk assessment for each role.

When completing risk assessments, the Chief Executive will consider the following:-

- Does the workplace present an increased risk to lone workers?
- Is there a safe way in and out of the premises for one person?
- Can one person carry all the equipment necessary to perform the role, or are objects too heavy?
- Is any personal protective equipment needed?
- Is there any risk of violence?
- Are women at risk if working alone?
- Are younger workers at risk if working alone?

The Chief Executive will ensure lone workers are suitably fit and healthy to work alone and, in doing so, may seek guidance from an occupational health professional.

The Chief Executive will ensure any risks are communicated to the lone worker and a copy of the risk assessment showing the identified hazards and control measures is also given to them.

The Chief Executive will establish a system for the lone worker to raise an alarm, in the event of an emergency. All lone workers will be provided with a Merton Mencap mobile phone and a basic first aid kit.

## Procedure

When carrying out duties, all staff must adhere to the following:-

1. If possible and as appropriate, meetings should take place at the office or other neutral venue (e.g. High Path Community Centre) rather than undertaking a home visit.
2. In the case of home visits, staff are responsible for obtaining information about any known risks associated with the person(s) they are planning to visit, e.g. by contacting a referring party, such as a care manager or social worker. In cases where hazards are identified, the Chief Executive must be advised and, as a result, a home visit may not go ahead or two members of staff may attend, as appropriate.
3. Staff must obtain the name, address and telephone number of the person they are visiting and enter this in the main Merton Mencap diary, which is kept in the Office Manager's office.
4. Staff must use the wipe-clean board in the main office to record their whereabouts, including the estimated return time to the office after meetings.
5. In the case of an emergency, staff should use the key phrase '***please cancel my appointment with the chair of trustees***', to initiate an immediate response from colleagues without raising the alarm. All office staff must be aware that this key phrase means that a lone worker may be in trouble. Any member of staff receiving this call should notify the Chief Executive or, in their absence, the Chair of Trustees, immediately. Once the whereabouts of the lone worker is established, the police should be contacted, by dialling 999.
6. If a lone worker does not intend to return to the office or will be returning to an empty office, they must ensure they contact a colleague after their meeting to say they are safe. It is the responsibility of the lone worker to ensure this arrangement is made with a colleague prior to the meeting starting. If the lone worker does not contact their colleague after the meeting, as planned, the Chief Executive must be notified.

## Staff responsibilities

All staff have a general duty to take care of themselves and others while at work and must familiarise themselves with this document and the risk assessments associated with the work they do.

Staff must inform their line manager of any changes to their working practice which may require a review of the risk assessment of their role.

All accidents and incidents, including those which occur while lone working, must be reported to the Chief Executive using the appropriate incident/accident report form. A central log of all accidents and incidents at the Merton Mencap office.

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### Audit Guidance

<b>Check</b>	<b>Evidence</b>
Is a risk assessment conducted for each role within the charity and updated every 2 years?	<p>Ask Operations Manager for Risk Assessments for 'Roles'.</p> <p>Check whether an assessment of lone working has been included in each Risk Assessment and, in these cases, whether measures have been taken to keep staff safe</p>
In cases where a member of staff working alone has a health condition/disability, have actions been taken to secure their safety?	<p>Check what action has been taken.</p> <p>Has Occupational Health had input and, if so, do records exist which show the situation is being managed sufficiently?</p>
<p>Are the 6 procedures (outlined above) being followed by staff?</p> <p>Do all staff know key phrase to be used in an emergency?</p>	<p>Speak to staff about these procedures.</p> <p>Check whether these are being adhered to.</p> <p>Ask staff whether they know the key phrase. Check what action staff would take in this eventuality.</p>