

St Albans Mencap

Charity number: 210073

stalbansmencap.org.uk

Lone Worker Policy & Procedure

St Albans Mencap members of staff, due to the nature of the work carried out, may be subject to lone working and they should therefore be aware of the lone worker policy and that they can seek assistance from the manager as required.

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Document control:

Version:	Date approved:	By:	Review due:
1.0			

Summary of changes:

Version:	Changes:
1.0	Converted old July 2020 version to new format (May 2026) for review

Aim

Due to the nature of the work carried out by St Albans Mencap, some members of staff may be subject to lone working. Staff should be aware of this lone worker policy and seek assistance from the manager as required.

Confirmation of dates will be confirmed by a manager via email or post, in which will contain an invoice for total payment.

Definition of Lone Working

Lone working does not mean that a person has to be working in complete isolation all of the time. An employee may, for example, be the only/last person in the office, working one to one with a service user, travelling between appointments/locations or working from home.

Hazards of Lone Working

People who work alone face the same day to day hazards whilst at work as other employees. However, for lone workers the risk of harm may be greater because of some degree of isolation. It is therefore, crucial that the specific hazards of lone working are taken into account when risk assessments are carried out. Examples of specific hazards are:

- Accidents/emergencies arising out of the work
- Fire
- Inadequate provision of rest, hygiene and welfare facilities
- Violence
- Moving and handling
- Travelling
- Sudden illness
- Stress due to isolation

St Albans Mencap's Duties

It is the duty of St Albans Mencap to safeguard the health, safety and welfare of all its employees whilst at work and also the health and safety of those who may be affected by the work they carry out e.g. service users. These duties cannot be transferred to people who work alone.

Risk Assessments

Risk assessments are required for all work carried out by St Albans Mencap. This is particularly important for lone working.

- No lone working may be carried out until a full risk assessment has been carried out. This must take into account the risks associated with the task/activity, the client (if any), the venue and the employee. If the activity includes community access, the risks to/from members of the public must also be assessed.
- Any training requirements or extra resources must be completed or in place before lone working can begin.
- NB Where the risks cannot be eliminated or reduced to an acceptable level for a lone worker then it may be necessary either not to carry out the task or to provide extra personnel to achieve an acceptable level of safety.

- The assessment must be reviewed regularly (as laid down in the assessment) and immediately if any aspect changes (including a change of employee).

Suitability for Lone Working

Managers must establish, in consultation with the employee, whether there are any particular personal issues which may affect their suitability for working alone e.g. medical conditions. Risk assessments must then establish appropriate work parameters and any additional safeguards or resources which must be put in place before work can start. For some people lone working may be inappropriate.

Employees have a duty to inform their manager of any issues that may affect their suitability for lone working.

Additional Management Support for Lone Workers

In addition to St Albans Mencap policies and procedures designed to ensure the safety of its employees, extra measures may be necessary to ensure the safety of employees who work alone.

Out of Normal Working Hours Support for Lone Workers

The Mencap office is open during normal office hours and can provide support to a lone worker. However, some employees may work and travel outside normal office hours and should ensure that they have obtained any advice/guidance or additional resources that may be required for both routine and emergency situations.

It is the responsibility of the staff member to inform the line manager of any circumstances/potential circumstances involving lone working whereby they feel uneasy.

Diary/Rota Management

Where lone workers may be out of their base office on a regular basis the team leader or line manager must always be in possession of the employee's up to date diary/rota to establish the employee's whereabouts. Any change to the normal timetable must be notified to the team leader at least 24 hours ahead.

Supervision Guidelines for Managers of Lone Workers

It is important that employees undertaking lone working have some form of regular contact (usually weekly) with their line manager, in addition to formal supervision sessions (at least every 16 weeks).

It is the line manager's responsibility to carry out regular monitoring, such as accompanied visits with lone working employees, to ensure that:

- The service remains safe for lone working.
- The employee is operating within the service guidelines and in accordance with St Albans Mencap's policies and procedures.
- All risk assessments are current and complete and have been reviewed within the relevant timescale.

- All requirements of the risk assessment are in place and any restrictions are being observed.

Telephones

All employees who are expected to work alone must have access to a telephone. This can either be a telephone in the workplace or a mobile telephone if working without easy access to a landline. (They will not be responsible for any cost involved).

Accident/Incident Reporting

The St Albans Mencap Accident/Reporting System is contained in the Health, Safety Policy.

Incidents and the completed forms must be brought to the attention of The Manager AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. A review of the circumstances and risk assessments must be carried out as a matter of urgency. In the case of serious incidents, no further lone working will normally take place until the review is completed.

Emergency Placements

Lone working is not permitted until full risk assessments have been completed. Consequently emergency placements must use a minimum of 2 staff at all times until such time as the assessments have been completed