



Norfolk and Suffolk Animal Trust (NASAT)

Lone Working Policy

Approved by: Board of Trustees

Date Approved: 13.05.2026

Next Review Due: 13.05.2027

1. Purpose

Norfolk and Suffolk Animal Trust (NASAT) are committed to ensuring the health, safety, and welfare of all trustees, staff, volunteers, foster carers, contractors, and visitors involved in the operation of the kennels and associated activities.

This policy outlines the arrangements, responsibilities, and procedures relating to lone working within NASAT kennels.

NASAT recognises that lone working can present additional risks and aims to ensure that appropriate safeguards and procedures are in place to reduce those risks as far as reasonably practicable.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All trustees, staff and volunteers
 - Any individual undertaking duties alone on behalf of NASAT
 - NASAT kennel
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3. Definition of Lone Working

Lone working refers to situations where an individual:

- No one else at the kennel premises
- Is isolated from colleagues or immediate assistance
- Undertakes duties outside normal operating hours

Lone working may occur during:

- Dog walking
 - Opening or closing procedures
 - Cleaning and feeding duties
 - Veterinary transport
 - Emergency call-outs
 - Foster support visits
 - Out-of-hours welfare checks
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4. General Principles

NASAT will seek to ensure that:

- Lone working is avoided where reasonably practicable
- Risks associated with lone working are assessed appropriately
- Individuals are provided with relevant guidance and support
- Appropriate communication systems are maintained
- Emergency procedures are understood and accessible
- No individual is expected to place themselves at unnecessary risk

Individuals must not undertake lone working duties if they feel unsafe, unwell, insufficiently trained, or unable to manage the situation safely.

5. Risk Assessments

NASAT will assess risks associated with lone working activities, considering:

- The number and behaviour of dogs on site
- Known behavioural or medical risks
- Environmental hazards
- Time of day
- Access to communication devices
- Experience and competency of the individual
- Potential emergency situations

Additional precautions may be implemented where higher risks are identified.

6. Lone Working Procedures

Individuals undertaking lone working duties should:

- Inform an authorised person of their location and expected duration of work
- Carry a charged mobile phone where possible
- Maintain access to emergency contact information
- Avoid entering kennels with dogs assessed as high risk unless authorised
- Use appropriate handling and safety equipment
- Secure gates, doors, and entrances appropriately
- Report concerns, incidents, or hazards promptly

Where reasonably practicable, check-in procedures should be used during lone working periods.

7. High-Risk Situations

Lone working must not take place in situations considered unreasonably dangerous, including:

- Handling dogs known to present a significant aggression risk without authorisation
- Situations involving unsafe environmental conditions
- Emergencies requiring additional assistance
- Tasks requiring two-person handling for safety reasons

Additional support must be sought where risks cannot be safely managed alone.

8. Accidents, Emergencies, and Incidents

In the event of an accident, injury, escape, aggressive incident, fire, or medical emergency, lone workers should:

- Prioritise personal safety
- Contact emergency services where required
- Contact Kennel Management or a Trustee
- Follow emergency procedures where safe to do so

All accidents, near misses, injuries, or safety concerns must be reported promptly to the trustee team.

19. Welfare and Wellbeing

NASAT recognises that lone working can place additional emotional and physical pressures on individuals.

Trustees, staff, volunteers, and foster carers are encouraged to:

- Raise concerns regarding workload or safety
- Request assistance where needed
- Report incidents or near misses openly
- Avoid undertaking tasks beyond their competency or comfort level

NASAT will seek to always promote a supportive and safe working environment.

11. Monitoring and Review

The Board of Trustees will review this policy annually, or sooner if required due to changes in legislation, operational practice, welfare guidance, or identified risks and incidents.