

Lone Worker Policy

Policy · US · Updated 2026-07-13 · Square brackets are placeholders to replace with your own details.

A lone worker policy is the written statement of how your organization keeps people safe when they work where nobody would see or hear a problem — opening a store alone, visiting clients in their homes, working a night shift solo, or driving between sites. It defines who counts as a lone worker, what checks happen before lone work is allowed, and the check-in system that notices when something goes wrong.

Lone work rarely creates new hazards; it removes the safety net from existing ones. A fall, a medical emergency, or a threatening customer that a colleague would handle in minutes becomes serious when nobody knows for hours. The policy's job is to shrink that window — first by controlling the risks, then by making sure someone always notices, fast, when a lone worker stops responding.

This template gives you the policy statement, the risk assessment approach, the check-in system with escalation steps, the controls for common lone-work situations, and the training and review routine that keeps it working after the first month.

Purpose and scope

This policy sets out how [Your company] identifies, assesses, and protects lone workers. It applies to every employee who works without close or direct supervision and without a colleague nearby who could see, hear, or quickly reach them — whether that is all shift, part of a shift, or occasionally.

That includes [adapt to your operation]: staff opening or closing [site] alone, employees visiting clients' homes or third-party premises, delivery and field staff traveling between locations, and anyone working outside normal hours when the building is otherwise empty. Contractors working alone on our premises are covered by the coordination rules in this policy.

Policy statement

[Your company] does not treat working alone as inherently unacceptable — but no one works alone until the risks of their specific task have been assessed, the controls in this policy are in place, and a check-in arrangement is running. Where the assessment concludes a task is too dangerous to do alone, it is not done alone: the answer is a second person, a schedule change, or not doing the task.

Every lone worker has the right to stop work and withdraw to a safe place when a situation feels unsafe — a threatening person, a dangerous property, a task going wrong — and will never face criticism for doing so. [Name/role] owns this policy, the risk assessments under it, and the check-in system.

Identifying lone work and assessing the risk

Managers identify lone-working situations in their area and record a risk assessment for each at [location/system], reviewed [frequency] and after any incident. The assessment asks, for this task, this place, and this person:

- What could go wrong, and how would anyone know? A medical emergency, a fall, equipment failure, fire — every scenario gets an answer to "who notices, and when?"
- Is there a violence risk? Cash handling, late-night opening, home visits, and lone reception duty carry a people risk that a locked door and a colleague normally absorb.
- Is the task itself safe for one person? Some tasks are prohibited alone at [Your company]: [list — e.g. work at height above [height], confined space entry, high-voltage work, specific machinery].
- Is this person okay to work alone? Medical conditions, experience level, and training all matter — new hires do not work alone until signed off on [criteria].
- Does the location change the answer? Poor cell coverage, remote sites, and client premises each need their own controls, recorded in the assessment.

Check-in system

Every lone worker is covered by a check-in arrangement proportionate to the risk. The arrangement for each role is recorded in the risk assessment; the default is:

- Before lone work starts: the worker confirms their location, task, and expected finish time with [named contact/system].
- During: scheduled check-ins at [interval — set by risk level, e.g. hourly for higher-risk work], by [call, message, or monitoring app], plus an immediate check-in when moving to a new location.
- At the end: a positive "finished and safe" confirmation — silence is never treated as "probably fine."
- Missed check-in escalation: at [minutes] overdue, the contact calls the worker; no answer, they call the [backup number/site]; still nothing, they follow the escalation steps — [manager, then site visit or welfare check, then 911] — without waiting for a second missed check-in.
- Emergency signal: lone workers have a way to raise the alarm that does not depend on dialing — [panic button, monitoring app duress code, agreed phrase for a coerced call].

Risk controls for common situations

- Opening and closing alone: check for signs of forced entry before entering — if anything looks wrong, do not go in; call [police/manager] from a safe distance. Lock doors behind you until opening time, and cash out away from windows.
- Home and client visits: check the visit history for warnings before booking; keep the address and appointment times in [system]; park for an easy exit; leave immediately if the situation deteriorates and report it the same day.
- Late-night and out-of-hours work: doors locked, [security/CCTV] arrangements active, and the check-in interval shortened to [interval].
- Driving between sites: journey plans shared for long routes, breaks per [policy], no phone handling while driving — check-ins happen parked.
- Equipment: lone workers carry a charged phone, [first aid kit, flashlight, personal alarm as assessed], and know the poor-coverage fallback for their route.

Incidents and near misses

Any incident, near miss, threat, or missed check-in involving a lone worker is reported to [name/role] the same day and recorded per the injury and illness reporting procedure. Near misses matter most here: the fall that almost happened to a lone worker is the rehearsal for the one that will.

After any incident, the relevant risk assessment and check-in arrangement are reviewed before lone work in that situation resumes.

Training, records, and review

Lone workers are trained on this policy before their first lone shift: the check-in system, the escalation steps, the situations where they stop and withdraw, and the specific controls for their role. Managers and check-in contacts are trained on the escalation side — a check-in system whose contact hesitates is theater.

Risk assessments, training sign-offs, check-in logs, and incident reports are kept at [system/location] for [period]. This policy is reviewed [frequency, e.g. annually], after any lone-working incident, and whenever roles, hours, or locations change. Owner: [name/role]. Next review due: [date].

How to use this template

1. List every situation where someone actually works alone — include the accidental ones, like the last person out on a slow night, not just the rostered ones.
2. Write a short risk assessment per situation and decide the check-in interval from the risk, not from what is administratively convenient.
3. Pick a check-in method your people will really use — a monitoring app, a buddy call schedule, or a front-desk log — and name the person who owns escalation.
4. Define your prohibited-alone task list explicitly; the assessment's hardest and most valuable output is "not alone, ever."
5. Run a missed check-in drill in the first month: let a check-in lapse deliberately and time how long escalation takes. Fix what you find.
6. Check your state and local requirements for your sector — late-night retail, home care, and hospitality rules vary by state and locality.

Official guidance

- › [OSHA — OSH Act General Duty Clause \(Section 5\)](#)
- › [OSHA — Workplace violence](#)
- › [OSHA — Recommended practices for safety and health programs](#)

This template is provided in good faith and for general information — it is not legal advice. Adapt it to your organisation and, where your sector carries specific legal requirements, have the finished document reviewed by a qualified adviser. The live version at <https://trainedteam.com/templates/lone-worker-policy-us> is kept current; this file is a snapshot.