



## FRIENDS OF THE FAMILY WINCHESTER LIMITED

### LONE WORKER POLICY

#### **STATEMENT OF INTENT**

Friends of the Family recognises that some employees and volunteers work alone in a range of settings and that the Health and Safety of these individuals is paramount.

N.B. This policy should always be read in conjunction with Friends of the Family Health and Safety Policy.

#### **AIM**

- To raise awareness of Health and Safety issues related to lone working
- To give guidance on assessing and controlling the risks
- To ensure that as far as possible, people working alone are not at more risk than other employees and volunteers

#### **Who is a Lone Worker?**

An employee or a volunteer who

- works alone with families in their own homes
- travels alone in relation to their volunteer work
- works alone at the Friends Meeting House office or at home

#### **The Law**

There is no general prohibition in health and safety law of working alone, but there is a duty of care under the Health and Safety at Work Act. However, when determining a safe system of work, it is likely that there will be a need for additional controls to be put into place. These controls will be identified once a risk assessment has been undertaken.

## **METHODS**

Friends of the Family will ensure that all Lone Workers are aware of and fulfil their responsibilities for Health and Safety. They will do this by

- ensuring that this policy is disseminated, implemented and monitored
- ensuring that employees and volunteers are aware of the need for risk assessment and appropriate controls are in place
- establishing preventive measures to minimise the risks
- ensuring that employees and volunteers receive appropriate training where necessary e.g. general risk assessment procedures and methods, dealing with violent or aggressive behaviour etc.
- recording any incidents using the Friends of the Family's incident report form (Appendix B)
- monitoring the frequency of reported incidents and conducting regular analysis to identify risks and hazards

Employees and volunteers must:

- take reasonable care of themselves and other people who may be affected by their acts or omission
- take sensible measures to ensure their own safety when working alone, travelling to keep appointments and when meeting with people they have not previously met.
- attend relevant training
- not endanger themselves or their colleagues
- not put their lives, or the lives of others at risk whilst attempting to prevent an act of violence
- ensure that the emergency services are called in an emergency
- report any incidents to the Project Manager/Line Manager at the earliest possible opportunity

## **Risk Assessment**

All employees and volunteers need to be aware of the potential risks and hazards associated with lone working. This includes working at the Friends of the Family office and home visiting.

Any risk assessment should take into account the potential for the following hazards

- physical or sexual abuse
- verbal abuse or threatening behaviour
- robbery
- theft / criminal damage
- road traffic accidents / breakdowns / punctures
- personal injury

When home visiting a new family, employees and volunteers should be made aware of any potential risks via the referral form and information from the Project Manager. Where there are risks already identified, procedures need to be in place. These risks may include reports concerning

- geographical location / type of housing
- environmental factors
- previous or current failure to comply with supervision or treatment
- previous or current failure to comply with prescribed medication
- use of drugs/ alcohol
- an individual being subject to court orders
- history of violence in the family
- a diagnosed mental illness / deterioration of condition

The risk assessment also needs to be reviewed when there are:

- any incidents involving employees or volunteers
- changes in family circumstances
- changes in employee's or volunteer's needs etc

**N.B.** If a family member has mental health or substance abuse problems they will only be accepted into the 5s to 13s Befriending if they are receiving support / treatment.  
Volunteers will not be asked to home visit families where domestic violence is current.

Policy reviewed and approved at Friends of the Family Trustee Meeting on 27/05/2021

Signed   
Chair of Trustees

Review date: April 2024

## Appendix A

### Procedures

#### Recommendations for home visiting families

At Friends of the Family the safety of our employees and volunteers is paramount and although some of the recommendations below are common sense we believe that it is appropriate to highlight them.

#### **When making a home visit employees and volunteers should:**

- PLAN for their own safety (Prepare, Look and Listen, Avoid Risk, Never Assume)
- ensure that colleagues/family members know where they are going and their expected time back. If it is the employee's intention to go directly home from the visit then this information must also be relayed at the same time.
- report back to the Friends of the Family office/Project Manager/Line Manager with any changes to their planned itinerary
- use the mobile provided by Friends of the Family to contact with families. If it is necessary to use their own mobile or landline they should withhold their personal telephone number by dialling 141 before the telephone number
- ensure that they carry a fully charged mobile phone and it is switched on
- not enter a home if they feel concerned about their safety. They should ask their Project Manager/ Line Manager for advice or extra support If they feel uneasy about making a home visit
- be prepared to identify themselves with their Friends of the Family identity card
- be aware of cultural issues and dress appropriately. If possible avoid taking a handbag/ valuables into the family home
- treat the family members courteously and remember they are guests in the family home
- allow enough time for their journey and let the family they are visiting and let the family know if delayed
- be aware of the general safety issues associated with road travel and be responsible for their own safety
- conceal bags and equipment in the boot of their car
- avoid parking on the family drive to avoid being blocked in
- avoid using waste ground, isolated pathways and subways, particularly at night
- be aware of the nearest place of safety e.g. shops
- if using taxis, they should ensure that the details of the taxi firm are logged with the Project manager/ Line manager
- if a person requests a lift in their car without prior arrangement, explain that they are not insured to carry passengers unless it is in relation to their voluntary work

If an incident occurs employees and volunteers should

- always put their own safety first
- allow a person to have their say and calm down
- only discuss the situation if they feel that the aggression is not directed at them
- recognise the limits of their own abilities to deal with a situation and leave when appropriate

For the welfare and safety of employees and volunteers who undertake lone work the following personal information should be stored on Friends of the Family's CRM.

Name

Address, telephone and emergency contact number

Relevant medical conditions

Mobile phone number

Car registration number, make, model and colour

Client details

#### **Procedure in event of a volunteer not returning from a home visit when expected**

- a relation of the volunteer who has not returned and has not been contactable on their mobile phone should telephone Friends of the Family on the office/mobile numbers provided on the emergency contact card. The Project Manager will then contact the family the volunteer has been visiting to track their movements. The date and time of all contacts with both parties should be kept as a record in case assistance from the Police is required
- if Friends of the Family are not contactable then the relation of a volunteer should open the envelope with the family contact details that has been stored securely in their family home and contact the family directly themselves
- if Friends of the Family or the volunteer's relation is unable to track down the volunteer and there is sufficient concern for that person's safety / wellbeing then the decision to report it to the police may be made

#### **Procedure in event of an employee not returning from a home visit when expected**

- a relation of the employee who has not returned and has not been contactable on their mobile phone should telephone the employee's Line Manager who will then contact the family the employee has been visiting to track their movements. The date and time of all contacts with both parties should be kept as a record in case assistance from the Police is required
- if Friends of the Family or the employee's relation is unable to track down the employee and there is sufficient concern for that person's safety / wellbeing then the decision to report it to the police may be made

#### **Guidance for employees working alone at the Friends of the Family office**

- if possible let a member of the Friends Meeting House know that you are present in the office
- ensure that office windows and door are secure when no one is in the Friends Meeting House
- ensure that the outside security light is switched on at all times
- if you are concerned and in immediate danger, call the police

**Appendix B**  
**Lone Working Incident Report Form**

Incident			
Name of person reporting incident			
Role			
Please give details of the incident / cause for concern (including who, where, when, what, how)			
Date the incident / cause for concern occurred			
Signed		Date	

Investigation			
Carried out by			
Position			
Please give details of the investigation and findings			
Recommended Preventive Actions			
Signed		Date	

Actions			
Carried out by			
Role			
Signed		Date	

