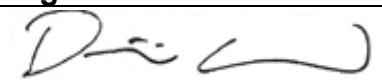**Newcastle West End Foodbank**

Lone Working Policy

Version No.:   1.1
Effective From: 15 November 2022
Review Date: 14 November 2025

Signature:	Signed by:	Position:	Date:
[signature]	Rev D Coad	Chairman	17 November 2022

1   Introduction

The Newcastle West End Foodbank (WEFB) seeks to protect those staff and volunteers who work alone and undertakes to, as far as reasonably practicable, minimise the risks to their health and safety and those who may be affected by their activities.

WEFB acknowledges its duty to make sufficient provision for the management of health and safety in the workplace and to fully implement the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations by providing the facilities, procedures and resources for a suitable and sufficient management system.

This policy sets out the commitments and arrangements of WEFB for minimising the risk of physical and non-physical assaults against staff and volunteers, risk of injury to them and improving overall personal safety and arrangements for lone working.

2   Definitions

2.1   Lone Working

Lone working is intended to cover all work proposed to be undertaken alone where the risk to the individual lone worker may be increased either by work itself, or by the lack of on-hand support should something go wrong.

Lone working can occur:

  −   During normal working hours at an isolated location within the normal
       workplace
Or
  −   When working outside normal working hours

Under both these circumstances, WEFB's guidance on lone working will apply.

2.2   Physical and Non-physical Assault

Physical assaults – General Baseline Definition:
"The intentional application of force to the persons of another, without legal justification, resulting in physical injury or personal discomfort."

Physical assaults include being shoved, pushed, punched, kicked, head-butted, but this is not an exhaustive list.

Non-physical assault – General Baseline Definition:
"The use of inappropriate words or behaviour causing distress and/or constituting harassment."

It is very difficult to provide a comprehensive description of all types of incidents that are covered under this definition; however, the following examples would be consistent:

- Offensive language, verbal abuse and swearing which prevents staff from doing their job or makes them feel unsafe
- Negative, malicious or stereotypical comments
- Invasion of personal space
- Brandishing of objects or weapons
- Near misses, i.e. unsuccessful physical assaults
- Threats or risk of serious injury to a member of staff, volunteers or visitors
- Bullying, victimisation or intimidation
- Stalking
- Spitting
- Alcohol or drug fuelled behaviour
- Unreasonable behaviour and non-cooperation
- Any of the above linked to destruction of or damage to property

This is not an exhaustive list.

3 Roles and Responsibilities

3.1 Chief Executive

The Chief Executive has overall responsibility for managing all aspects of health and safety.

- To ensure any risk to a person's safety is adequately controlled, and reduced to the lowest level; which is reasonably practicable.
- To ensure, where necessary, that appropriate risk assessments and safe systems of work are in place
- To ensure that this policy is adhered to by staff and volunteers and that resources are available to ensure effective implementation.

3.2 Employees and Volunteers

All employees and volunteers have a general duty to take reasonable care of their own safety and that of others who may be affected by their actions.

All employees and volunteers must further ensure that they will:

- Cooperate with WEFB to enable it to meet its obligations in respect of the prevention of physical and non-physical assaults and the reduction of risks related to lone working.
- Be vigilant and ensure that any known or identified risks are immediately reported to their line manager as a minimum requirement.

- To be aware of normal opening hours and the details of the contact details for senior managers and trustees so that immediate contact can be made in the event of an emergency (see notice boards).
- Report any accident or incident in accordance with the provisions of the incident reporting procedure.
- Attend health and safety related training

4   Risk Assessment and Control

The policy for dealing with lone working is no different from other activities in that it involves risk assessment for the lone working activity. The objective of the risk assessment is to ensure that satisfactory control measures are in place for such activities.

To simplify the procedures this policy proposes that lone working can be arranged into three risk categories, namely low, medium and high and examples of these are given in the table below, but please note that these are not exhaustive lists and each WEFB location needs to identify and organise their lone working activities into these categories.

Risk Level	Activities	Control Measures
Low	• People engaged in tasks they would normally undertake and where the work does not involve use of dangerous machinery, equipment or hazardous substances.	• Lone work is permitted, but it is good practice to ensure that a second person is aware of the first person's location and they have access to means of communication. • Inspections/risk assessments of the work area should be undertaken to ensure hazards have been identified, risk controlled and provisions for emergencies are in place, e.g. escape routes open, fire-fighting equipment, first aid, etc. • Induction training and health and safety information. • Staff are aware of the correct incident reporting procedures and are encouraged to report actual and near miss incidents.
Medium	• Work with members of the public • Handling money. • Working in areas that are difficult to locate and reach in an emergency.	<u>Essential requirement</u> Follow low risk control measures and in addition consider: • Staff and volunteers have access to means of communication • Provisions for emergencies are in place, e.g. escape routes open, fire-fighting equipment, first aid, etc.

Risk Level	Activities	Control Measures
Medium	• Lone worker suffers from illness that might increase risks of the job.	• Public access restricted • Appropriate communication should be maintained with the lone worker. The lone worker equipped by means of two-way communication, a pager, mobile phone or personal alarm. A system should be in place detailing what to do if an alarm is activated. • Additional control measures to risk assessment (for normal hours) should be considered due to fewer personnel on site and availability of first aid. Control and reduce material employed, at least two personnel present. Restricting work to familiar operations. Informing a senior member of the group when work is finished.
High	• Operation of specified dangerous machines or equipment • Moving machinery or equipment • Use of ladder which cannot be secured and require 'footing' by a second person • Service of 'live' electrical materials • Contact with potentially violent or aggressive members of the public. • 'High risk activities' as determined by management.	**LONE WORKING IS NOT PERMITTED**

5   Information Sharing

It is important that staff and volunteers have access to up to date information regarding contacts and locations so that they can do their job efficiently and safely.

One of the most important arrangements of this policy is the requirement for managers to know where staff and volunteers are working and when, so that their movements can be traced if necessary.

These issues make it necessary from management to provide a Control Point.

The Control Point could be any one of, or a mixture of, the following:

A Nominated person in the office, at all times staff are working alone at other locations
B An answerphone checked regularly
C Nominated person with mobile phone
D Nominated person at home

The Control Point would be the person or persons who should know the movements of all employees and volunteers when they have expressed concerns and when their movements need to be monitored.
These details should include, for each employee and volunteer, their:
- Name
- Address, home telephone number and any emergency contact
- Mobile phone
- Time started work
- Location where working
- Expected time of finish
- (If appropriate) car registration, make and model

6   Incident Reporting

All incidents and near misses must be reported by the employee/volunteer to their line manager as soon as possible.

When the report is received, the line manager will as soon as possible, interview the employee/volunteer involved a complete an Incident Report Form.

The line manager will ensure that the victim receives support if he/she wishes. A note of this action will be made on the incident report form.

No action will be taken until the situation has been thoroughly investigated. The follow up investigation will involve formal interviews with all those involved, including the victim, the alleged perpetrator, any witnesses and, if necessary, the police. A covering report by the person investigating, with records of interviews and a recommendation of action will be submitted to the CEO.

7   Aftercare and Support

On a practical level, WEFB will provide support to an employee or a volunteer, who is the victim of violence or aggression as a result of their work. This support may include:
- Counselling
- Training
- Support in dealing with the police and other authorities
- Support in using the Protection from Harassment Act 1997

If the incident involves a client and after consultation with the employee/volunteer, the CEO feels that the health, safety and well-being of that individual is at risk, WEFB may consider:
- Time-out exclusion of the client from the service
- Refusing service altogether to the client.

8   Equality and Diversity

WEFB is committed to ensuring that it treats its employees and volunteers fairly equitably and reasonably and that it does not discriminate against individuals or groups on the basis of their ethnic origin, physical or mental abilities, gender, age, religious beliefs or sexual orientation. This policy has been appropriately assessed.

9   Monitoring and Compliance

WEFB will maintain effective monitoring systems to ensure implementation of this policy, including the following:

Standard/ process / issue	Monitoring and audit			
	Method:	By:	Reporting to:	Frequency:
Control Pont contact details	Updated whenever change occurs	CEO		As and when required
Staff contact details and working hours	Updated whenever change occurs/checked annually	CEO		As and when required
Volunteer contact details and working hours	Updated whenever change occurs/checked annually	Volunteer Organiser	CEO	Annually

10   Amendments Table

Version	Effective From	Date of Review	Changes made
1.0	18 November 2019	18 November 2020	
1.0	18 November 2020	18 November 2022	Reviewed November 2020, no updates required. Next review date moved on by two years.