Lone Worker Policy

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Purpose

The purpose of this Lone Worker Policy is to establish clear work health and safety (WHS) requirements for managing the risks associated with workers who carry out tasks in isolation or without immediate assistance. Lone workers may be at increased risk of injury, violence, medical emergencies, psychological harm or delayed emergency response.

This policy sets out how [Company Name] will:

- identify and assess hazards associated with lone work
- implement and maintain effective control measures
- ensure appropriate communication, supervision and emergency response
- clarify the responsibilities of officers, managers, supervisors, workers and others
- support WHS compliance with relevant Australian work health and safety legislation, regulations and codes of practice.

This policy applies to all workers of [Company Name] including employees, contractors, labour hire workers, volunteers and students, who perform work alone or in isolation in any location, including clients' homes, farms, commercial properties, vehicles, depots, yards, warehouses and remote or rural locations.

Scope

This policy covers lone work activities undertaken by [Company Name] in the following sectors:

- disability and aged care services (e.g. in-home support, community visits, personal care)
- security services (e.g. static guarding, patrols, alarm responses, cash-in-transit)
- farming and agriculture (e.g. operating machinery alone, working in remote paddocks, chemical application)
- real estate (e.g. property inspections, open homes, rental inspections, site visits)
- transport and logistics (e.g. long-haul driving, single-person deliveries, after-hours depot work).

The policy applies to work undertaken:

- during standard and after-hours shifts
- in metropolitan, regional, rural and remote locations
- on foot, in vehicles, on plant or machinery
- at client or customer premises, public spaces, farms, warehouses, depots, yards and in transit.

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This policy should be read in conjunction with other [Company Name] WHS policies and procedures, including but not limited to:

- WHS Policy
- Risk Management Procedure
- Fatigue Management Procedure
- Aggression and Violence Prevention Procedure
- Driving and Vehicle Safety Procedure
- Incident Reporting and Investigation Procedure
- Emergency Management Plan.

Definitions

Lone Worker

A person who carries out work activities in isolation from other workers, without close or direct supervision, and where assistance may not be readily available in the event of an incident, emergency or illness. Examples include:

- a disability support worker providing in-home care alone
- a security officer undertaking a night patrol at an isolated site
- a farm worker operating a tractor in a remote paddock
- a property manager conducting a rental inspection alone
- a long-haul truck driver travelling between depots.

Remote or Isolated Work

Work that is isolated from the assistance of other persons because of location, time or the nature of the work. This includes work in remote rural areas, at night, in low-occupancy buildings, or where communication or access to emergency services is limited.

PCBU

A Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBU) as defined in WHS legislation. [Company Name] is the PCBU for the purposes of this policy.

Officer

A person who makes, or participates in making, decisions that affect the whole or a substantial part of [Company Name] (e.g. directors, senior managers). Officers have a due diligence duty under WHS legislation.

Worker

Any person carrying out work in any capacity for [Company Name], including employees, contractors, subcontractors, labour hire workers, apprentices, trainees, volunteers and work experience students.

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Reasonably Practicable

That which is, or was at a particular time, reasonably able to be done to ensure health and safety, considering and weighing up all relevant matters such as the likelihood and severity of harm, what is known about hazards and controls, availability and suitability of ways to eliminate or minimise risk, and the cost of those controls.

Personal Duress / Safety Device

An electronic device (e.g. duress alarm, GPS tracker, lone worker app, satellite device) that enables a worker to signal for help, track location or maintain scheduled welfare check-ins.

Roles and Responsibilities

Officers

Officers of [Company Name] must exercise due diligence to ensure that the PCBU complies with its WHS duties in relation to lone workers by:

- acquiring and keeping up-to-date knowledge of lone worker WHS risks and control measures
- ensuring [Company Name] has appropriate resources and processes in place to identify, assess and control lone work risks
- ensuring processes are in place for receiving, considering and responding to information about lone worker incidents and hazards
- verifying that lone worker risk controls, training, supervision and emergency arrangements are being implemented and are effective.

Managers and Supervisors

Managers and supervisors are responsible for implementing this policy within their areas of control. They must:

- identify roles and tasks that involve lone or remote work
- ensure task-specific risk assessments are conducted for lone work activities
- consult with workers and Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs) regarding lone work hazards and controls
- implement and maintain appropriate control measures, including communication systems, training, supervision and emergency procedures
- ensure lone workers are competent, trained and authorised to undertake their tasks
- verify that pre-start checks and welfare check-ins are completed
- respond promptly to missed check-ins, duress activations and reported hazards

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