Lone Worker Safety Procedure

SAMPLE

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Purpose

This Lone Worker Safety Procedure sets out how [Company Name] manages work health and safety (WHS) risks for workers who perform work alone, in isolation or without direct supervision. It provides clear requirements for planning, authorising, monitoring and reviewing lone work to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that lone workers are not exposed to unacceptable risks to their health and safety.

This procedure applies to all lone work undertaken for [Company Name], including:

- Disability and aged care services provided in clients' homes or community settings
- Security patrols, alarm response and guarding at client premises
- Real estate inspections, open homes and property management visits
- Farming and agricultural activities carried out in remote or isolated locations.

Scope

This procedure applies to:

- All workers of [Company Name], including employees, contractors, labour hire workers, volunteers and students
- All locations where work is carried out on behalf of [Company Name], including client homes, community locations, farms, rural properties, construction sites, offices, depots and public spaces
- All work activities where a worker:
    - Is the only person at the workplace or part of the workplace
    - Cannot be seen or heard by another person who could provide assistance
    - Is travelling alone for work purposes (including driving between client visits, patrols or properties)
    - Works outside normal hours where support services may be limited.

This procedure must be read in conjunction with [Company Name]'s:

- WHS Policy
- Risk Management Procedure
- Incident Reporting and Investigation Procedure
- Fatigue Management Procedure
- Domestic and Occupational Violence and Aggression Procedure
- Emergency Management Procedures.

Definitions

For the purpose of this procedure:

- **Lone worker** – A worker who performs work alone, in isolation, or without direct supervision, where assistance may not be readily available in an emergency, if an incident occurs, or if the worker becomes ill.

- **Remote or isolated work** – Work that is isolated from the assistance of other persons because of location, time or the nature of the work, including work in rural areas, at client homes, on farms, in security patrols or at open homes.

- **Reasonably practicable** – What could reasonably be done at a particular time to ensure health and safety, taking into account the likelihood and degree of harm, what is known about the hazard, availability and suitability of control measures, and the cost of those measures.

- **Duress device** – A personal safety device (such as a lone worker alarm, safety app, GPS tracker or radio with emergency button) that enables a worker to signal for help and be located quickly.

- **Check-in system** – A formalised process for regular contact between lone workers and a designated contact person or monitoring centre.

- **PCBU** – Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking, as defined under WHS legislation.

Legislative and Other Requirements

[Company Name] will manage lone worker risks in accordance with, but not limited to, the following legislation, codes and standards (as applicable in the relevant State or Territory):

- Work Health and Safety Act and Regulations

- Relevant industry-specific regulations, including those for aged care, disability services, security and agriculture

- Safe Work Australia model Code of Practice: Managing the Work Environment and Facilities

- Safe Work Australia guidance on remote or isolated work and violence and aggression in the workplace

- Australian Standards relating to communication systems, personal protective equipment (PPE) and vehicle safety.

Where there is any inconsistency between this procedure and legislative requirements, the legislative requirements will take precedence.

Roles and Responsibilities

Officers (e.g. Directors, Senior Executives)

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

- Ensuring appropriate resources and processes are in place to identify, assess and control lone worker risks

- Approving and resourcing lone worker communication and monitoring systems

- Ensuring procurement decisions (e.g. vehicles, duress devices, radios) take account of lone worker safety requirements

- Reviewing reports on lone worker incidents, near misses and audit findings and ensuring corrective actions are implemented.

Managers and Supervisors

Managers and supervisors are responsible for implementing this procedure within their areas of control by:

- Identifying all roles and tasks that involve lone work

- Undertaking and documenting risk assessments for lone work activities

- Determining whether lone work is appropriate for particular tasks or clients and specifying required controls

- Ensuring workers receive training and information on lone worker safety, communication protocols and emergency procedures

- Ensuring appropriate communication and monitoring systems are in place and used (e.g. check-in schedules, GPS tracking, duress devices)

- Confirming that vehicles, equipment and PPE used for lone work are fit for purpose and maintained

- Reviewing lone worker schedules to manage fatigue, travel times and time of day risks

- Responding promptly to lone worker alerts, missed check-ins and safety concerns

- Investigating lone worker incidents and near misses and implementing corrective actions.

Workers

All workers undertaking lone work must:

- Comply with this procedure and any local work instructions

- Participate in risk assessments and raise any concerns about lone work tasks or environments

- Follow pre-start planning and check-in procedures before commencing lone work

- Use issued communication devices, duress alarms, PPE and vehicles as instructed

- Immediately report hazards, incidents, near misses, aggressive behaviour or unsafe conditions encountered while working alone

- Decline or withdraw from work where they reasonably believe there is a serious risk to their health and safety (e.g. violent client, unsafe rural access