

# Lone Working Policy

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## 1. Statement of intent

1. The purpose of this policy is to protect staff and volunteers from risks associated with working alone on premises, travelling alone or working in an isolated setting in people's own homes or when on voluntary driving duties.
2. Although the risks posed to staff and volunteers from the people we support are low, ADCA does not expect anyone to expose themselves to unnecessary risks in the course of their duties.
3. ADCA will support any member of staff or volunteer who walks away from a situation in which they feel at risk.

## 2. Lone working on premises

1. ADCA requires details of staff and volunteers' mobile telephone numbers, home contact numbers and details of a person to be contacted in case of emergencies.
2. A personal alarm will be provided if requested.
3. Working alone in premises/venues used by ADCA is undesirable. However, it is not always practical to ensure that two people are present, so the emphasis of this policy is to **reduce risk**. Even when there is more than one person in the premises, there is still need for vigilance.
4. Before entering premises, ensure that the premises look as you would expect – no signs of damage or occupancy and no signs of doors or windows forced or unlocked. If you have concerns, **DO NOT ENTER** – or ask a second person to enter with you. Do not enter alone.
5. On entering the building, check that the building and contents are as you would expect. If you have any concerns, leave the premises.
6. While working alone in the building, ensure that you are near a phone which is in working order. Ensure that the front door is locked if people are not expected, and that emergency fire exit doors are closed. On leaving the building, ensure all doors are shut and locked and that fire exits are closed.
7. Insist that any visitors identify themselves if they are not known to you. Do not let anyone into the premises but close and lock the door and check identity by phone if needs be, or ask people to return at a later date suitable date. When talking to anybody you do not know on the phone, do not tell them you are alone in the building.
8. If anybody appears in the premises that you don't know, remain calm and non-threatening – ask who they are and who they are looking for, explain that the person they are looking for is not present and escort them out.
9. Always trust your instincts. If you do not feel comfortable about letting a person into the premises, ask them to return at a time when you will not be alone. If you make an appointment with somebody for the first time, or with somebody whom you are not comfortable being with, then arrange for somebody else to be present at the time of the appointment
10. If an incident occurs where there is a breach of your personal safety, report this to staff so they can complete an incident report, including the date, time, location and description of the incident with names and contact details of any witnesses, if known. This should be done no matter how minor the incident, as the policies outlined here may need to be reviewed.

### 3. Travelling alone during working hours

Travelling alone holds the same risks whether you are travelling for work or pleasure. The Suzy Lamplugh Trust recommends that an individual plans their movements, whether at work or in daily life:

#### **P\*L\*A\*N – for being safe out and about**

- **Prepare yourself for the journey**
  - know exactly where you are going and how you are going to get there
  - make sure you let someone know where you are going and when you expect to return
  
- **Look confident**
  - stand tall and look as if you know what you are doing and where you are going
  - be alert to what is going on around you
  - do not wear a personal stereo
  - carry a personal alarm (ADCA will provide one on request)
  - ensure you have a working mobile phone with you
  
- **Avoid risk**
  - do not take short cuts unless they are as safe as the longer route
  - do not change plans at the last minute
  
- **Never assume**
  - “It won’t happen to me”
  - do not ignore your instincts

Remember – never put yourself at risk – trust your instincts!

#### 4. Visiting people in their own homes or voluntary driving

1. Always arrange visits in advance so the person is expecting you. This includes voluntary driving, befriending visits and staff visits for assessments.
2. When assessing an individual's needs for ADCA's services, staff undertake a risk assessment of the home living situation and/or transporting by car, including access and exits. They also check whether the individual poses any risk of verbal or physical abuse or intimidation to ADCA staff or volunteers.
3. In the case of the Medical Transport Scheme, face-to-face staff assessment of people's needs and any risk posed are not usually carried out. Staff and volunteers who take bookings will obtain sufficient details of people's needs, age and disability to assess whether ADCA can offer a service, including whether a person requiring transport can comfortably get in and out of an ordinary car. Where there is any doubt about whether an ADCA Voluntary Driver can safely transport someone, the Coordinator should be informed so that a home visit can be arranged to assess needs and risks.
4. Where such risks are identified, staff will discuss with ADCA's Chairman or a designated Committee member whether and how a service can be offered. All identified risks will be recorded and all staff or volunteers will be told about them and how to mitigate the risk.
5. If you ever feel threatened or unsure of what to do when at someone's home you must **LEAVE IMMEDIATELY**. There is **no need to explain** why you are leaving – just leave.
6. If there are problems in the course of voluntary driving, then either
  - leave the car if it is safe to do so and telephone for assistance, or
  - take the person back home or to the nearest safe place and leave them there.
7. Inform staff as soon as possible about the situation, and staff will then let the person (or a relative, as appropriate) know why the staff member or volunteer left.
8. Staff assessments for driving and befriending services always include a risk assessment, including compatibility between the person being offered a service and the ability of volunteers to provide that service safely.

**REMEMBER !**

**NEVER PUT YOURSELF AT RISK**

**TRUST YOUR INSTINCTS**

**WALK AWAY!**