

# **EAST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**

## **HEALTH & SAFETY PROCEDURE**

### **LONE WORKING**

#### **SP19**

<b>Date of First Issue:</b>	<b>September 2023</b>
<b>Author:</b>	<b>Debbie Gray</b>
<b>Revision:</b>	<b>01</b>
<b>Approved by:</b>	<b>Laura Gold H&amp;S Manager</b>

## CONTENTS

<b>1. INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2. SCOPE .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES.....</b>	<b>6</b>
3.1 CHIEF EXECUTIVE .....	6
3.2 EXECUTIVE OFFICERS & MANAGERS .....	6
3.3 SUPERVISORS/TEAM LEADERS .....	7
3.4 EMPLOYEES .....	8
3.5 HEALTH AND SAFETY TEAM .....	8
<b>4. DEFINITION OF LONE WORKING .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>5. RISK ASSESSMENT .....</b>	<b>9</b>
5.1 IDENTIFY THE HAZARDS.....	10
5.2 WHO MIGHT BE HARMED AND HOW .....	10
5.3 EVALUATE THE RISK AND TAKE ACTION .....	10
5.4 RECORD THE FINDINGS AND IMPLEMENT CONTROL MEASURES.....	12
5.5 REVIEW AND REVISE THE RISK ASSESMENT .....	12
<b>6. DYNAMIC RISK ASSESSMENT .....</b>	<b>13</b>
6.1 DYNAMIC RISK ASSESSMENT PROCESS .....	13
<b>7. REPORTING OF LONE WORKING INCIDENTS.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>8. MANAGEMENT OF LONE WORKING INCIDENTS.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>9. INFORMATION AND TRAINING.....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>10. MONITOR AND REVIEW .....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>11. REFERENCES.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>APPENDIX 1 – DE-ESCALATION TECHNIQUES .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>APPENDIX 2 – CONTINGENCY PLAN - EXAMPLE .....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>APPENDIX 3 – LONE WORKER HAZARD CHECKLIST .....</b>	<b>21</b>

## DOCUMENT CONTROL AMENDMENT RECORD

Date	Issue No	Amendment	Person Responsible for Amendment
Jun '22	01	Conversion to new management system template	Debbie Gray
Sep '23	01	Review pre-approval	Laura Gold
Jan '24	01	Document Approved	Laura Gold

## 1. INTRODUCTION

East Dunbartonshire Council (EDC) has a legal duty under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 to ensure the health, safety and welfare at work of its employees. Additionally, The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (MHSWR) require that every employer undertake risk assessments to identify potential hazards to employee health and safety and anyone who may be affected by their work activity.

EDC accepts that a number of employees may require to work by themselves within the community without close or direct supervision, sometimes in isolated work areas or “out of office” hours. Where the conditions for service delivery or its associated tasks require employees to work or travel alone, both the Line Manager/Supervisor and individual employee have a duty to assess and reduce the risks, which lone working presents.

EDC is committed to meeting its statutory obligation to protect employees, so far as is reasonably practicable from the risks inherent with lone working and aims to do this by:

- Increasing Line Manager’s/Supervisor’s and employee’s awareness of safety issues relating to lone working;
- Providing advice, guidance and information relevant to the management of lone working;
- Ensuring the risks of working alone are assessed in a systematic and on-going manner, and that safe systems for lone working are agreed, implemented and reviewed regularly;
- Identifying staff who may work alone for significant periods and the subsequent provision of training to equip them with the necessary skills to recognise and manage risks from working alone;
- Maintaining robust reporting, recording and monitoring systems for all lone working incidents, in accordance with the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR);
- Ensuring statistics relating to lone working incidents are reported to relevant Committees/Groups to inform EDC’s strategic response to the Management of Lone Working;
- Encouraging the full reporting of all adverse incidents, including near-miss incidents, relating to lone working, thus enabling these to be investigated, with the subsequent development of Action Plans to prevent and minimise the potential for a recurrence; and
- Providing appropriate support to employees subject to an adverse event, whilst working alone.

*Note: This procedure should be read in conjunction with Health and Safety Procedure SP17 Violence & Aggression at Work and Violence in the Workplace policy 2004.*

This document has been created to provide a suitable and correct procedure for the Management of Lone Working.

## 2. SCOPE

This procedure applies to all East Dunbartonshire Council contractors, employees, trade operatives and team/squad leaders where it has been identified that in the course of carrying out their duties, there is a foreseeable risk of exposure to the risk(s) associated with lone working.

There are a number of areas within EDC where employees are required to work on their own for significant periods of time. The following, although not exhaustive provides examples of some of these areas:

- Enforcement activities, e.g. planning officers, environmental health officers, trading standards officers undertaking inspections or investigations;
- Working within the community either through home visits, or undertaking repairs to properties;
- On-call employees required to respond to emergencies;
- Staff working on their own within a large part of a premises, e.g. vehicle workshop, leisure centre;
- Facilities management employees, e.g. janitorial and cleaning staff;
- Travelling alone as required by work activities; and
- Cleansing/maintenance activities, e.g. litter picking, grass maintenance, and pitch management.

### **3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **3.1 CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

The East Dunbartonshire Council (EDC) Chief Executive has ultimate responsibility for health and safety and for making sure that "Lone Working" activities are appropriately managed.

It is important to acknowledge that the Chief Executive's responsibilities are shared, in that the Depute Chief Executive, Executive Officers and Managers will be responsible and accountable within their areas of responsibility for the management of "Lone Working".

#### **3.2 EXECUTIVE OFFICERS & MANAGERS**

Executive Officers and Departmental Managers must ensure the following:

- Adequate resources and competent person(s) are allocated to support the implementation of this Management Procedure and relevant associated Health and Safety legislation.
- Nominated person(s) are supported in the implementing the measures of this Management Procedure to comply with relevant Health and Safety legislation.
- Adequate procedures for identifying work activities and processes which may foreseeably cause harm to employees as a result of working alone;
- Sufficient systems for identifying the likelihood of the hazards associated with lone working being realised, and possible consequences, which might occur;
- Suitable procedures for enabling a risk assessment to be developed which will assist in eliminating or reducing the exposure of employees to risks associated with lone working;
- Suitable arrangements to provide information, instruction and training on hazards, risks, control measures and safe systems of work associated with lone working to all relevant employees. This will include refresher training at suitable intervals;
- Suitable procedures for routine checks to ensure control measures are being applied, particularly those relying on direct action by individual employees;

### 3.3 SUPERVISORS/TEAM LEADERS

Any person who has a supervisory responsibility for employees, has the responsibility for ensuring:

- All employees under their control involved in lone working activities are made aware of this procedure;
- Risk assessments relating to lone working are developed within their area of responsibility;
- Risk assessments are recorded and retained for inspection by the Health & Safety team, managers and enforcement agencies (i.e. Health & Safety Executive) and any other relevant person.
- Risk assessments are reviewed regularly in accordance with Health and Safety Procedure SP14 Risk Assessment.
- Control measures and corrective actions identified within the risk assessment are implemented, so far as reasonably practicable;
- Safe Systems of Work (SSoW) are developed, implemented, monitored and reviewed;
- Relevant employees are provided with communication devices, such as mobile phones, personal attack alarms, lone worker alert systems, where the risk assessment has identified this as a control measure;
- All relevant persons are informed of the contents of the risk assessment and SSoW and a record of this retained;
- Employees for whom they are responsible comply with health and safety requirements for their job;
- Lone working incidents are recorded within the EDC on-line "Accident/Violent Incident/Fire Alert" Reporting Form - HS1(a) and near miss events which had the potential for harm/damage in HS1(b) Reporting Form, in accordance with Health and Safety Procedure SP01 Accident & Incident Reporting" and e-mailed to the Health and Safety Team mailbox ([health.safety@eastdunbarton.gov.uk](mailto:health.safety@eastdunbarton.gov.uk));
- Lone working incidents are suitably investigated, with action plans developed in order to prevent/minimise a recurrence;
- Support to employees involved in an incident linked to lone working, where required;
- Employees are provided with information, instruction and training on the risks associated with working alone, where appropriate; and
- Incident statistics relating to lone working are monitored and analysed for their area of responsibility to identify any trends or problem areas.

### 3.4 EMPLOYEES

All employees have a responsibility to ensure they comply with the health and safety procedures and requirements appropriate to their job. To achieve this, in relation to the management of lone working, employees should:

- Co-operate with line management to enable EDC to comply with its legal duties and obligations;
- Makes themselves aware of and comply with the requirements of all relevant risk assessments and this Procedure, where appropriate;
- Undertake training, where available and appropriate;
- Report any adverse incidents as a consequence of working alone in accordance with Health and Safety Procedure SP01 Accident & Incident Reporting”;
- Co-operate with any subsequent investigations following reports of a lone working incident;
- Follow local Safe Systems of Work which have been developed for their own personal safety;
- Carry and use communication device(s) provided to them, as part of the control measures highlighted within risk assessments;
- Not enter a known hostile, violent or dangerous environment, unless support is provided (e.g. police, colleagues or specific plan of action); and
- Avoid confrontation and do all that is reasonably possible to diffuse a potentially violent or aggressive situation.

### 3.5 HEALTH AND SAFETY TEAM

The EDC Health and Safety Team will advise the management in fulfilling their duties in regards to the implementation of this Management Procedure and associated regulations and guidance.

In particular, the Health and Safety Team shall:

- Advise Executive Officers, Managers, Team and Squad Leaders in fulfilling their duties.
- Work with teams to provide feedback about actions and control measures that may need to be taken to prevent harm and protect employees.
- Provide and reinforce training and education on health risks associated with certain tasks
- Monitor the compliance with this management procedure and the associated regulations and guidance by carrying out periodical audits and inspections and issuing subsequent reports detailing any possible gaps or issues that need to be addressed.



## 4. DEFINITION OF LONE WORKING

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) describes lone workers as “**Those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision**”. However, for the purpose of this procedure, this definition has been expanded to “**Those who work by themselves and/or work in the community and/or with limited support arrangements, which thereby exposes them to risk by being isolated from their usual back up support**”.

*Note: Working alone is specifically prohibited by law in only a small of high risk situations, such as working with live electrical conductors, entry into confined spaces, etc. where a Permit to Work system should be in place There is no general legal prohibition on lone working, with EDC’s responsibility being to ensure the health and safety of employees working alone and others affected by their activities.*

## 5. RISK ASSESSMENT

Risk assessment is essential to good risk management and should only be carried out by competent persons. This principle also applies to specific task-based risk assessments, including those conducted for lone working activities.

Lone work is work which is specifically intended to be carried out unaccompanied or without immediate access to another employee. It is not the same as the chance occurrence of an employee being on their own for a short period of time. For example, a member of staff is working late and is the only person within the office, or a person is working within a room on their own for short periods.

Lone working can occur:

- During normal working hours at a remote location either within the normal workplace, working within the community or other off-site visits; and
- When working out with normal working hours.

Service/Departmental procedures should take account of the possibility of both situations arising and should define what constitutes “normal working hours”. Flexible working hours are a valuable and necessary component of the workplace, however, where reasonably practicable, work should be carried out within recognised working hours.

The process of conducting a risk assessment for lone working is no different to that followed when assessing other tasks/activities of which full details can be found within Health and Safety Procedure SP14 Risk Assessment, the process aligns with the HSE’s “5 Steps to Risk Assessment” process:

- Identify the hazards associated with the task/activity being carried out;
- Decide who might be harmed and how
- Evaluate the risks associated with the work and decide on the safe working arrangements to control these risks;
- Record the significant findings of the assessment and implement safe working procedures (control measures); and
- Monitor and review the risk assessment.

## 5.1 IDENTIFY THE HAZARDS

The first step in the process is to identify the work activities and areas where employees may require working alone. Work activities should be examined to identify the potential hazards associated with lone working, (e.g. exposure to violence and aggression, sudden illness, working with dangerous equipment/ hazardous chemicals, etc.).

The analysis and assessment of accident/incident statistics will also help identify hazards, trends or activities where there have been issues of concern with regards to lone working. This identification of significant hazards will enable resources to be directed to where they are most needed.

## 5.2 WHO MIGHT BE HARMED AND HOW

It is essential Line Managers/Supervisors identify which of their employees or group of employees, are at greater risk from lone working. They are found within a wide range of work situations with the three main groups being:

- Employees working alone within fixed environments;
- Employees working out with normal working hours; and
- Employees working away from their fixed base on a regular basis

Identify how staff may be harmed. For example, are they attending a home visit on their own where the occupants have a previous history of violent and aggressive behaviour towards staff and others? Will they be using equipment within a workshop on their own for a significant period of time? Will they be working on their own late at night and driving in poor weather conditions?

## 5.3 EVALUATE THE RISK AND TAKE ACTION

In simple terms this means having a look at the current control measures in place to eliminate/reduce the potential for adverse incidents involving lone workers to occur and deciding if these are adequate or if more could be done.

Although working alone may not introduce any additional hazards, the risk(s) faced by the employee may increase significantly if the task/activity is carried out alone. Having evaluated the risk the Line Manager/Supervisor must decide if further action is required to reduce the risk further.

Some of the issues that require to be taken into account when evaluating the risks and planning safe working procedures are as follows:

- a) Can one person adequately control the risks involved in undertaking a task/activity?
- Does the workplace present a special risk to the lone worker, e.g. working at height, slip, trip hazards, adequate lighting?
  - Is there safe access/egress?
  - Can one person safely use any necessary equipment?
  - Is there any manual handling tasks/activities that would require more than one person?
  - Is the employee new or inexperienced?
  - Could the employee be exposed to violent and aggressive behaviour from one or more people?

- Does the employee suffer from any medical conditions/disability or are they an expectant mother that puts them at a greater risk if working on their own?
- b) What training is required to ensure competency in dealing with issues when working alone? Training plays an important role where there is limited supervision to support, control, and help in situations of uncertainty. To be suitable and sufficient, training should include a number of the following elements:
- Familiarisation with EDC Policy and guidance on “Lone Working”, including details of relevant risk assessments;
  - Use of lone working alert systems, where provided;
  - Principles of Dynamic Risk Assessment;
  - Causes/signs of violent and aggressive behaviour;
  - Communication/inter-personal skills; and
  - De-escalation/breakaway techniques (**Appendix 1- De-escalation Techniques**)
- c) Work practices should be reviewed to establish if the way the work activity is carried out can be changed to reduce the risk. For example:
- Working within Teams to reduce the need for lone working;
  - Developing a documented programme of visits and Line Manager/Supervisor maintaining regular contact with the employee;
  - Conducting meetings over the telephone, if circumstances will allow;
  - Reduce/eliminate night visits;
  - The use of a signing in/out system;
  - Provision of mobile phones/personal alarm systems; and
  - Contingency plans should specify the action to be taken if an employee cannot be contacted, becomes ill or if a personal alarm is activated. (**Appendix 2 – Contingency Plan: Example**)

## 5.4 RECORD THE FINDINGS AND IMPLEMENT CONTROL MEASURES

The findings of the task-based risk assessment process should be documented within Health and Safety Form D01 Risk Assessment and employees informed of the content and control measures contained therein.

For those employees required to work alone as part of their job role, a more specific “Lone Worker” checklist (to supplement the task-based assessment) is provided within **Appendix 3** which should be completed by Line Managers/ Supervisors for those employees carrying out roles where they will be working on their own for significant periods. *Note: Lone Worker risk assessments need not be completed for each individual employee, with one being sufficient for a group of employees undertaking similar lone working roles.*

Line Managers/Supervisors should develop an “implementation programme” detailing who is responsible for the implementation of control measures and the timescales in which these should be completed (e.g. short, medium and long term). This will assist with the monitoring of the implementation process and provide employees with confidence that action is being taken to eliminate/reduce the risk encountered when working alone.

## 5.5 REVIEW AND REVISE THE RISK ASSESMENT

The risk assessment should be reviewed and revised (where required) annually, when the work activity has changed or when a lone working incident has occurred and the investigation has identified additional control measures to further reduce the risk of a recurrence. Changes to the assessment should be communicated to relevant employees.

## 6. DYNAMIC RISK ASSESSMENT

Whilst risk assessment is a vital part of the management of lone working, employees may unfortunately, on occasion, be faced with a situation which may not have been foreseeable and therefore not highlighted and controlled within the task-based risk assessment.

In these situations, the use of the Dynamic Risk Assessment process is helpful in managing the unexpected risks faced by employees. It is not a substitute, however, complements existing assessments by enabling the employee to identify, measure and evaluate risk in real-time, whilst undertaking their role.

### 6.1 DYNAMIC RISK ASSESSMENT PROCESS

The term “Dynamic Risk Assessment” is the process whereby employees “*carry out continuous assessments of the risks encountered during an on-going/ changing situation in order to implement the necessary control measures to ensure an acceptable level of safety*”.

One technique for carrying out a dynamic risk assessment is known as “**SLAM**”, (Stop-Look-Assess-Manage). There are four stages to the technique:

**Stop** and think about the task/activity at hand. Do you feel comfortable carrying out the task? Do you have adequate communications (e.g. mobile phone, personal alarm)?

**Look** before and during the task/activity for any hazards. Are they under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol? How many people are within the premises and are they known to you? Will you require to work at height? Can you use the machinery/equipment on your own? Do you require to undertake manual handling activities?

**Assess** the situation and risks. Is the atmosphere welcoming or hostile? Are there suitable exit routes? Are these unobstructed? Do you feel comfortable and capable of carrying out activities such as manual handling or use of machinery/ equipment on your own? Do you have the necessary skills, knowledge and training in order to manage any potential violent and aggressive incident or use of machinery/equipment?

**Manage** and apply appropriate control measures. Are you able to request additional support/assistance from colleagues? Are you able to activate your personal safety alarm? What do your instincts tell you? If something does not feel right remove yourself immediately from the situation or do not carry out the activity.

Given the nature of the Dynamic Risk Assessment process it is not possible to document the findings of an assessment and the reasoning behind any action taken at the time. Therefore, it is essential the employee has a discussion with their Line Manager/Supervisor as soon as possible following the incident in order to discuss any concerns and the action taken. This will enable a review of the current control measures to take place to identify if these are suitable and sufficient or if improvements can be identified to improve employee safety.

## 7. REPORTING OF LONE WORKING INCIDENTS

Incident reporting and investigation is an essential element of preventing, managing, and learning from lone working incidents. Incident reporting provides documentary evidence for:

- Monitoring the effectiveness of control measures;
- Identifying and modifying those control measures in need of review;
- Supporting the provision of appropriate resources and training;
- Supporting further action such as Police intervention;
- Reporting to the HSE under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations, 2013 (RIDDOR);
- Provision of statistics to relevant Health & Safety Committees/Groups; and
- Incident analysis and evaluation of trends.

Any employee who has been subject to an adverse event when they have been working alone must report the incident to their Line Manager/Supervisor as soon as practicable.

If an employee is hospitalised or is absent from work following a lone working incident the Health and Safety Team should be notified immediately. All lone working incidents will be recorded by the Health and Safety Team and depending on the nature/severity of the incident, the Team may undertake a comprehensive investigation

The Line Manager/Supervisor must ensure details of the incident are recorded within the EDC on-line “Accident/Violent Incident/Fire Alert” Reporting Form - HS1(a) and near miss events which had the potential for harm/damage in HS1(b) Reporting Form, in accordance with Health and Safety Procedure SP01 Accident & Incident Reporting and e-mailed to the Health and Safety Team mailbox ([health.safety@eastdubarton.gov.uk](mailto:health.safety@eastdubarton.gov.uk)).

## 8. MANAGEMENT OF LONE WORKING INCIDENTS

As soon as possible after any lone working incident the Line Manager/ Supervisor should carry out an investigation in accordance with Health and Safety Procedure SP01 Accident & Incident Reporting. The severity of the incident will dictate the level of investigation required and who will be involved. In significant incidents will be investigated by the Health and Safety Team.

If the incident involved violent and aggressive behaviour towards an employee the over-riding concern should be the wellbeing of the employee and any others adversely affected by the incident. Full details of the process for managing Violent & Aggressive Incidents is contained within Health and Safety Procedure SP17 Violence and Aggression at Work.

Information gained from the investigation should be used when undertaking a post-incident review of the relevant “Lone Worker” risk assessment.

## **9. INFORMATION AND TRAINING**

Line Managers/Supervisors should ensure employees and others are given the necessary information, instruction, training and supervision to help them recognise the hazards and appreciate the risks of working alone. Employees will be required to follow relevant Safe Systems of Work (SSoW), which should include keeping in contact, provision of first aid, not putting themselves unnecessarily at risk and awareness of emergency procedures. All employees must co-operate with these SSoWs to ensure their safety.

Line Managers/Supervisors are also responsible for identifying their employees' training needs, including those linked to the management of Lone Working (e.g. "Conflict Management/De-Escalation", Dynamic Risk Assessment type training).

Line Managers/Supervisors should consider attending an Incident Investigation training course to enable them to obtain the necessary knowledge and skills in which to carry out suitable and sufficient investigations of any lone working incident.

## **10. MONITOR AND REVIEW**

As part of the EDC Health and Safety Management System, the EDC Health and Safety Team will conduct regular audits and inspections to monitor the implementation of this management procedure.

The EDC Health and Safety Team will review this management procedure every two years from the date of signing or sooner as a result of any changes to legislation or some other event i.e. a major incident or accident.

The EDC Health and Safety Team will provide feedback in the form of a report following any audits and inspections. When necessary, the procedure will be amended and reissued with an updated version number.

All Team Leaders must ensure that local procedures are updated to reflect any changes to the management procedure.

## 11. REFERENCES

### HSE Guidance and Regulation

- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Industrial Guidance INDG73 – Protecting lone workers: How to manage the risks of working alone.

### East Dunbartonshire Council: Health and Safety Policy / Procedures

- HSP01 Health and Safety Policy
- EDC Violence in the Workplace policy 2004
- HSP07 Controlling Workplace Hazards Policy
- SP01 Accident and Incident Reporting Procedure
- SP17 Violence and Aggression at Work
- SP18 Provision of First Aid
- SP29 Duty Holder

### East Dunbartonshire Council: Health and Safety Forms

- D01 Risk Assessment
- D02 Dynamic Risk Assessment



## APPENDIX 1 – DE-ESCALATION TECHNIQUES

The handling of a violent or aggressive situation may be very demanding and can occur and escalate quickly if not managed effectively.

A number of factors that could lead to violent and aggressive behaviour and create a risk to employees include:

- Inherent aggression or mental instability;
- Impatience/frustration (due to waiting, lack of information or boredom);
- Anxiety;
- Resentment (due to lack of rights);
- Alcohol and/or drugs;
- Enforcement action being taken and
- Poor design of premises.

The following signs may be presented by someone prior to exhibiting violent and aggressive behaviour:

- **Eye contact** - staring directly at you without breaking eye contact, breaking eye contact with quick, darting glances.
- **Stance** - In typical non-threatening conversation, most people stand squarely facing each other, their feet even with their shoulders, i.e. neutral position. Someone who is ready to attack will typically have their feet in an aggressive stance, with one foot back and the other foot forward, i.e. boxer stance. *Note: An aggressor will often move back the part of the body concealing a weapon.*
- **Hands** - A person's arms and hands can be a further indication of whether they are threatening or not. Relaxed people tend to have their arms by their sides, whereas people who are tense or nervous may have their arms crossed, clenched hands.
- **Mouth** - A person's mouth (and also facial expressions) often move to mirror that person's feelings. When a person becomes angry, this can usually be reflected in a snarl or clenched jaw.
- **Pupils** - Dilation of a person's pupils in broad daylight is normally an indication of violent and aggressive behaviour. In addition, pupil dilation is an evident symptom of drug usage, and whilst it would not suggest the person is about to present with violent and aggressive behaviour it will provide an insight into that person's current mental health status.
- **Pulse** - In anticipation of a violent and aggressive attack most people's heart rate will increase rapidly, with this quickening in pulse often being seen on someone's neck and temples. It is also a key sign that a person's anger is quickly becoming uncontrollable.
- **Sweat** - A person may sweat profusely prior to a violent and aggressive attack.
- **Shoulders** - A person about to attack typically has their upper body poised/leaning forward, balanced over the toes, whilst a relaxed person may have their weight shifted back on their heels.

- **Breathing** – In addition to a fast pulse and sweating, heavy or quick rapid breathing or even holding the breath is a clear indication that a violent incident may occur.

***It is worth noting that a person presenting with just one or two of the above signs may not be a potential threat (e.g. they may be nervous, unfit or suffering from a medical condition). However, if their body language highlights three or more of the above signs, the potential of a violent and aggressive incident occurring is increased.***

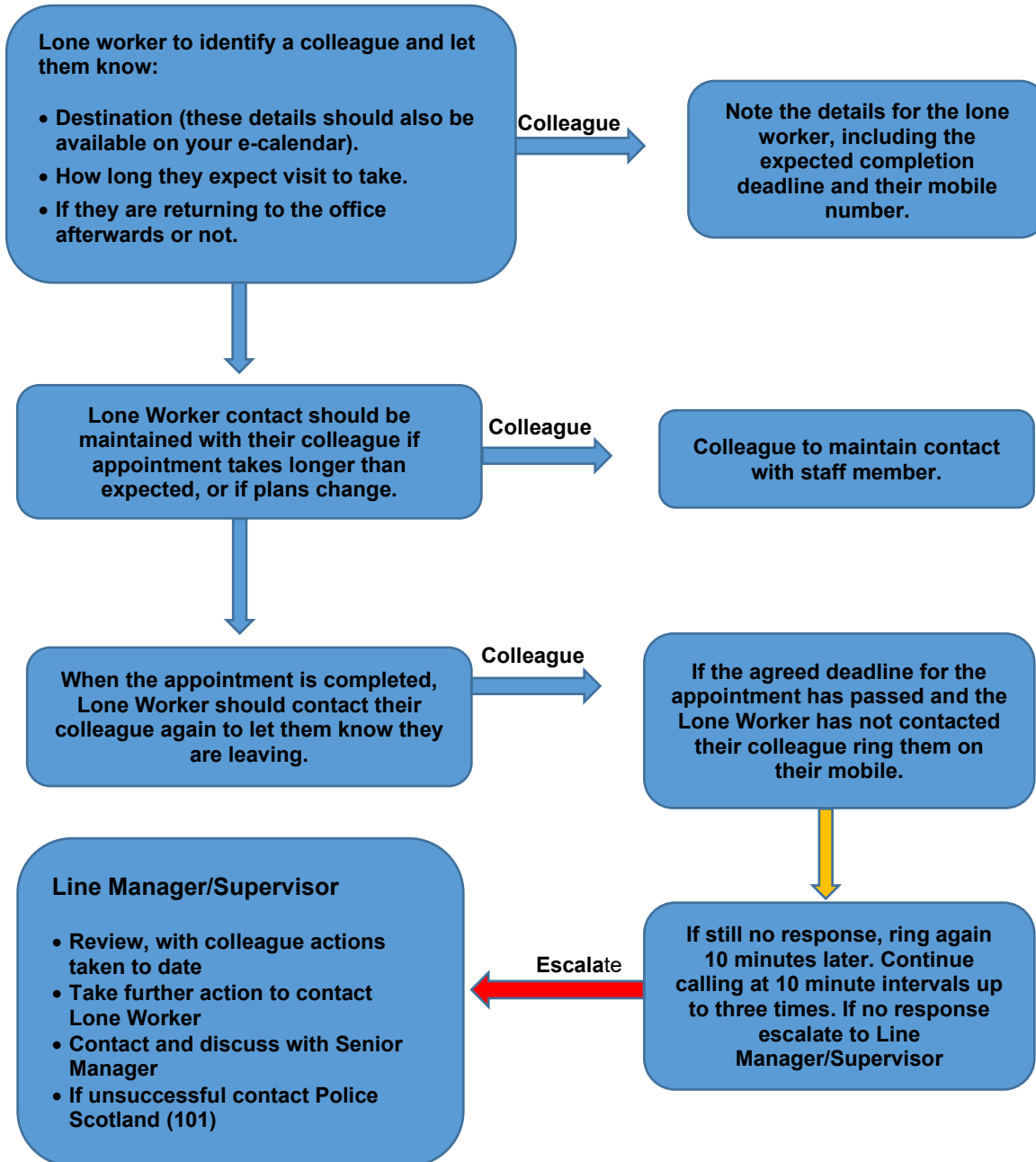
Learning how to avoid incidents by using the following simple de-escalation techniques can help manage the situation:

- Try not to become angry, agitated or exited. This is not always an easy thing to do when you are confronted with an angry individual. Keep calm, for example, controlled breathing to allow you to act and speak more confidently. This can help the situation to feel less out of control to both you and the aggressor.
- Take time to think about what you are going to say and say it slowly, clearly and calmly.
- Maintain self-control.
- Show empathy and actively listen. Empathy is about seeing the other person's point of view, even if you don't agree with it.
- Adopt a non-threatening body posture, use a calm, open posture (sitting or standing).
- Remember that personal space should be maintained – keep a safe distance.
- Ensure requests or instructions are made in a clear manner and that the aggressor understands what is acceptable and unacceptable.
- Apologise - Not for an imaginary wrong, but for something connected to the situation that was unjust; a simple acknowledgment that an issue could have been handled differently. It is possible to apologise without accepting blame. Apologising can have the effect of showing you are empathetic for what the individual is going through, which could result in them desisting from the violent and aggressive behaviour.
- State your position about the individual's unacceptable behaviour and highlight consequences, for example that you want the person to stop shouting, and if they stop shouting you will try your best to help – if they don't then you will not continue the conversation. Remember to carry out the stated consequence based on their chosen action.
- Remain aware at all times (remember dynamic risk assessment). Are there any potential weapons available to the aggressor? do you have a means of escape?, move towards a "safe place" (e.g. towards a door), etc...
- Listen to what the person is saying and try to understand their point of view (even though you do not agree with it) and why they feel aggrieved. Be empathetic to their situation.
- Encourage the person to talk – refrain from trivialising their issues or feelings.
- Provide re-assurance that the aggressor's concerns will be thoroughly investigated and a response/decision provided as soon as is possible.

- Prevent the aggressor “playing to an audience” by moving them away from others. (However, ensure this is to a safe place).
- Ensure there is adequate space between you and the aggressor - adrenalin can make the aggressor perceive you as being closer, and therefore more threatening.
- Consider what you know about the person – are they inclined to this sort of outburst? What has helped before?

**If the incident escalates to the point that you feel unsafe, immediately remove yourself from the situation and call for assistance.**

## APPENDIX 2 – CONTINGENCY PLAN - EXAMPLE



## APPENDIX 3 – LONE WORKER HAZARD CHECKLIST

Lone Worker - Hazard Checklist			
<i>This checklist may be used to help Line Managers/Supervisors identify the hazards encountered by employees when their work activity involves Lone Working. The information can then be used within the task-based risk assessment to control the potential risks from these hazards.</i>			
<b>Service</b>			
<b>Name of Employee/Team</b>			
<b>Job Title</b>			
<b>Description of lone working duties</b>			
<b>Line Manager/Supervisor</b>		<b>Date</b>	
<b>Potential Hazards (Please ✓ Yes/No)</b>			
<b>General</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	
Will employee(s) be working alone?			
Will employee(s) be working within a fixed establishment (e.g. library, office, health centre)?			
Will employee(s) be carrying out remote working away from a fixed base?			
<b>Category 1 – Low Risk</b>			
Will employee(s) work outwith normal work hours within an office, library, or similar e.g. cleaners, janitors, home carers, enforcement officers, etc.?			
Will employee(s) travel alone for significant periods or in circumstances that may give rise to additional risks?			
Will employee(s) work within their own home?			
Will employee(s) work in isolation from others within the workplace?			
Will employee(s) visit other employers' premises			
<b>Category 2 – Medium Risk</b>			
Will employee(s) be working alone within or using reception areas, counters and interviews?			
<b>Category 3 – High Risk</b>			
Will employee(s) visit premises where the risk of violence and aggression or a dangerous situation developing is reasonably foreseeable?			
Will employee(s) travel from their own home to carry out home visits and then return home without going into the office?			
Will employee(s) be working out of hours (not within a controlled EDC facility)?			
Will employee(s) work alone with hazardous machinery, equipment, tools, or chemicals?			
Will employee(s) be at risk of serious injury as a result of the type of work they are carrying out?			
Will employee(s) be working on their own within the community?			
Will employee(s) require to be provided with a personal alarm/ alert?			

Has employee(s) been issued with a mobile phone?		
<b>Employee</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Are there any factors why the employee(s) may be more at risk when working alone (e.g. gender, age, disability, race, new or expectant mother, inexperience, etc.)?		
Is the employee(s) medically fit to work alone (i.e. would a medical condition increase the risk to the employee(s) when working alone)?		
Has the employee(s) being provided with sufficient information in which to carry out the task safely (e.g. use of equipment, machinery, chemicals etc.)?		
Has the employee(s) received sufficient information, instruction and training with regards to lone working?		
Has the employee(s) demonstrated their ability to carry out the task satisfactorily?		
Is there appropriate supervision of the employee(s), where required (Particularly those employees who are new to the Team or less experienced)?		
Has employee(s) been made aware of the emergency procedures in place if they encounter a problem when working alone?		
<b>Workplace</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Is access to, or exit from, the workplace safe?		
Is the lighting around the premises adequate?		
Are entrance security systems in place (i.e. digital locks, swipe cards, etc.)?		
Are members of the public allowed/able to gain access to work areas?		
Are reception/public areas designed in line with EDC guidance?		
Is there a risk of violence from members of the public?		
<b>Knowledge of Work Activity/Location</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Has the employee(s) been provided with sufficient background information?		
Are potential or known risk factors detailed/included within referral documents/ files/care plans, etc.?		
Is any relevant risk information shared with other Partner Agencies (e.g. NHS, Police, etc.)?		
Are procedures in place to request that additional employees (or other agencies such as the Police) be in attendance, where required?		
<b>Meetings &amp; Home Visits</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Are interview rooms designed and set up in line with EDC guidelines?		
Has employee(s) been trained in conflict management/de-escalation techniques?		
Will the employee(s) be carrying out visits within high risk areas (i.e. areas with high crime rates)?		
Will employee(s) be carrying out visits within isolated rural areas?		
Will employee(s) be visiting high risk or unpredictable groups (e.g. those with alcohol/drug addiction issues)?		
<b>Type of Work</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Will any part of the work activity present a physical risk?		
Is equipment safe and regularly maintained?		
Do work activities involve working within confined spaces?		
Do work activities involve working with/handling dangerous substances?		

Will employee(s) be using machinery?		
Can manual handling activities be carried out safely by one person?		
If required, does the employee(s) have the appropriate PPE and are they trained in its use?		
Are cash/valuables or medical drugs being carried by the employee(s)?		
<b>Intruders</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Are procedures in place to deal with Intruders within Council premises?		
Is employee(s) aware of these procedures?		
<b>Travel and Transport</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Has consideration been given as to how employee(s) will travel to and from appointments/work activities?		
Does employee(s) provide an itinerary when they are working away from their base?		
Is employee(s) aware of the EDC Managing Occupational Road Risk (MORR) Procedure?		
Is there a system in place (i.e. mobile phones, alarms/alerts, etc.) to enable employee(s) to communicate with Line Managers/ Supervisors or colleagues, if necessary?		
<b>Information and Training</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Has the employee(s) been provided with information and training on basic personal safety?		
Has employee(s) been trained in strategies for preventing and managing violence at work?		
Is employee(s) aware of the local lone working procedure for their Team and/or workplace?		
<b>Reporting System</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Is employee(s) aware of the EDC procedure for reporting lone working incidents?		