

Lone Working in a Small Centre

Area: Dry Facilities **Category:** Operations

How to use the guidance notes

This guidance applies to those working in a small centre unaccompanied or without immediate access to another person for assistance. This can be during and outside of normal working hours.

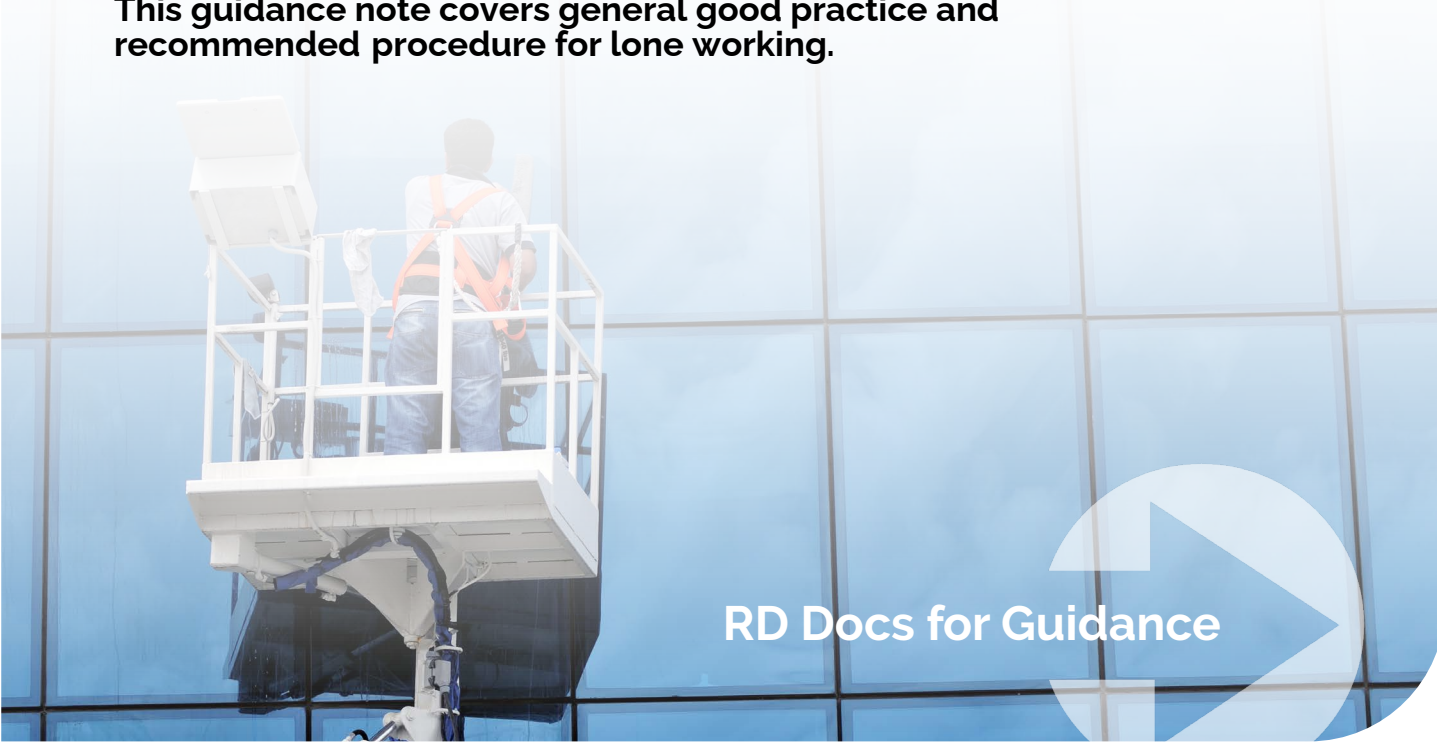
An individual who has either visual or audible communication with another person would generally not be considered as working alone.

If the content of this guidance note relates to aspects of your operation, it is recommended that you review your risk assessments, policies, procedures and training to ensure the content provided has been considered.

The guidance provided is not intended to be exhaustive and will be reviewed and added to from time to time by CIMSPA. CIMSPA and their contributors provide no warranty as to its accuracy or completeness.

Should you wish to seek further understanding or justification for the information covered, additional associated resources are listed at the bottom of this guidance note.

This guidance note covers general good practice and recommended procedure for lone working.



RD Docs for Guidance

General good practice

Some small leisure facilities may only have one person on duty in the premises at certain times. In principle, individuals can work alone. However, it is necessary to undertake a risk assessment. The reasons for assessing the risks of working alone are to establish whether the work can be done safely by an unaccompanied person and ensure there are arrangements so that an individual is not exposed to greater risks than normal when working alone.

Any associated hazards need to be determined so that risks from them can be assessed and suitable and sufficient control measures adopted.

To examine the hazards and risks involved the operator must look at the following.

- The **people** involved
- The **environment** in which members of staff are working
- The **tasks** members of staff are required to do.

The following key questions should be considered when completing lone working risk assessments and identifying relevant controls.

Key questions	Considerations
Does the workplace present a special risk?	• Are there specific legal duties associated with the activity that may prohibit or limit lone working (e.g. scaffolding)? • Is a permit to work required (high risk activities such as confined spaces, electrical testing etc.)?
Is the lone worker in a remote location?	• Is there a safe means of travel to and from the location? • Is there access to adequate welfare facilities? • Can emergency services access the area?
What is the condition of the workplace?	• Is there a safe way in and out when opening and closing? • Is there adequate lighting, heating and ventilation? • Are there adequate fire precautions and can evacuation be initiated by the lone worker?
Can all plant, equipment and substances required for the task be safely handled by one person?	• Can all equipment, especially powered tools and access equipment such as ladders, be used safely by one person? • Does the work involve lifting objects too large for one person? • Is more than one person needed to operate essential controls for the safe running of equipment?

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Is there a risk of violence towards staff members?	• Can handling cash be minimised? • Where the job involves a significant risk of violence from the public, can dual working arrangements be introduced to improve security? • Can women working alone be avoided? • What is the risk to the employee from the public? Some groups may be more threatening • Is there reasonable security? Does the employee have a place of refuge?
Are staff members suitably experienced and competent to carry out the work?	• Are there any specific training requirements relating to the limited supervision to avoid panic? • Are lone workers sufficiently experienced to understand the risks and precautions fully? – young workers may be particularly at risk. • Can the employer set the limits to what can and cannot be done while working alone? • How can you ensure staff members are competent to deal with circumstances which are new, unusual or beyond the scope of training? e.g., when to stop work and seek advice from a supervisor.

Key questions	Considerations
How will the staff be supervised?	Lone workers clearly will not be subject to constant supervision; however, supervision can help to ensure that staff members understand the risks associated with their work and that safety precautions are observed: • Can supervisors provide guidance in situations of uncertainty? • Can supervision take the form of periodic visits? • Can staff meetings offer an opportunity to discuss health and safety issues including lone working? • The extent of supervision required will depend on all of the aspects considered within the risk assessment.
How will the staff be monitored?	Procedures will need to be put in place to monitor lone workers to ensure they remain safe. These may include: • Recording of entry to and from isolated areas (e.g., signing in and out sheet) • Regular contact by telephone or radio • Automatic warning devices which operate if specific signals are not received from the lone worker, e.g., man down systems • Manually operated or automatic warning devices. • Checks to ensure a lone worker has returned to their home on completion of a shift
Is the person medically fit and suitable to work alone?	• Does the job impose any extra demands on the lone worker's physical or mental stamina? • Consider both routine work and foreseeable emergencies • Does the lone worker have any medical condition that might increase the risks of the job?
What will happen if a person becomes ill, has an accident or there is an incident or emergency?	• Identify foreseeable events, ensure emergency procedures are in place and that staff members are trained in them • Information about hazards and emergency procedures must be given to lone workers • Is there access to adequate first-aid facilities • Consider whether lone workers need training in first aid • Consider how they will raise the alarm and who will respond.

Useful Resources

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg73.pdf>

These guidance notes have been produced by Right Directions in partnership with CIMSPA.

For more information on lone working procedure or any other topics, please email Right Directions: info@rightdirections.co.uk or give us a call for a chat: (01582) 840098