

Lone Worker Policy and Statement

Introduction

The definition of a lone worker is 'any volunteer who is required, either in brief or a large portion of their time working where there is no close, frequent or regular involvement with other volunteers.' If the volunteer, at any time, is unclear whether a proposed activity comes under this definition of lone working, they should ask the foodbank manager and refer to the Portland Foodbank lone worker policy.

Wherever possible, lone working should be avoided, for example by meeting a client in a public place or by volunteers visiting client homes in pairs. However, the nature of the work of Portland's Foodbank is such that at times volunteers may be working alone with a client who could present a risk to them. This policy is designed to reduce and manage such risks, but a volunteer who has concerns about working alone should seek support and advice from the foodbank manager **before** going into the situation.

Principles

1. In addition to the risk assessment undertaken by the foodbank trustees, it is important that all volunteers carry out their own 'personal assessment' before undertaking any activity that involves working alone. (Under section 7 of the Health and Safety at Work Act all volunteers have their own duty to take reasonable care for their own safety and that of anyone else who might be affected by what they do or don't do.)
2. No team member should go into a situation that doesn't feel right. Instead, they should exercise judgement and report back to the foodbank manager before proceeding. If at any time there appears to be imminent danger or a perception of risk the volunteer must remove themselves to a place of safety immediately. A dedicated mobile phone is available in the Foodbank for use in emergencies.
3. Any concerns or incidents should be discussed with the foodbank manager and an Incident Report Form completed as soon as practicable and appropriate action taken to avoid them happening again.
4. Any significant concerns or incidents will be reported to the Trustees of the Foodbank by the Manager.

Practical Guidelines

1. Each situation should be assessed on its own merit, with those involved with the client being asked for any relevant information about behaviour and any past problems. Where there are potential risks, these will be shared with anyone working with the client so that all are aware of potentially dangerous situations.
2. When not on the duty rota, and working alone, with a client at the foodbank, the volunteer must ensure that someone knows where they are and their start and finish times.
3. Volunteers delivering food to people's homes should make contact with the team at the completion of their duties.
4. Personal information such as addresses, and telephone numbers must never be given to clients.