

Wansbeck Valley Food Bank

Lone Working Policy (Draft)

Wansbeck Valley Food Bank is committed to protecting staff and volunteers as far as practicable by:

- Minimising the risk of inadequate procedures
- Minimising the risk of malpractice
- Minimising any increased risk to staff, and volunteers.
- Breaches of confidentiality
- Reducing and controlling health and safety risks.

Wansbeck Valley Food Bank recognises that it is not always possible to avoid every potentially dangerous situation. The nature of our work means there will always be risk, but by staying calm and using common sense risks can be minimised. This Policy does not override other Food Bank policies, especially those relating to financial procedures, health and safety, risk assessment, staff induction and supervision.

Lone working can be in a variety of settings for example offices, warehouse or delivery/collection points or visiting schools or businesses. Wansbeck Valley Food Bank will do their best to eliminate lone working but where this does occur will mitigate any dangers. The Food Bank will operate within the legislative requirements as follows:

- Human Rights Act 1998
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Children's Act 1989
- Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- The Equality and Diversity Act 2010

Staff and volunteers must ensure that procedures for lone working are followed at all times to ensure safety. It is essential that this is included in induction for staff and volunteers.

Lone/Outreach Worker Procedures and Safety Guidelines

- If members of staff or volunteers are carrying out an external visit, delivery or attendance at a collection point they must record this either by email/telephone or in the Lone Worker Book or with a member of staff. This should include dates, times (including expected time of return) and contact numbers. If there are any changes to these arrangements then the member of staff, or volunteer should contact the office to amend the details.
- Ensure that, if you are using a mobile telephone for contact that it is fully charged. Ensure that the panic alarm device is carried at all times
- Always have the contact numbers of the Food bank office as well as the Police and emergency numbers with you in case you get into any difficult situations.
- Always wear an identity badge.
- If you are faced with a situation you cannot deal with or are uncertain about leave immediately and report to the Food Bank Office

- If you do not telephone 30 minutes after the expected time, a call will be made to you, if after two attempts they fail to make contact, they will then call the Police. It is therefore imperative that all lone and outreach workers contact the office when completing a visit or when there is a delay, Delivery and Collection Points

When delivering food:

- Food can be delivered to the gate or doorstep, but the driver will not enter the client's residence.
- Before leaving the vehicle the driver will park in a manner that is simple to depart quickly and safely if they feel under any threat whatsoever. In particular drivers should ensure that it is unnecessary to reverse the van when departing.

Lone Working/Collections Points Procedure

- There should always be two volunteers or a staff member and a volunteer at every collection point this is not only necessary to assist with the workload but to ensure the safety of all our staff and volunteers. **This procedure must be followed at all times.**
- If on any occasion there are issues that arise that give any staff member or volunteer concern at any collection point this should be reported IMMEDIATELY to the Duty Manager.

Lone Working/Office Northgate

Certain situations require lone working in the offices at Northgate.

To mitigate the risks of such working and to ensure the safety of the member of staff and volunteers, the following procedures must be adopted.

- On arrival – lift roller shutter doors and enter via front entrance. Disarm alarm and lock door. Lift all roller shutter doors.
- Ensure that there is a charged and serviceable phone available.
- Do not open the door to anyone unknown to you. Use intercom to speak with visitors.
- If unsure or concerned at any time, please contact one of the following:
 - Northgate Reception – 01670 515915
 - Chair of Trustees – 07976695056 – Sheila Rowley
 - Trustee – 07970164967 – John Rowley

If necessary activate the personal alarm button.

Lone Working/Use of own vehicles

Use of own vehicles Transport can be part of the work we do and the following safety guidelines should be adhered to:

- Make sure the vehicle you are using has the relevant insurance
- Lone and outreach workers should give details of the make, model, colour and registration number of the vehicle to the Office. The Office should be informed of any changes to the vehicle. This is used only as a safety measure in the event of loss of communication or difficulty.

- Lone and outreach staff, or volunteers should immediately contact the Office in event of emergencies, including accidents.

Because of the vulnerability of both lone workers and the customers we serve, it is important that lone/outreach workers receive the support and training to understand all relevant policies and procedures and how to deal with difficult/risky situations to minimise risk to themselves and others. It is vital that the Co-ordinator and Chair are proactive in monitoring the work of Lone /outreach staff and volunteers to ensure that policies and procedures are followed through regular monitoring and review

The Trustees of the food bank are responsible for ensuring that the policy is implemented. The Chair is responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of the policy. All staff, trustees and volunteers are responsible for the implementation of the policy.

Any trustee, volunteer, sub-contractor and user of our services who feel this policy has been unfairly applied, or has suffered loss or damage as a result of actions by Wansbeck Valley Food Bank may complain by using the Food Bank Complaints Procedure. Any member of staff who feels this policy has been unfairly applied, or has suffered loss or damage as a result of actions by Wansbeck Valley Food Bank may complain by using the Food Bank Grievance Procedure.