

Lone Worker Policy



As part of our routine risk assessment process, Tunbridge Wells Baptist Church (TWBC) needs to consider the particular risks that arise for lone workers whether staff or volunteers.

A lone worker is defined as, ***'anyone whose work includes a large portion of their time in situations where there is no close, frequent or regular involvement with other workers'***.

These guidelines set out practices to follow to minimise risks. This primarily refers to when working at the church but includes other situations as seen in the guidelines.

When appropriate, lone working should be avoided by adopting avoidance strategies.

Clearly it is not possible to avoid all risks and therefore the staff member or volunteer needs to make an assessment of potential risks before embarking on an activity; to that end unwritten risk assessments are carried out before the situation arises. To minimise potential risk Pastors and a Pastoral worker on staff are to record all pastoral visits and appointments in their respective Professional diaries and to conduct them in a way that is recognised as good practise of an accredited Baptist Minister in the Baptist Union of Great Britain.

A prerequisite of lone working is that all staff are aware of and can activate the health and safety procedures in the event of a fire, ill health or of the presence of an intruder. These include updated knowledge of how to exit from the church premises and a list of key telephone numbers (public and church) to phone in the event of an emergency.

Staff and volunteers must know where to find the first aid kit and be familiar with the contents. All first aid kits must be clearly sign posted.

The Trustees of TWBC have responsibility for the lone worker policy and any queries or concerns should be addressed to them via the Church Secretary

Lone worker guidelines

1. All staff or volunteers are to be advised of the potential risks before engaging on any lone working task. They also have a responsibility for their own well-being or of anyone else who might be affected by what they do or do not do. This is covered under section 7 of the Health and Safety at Work Act.
2. If there is any element of doubt about whether lone working on the premises would present unacceptable risks, the staff member/volunteer should seek guidance from their line-manager and if he/she assesses the activity as an unacceptable risk, lone working will not be allowed for that activity.
3. All members of staff/volunteers who are lone working are to advise a designated person of the date and the times of starting and finishing. On completion of the activity he/she should send a message to that person by text or phone call on leaving the building. If the

designated person has not heard from the lone worker within 30 minutes of the anticipated leaving time, they are to initiate contact with the lone worker and, if unable to make contact, advise the agreed designated member of staff or other. If further cause for concern occurs to report to the line manager or Senior Pastor.

4. No person under the age of 18, or any person who themselves is classified as a vulnerable person may undertake lone working on the premises. Further details regarding vulnerable persons can be found in the Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy.
5. No person with a known health condition which could lead to a sudden collapse or inability to manage routine exit procedures, in working time, should be allowed to engage in lone working.
6. If the risk assessment indicates that it is not safe for the employee/volunteer to be working alone but the activity must be undertaken, another person must agree to be present whilst the work is carried out.
7. People should not undertake repairs in a building that have potential for harm, if they are alone, or if nobody else knows that they are in the building. This is especially important if the task involves ladders, working at height or with dangerous substances and electrical appliances.
8. Staff or volunteers alone in the building must take precautions to safeguard their safety. This would include
 - having a mobile phone easily to hand if needed.
 - where possible having unrestricted access to an exit
 - not opening doors to strangers.
9. Whilst Staff members are absent from the family home for an extended period, it is important that the Church gives' consideration to safeguarding their family members. This might include the church not posting upcoming overnight or longer absence from the family on open social media or website. The office is to ensure these forthcoming periods away from the family are not to be included on recordings uploaded onto the website. The church is to offer a mutually agreed emergency contact number, to the family members at home, for use if they feel at risk for the duration of the period of absence

Any concerns or incidents should be discussed with either the Church Secretary, Senior Pastor, Pastoral worker or other mutually agreed person on Leadership and a Reported Incidents Form completed as soon as practicable. This can be obtained from the Church Office. The goal is to learn from these and take appropriate action to avoid them happening in future.

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Reference: Tunbridge Wells Baptist Church

Approved by the Leadership 11 December 2018.

Last Review: February 2023

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