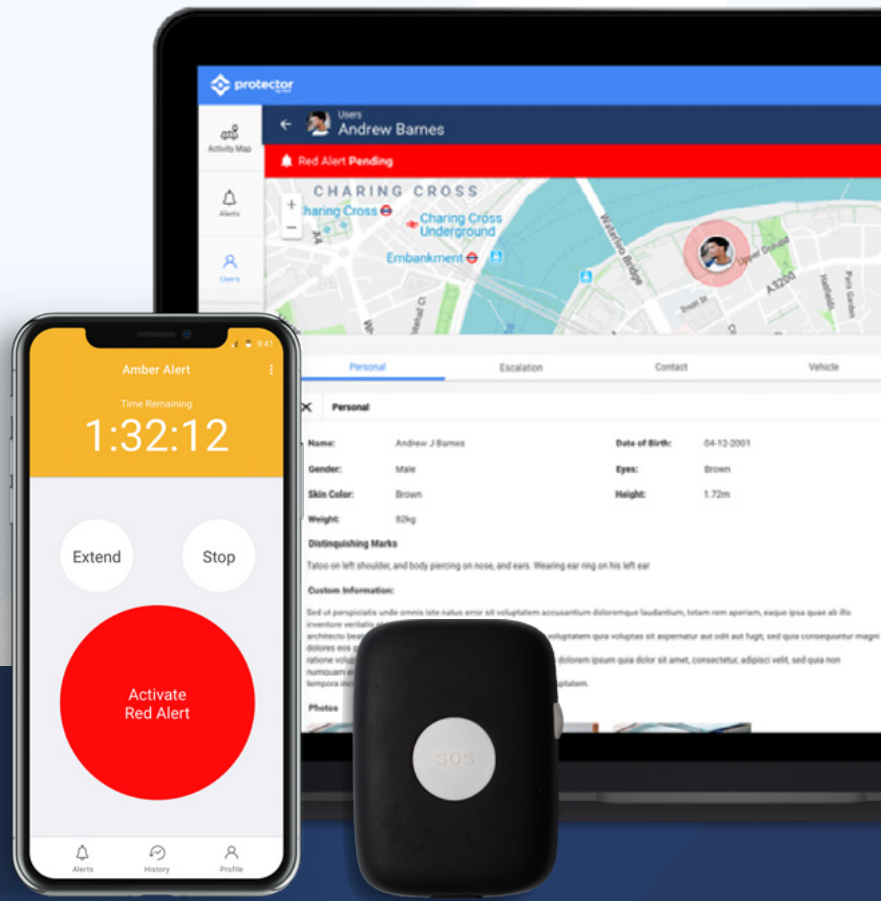


Writing A Lone Worker Policy:

Your Step By Step Guide



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Writing A Lone Worker Policy: Your Step By Step Guide

6-8M Lone Workers
In The UK

20% Of The British
Workforce



Company directors have a legal responsibility to keep employees safe, wherever they are.

There are between 6-8 million lone workers in the UK, according to the [British Safety Council](#). In other words: around 20% of the British workforce.

A 'lone worker' includes anyone whose role requires them to perform without supervision, full or part time. Whether that means fixing a wind turbine, conducting home visits for patients, or working the graveyard shift solo, these workers need health and safety policies, protection measures, and training – tailored around the specific risks they face.

Team members who work unsupervised are at greater risk than those who are surrounded by colleagues and managers. After all, if a lone worker is injured, has an accident, or – as unfortunately happens all too often – is attacked whilst on the job, how would you know?

Because of the inherent risks associated with lone working, **company directors have a legal responsibility to keep these employees safe, wherever they are.**

So if you have *any lone workers* on your payroll, you need to write up a lone worker policy.

Whilst there's **no one-size-fits-all lone worker policy** – as the specific clauses and considerations will need to be entirely relevant to your business – we are here to help.

This guide covers everything employers need to think about, to write their lone worker health and safety documents.



Step One:

To start with, you need a separate lone worker policy – your current health and safety policy won't cover lone workers' needs

More than 5 Full Time Employees?
You need a Health & Safety Policy.

£3 Million

Largest fine company directors face
for failing to keep their staff safe.

Any company or organisation with more than five full-time equivalent (FTE) employees needs a written health and safety policy. That's the law.

And company directors face financial penalties – with the largest fine so far [totalling £3 million](#) – and *even imprisonment* for failing to keep their staff safe.

But lone workers encounter different, and *often greater*, risks than their on-site colleagues. If anything were to happen to someone working alone, how would you, as a manager or company director, know? How would you respond to help them? And what if they couldn't call for help straight away?

By writing up a lone worker policy document, the company evidences that lone worker-specific risks have been assessed, and sets out company policy to mitigate those risks as much as possible.



Step Two:

How do you know if your business needs a lone worker policy?



81%

of lone workers have felt at risk from violence or aggression directed at them

Anyone who works by themselves – even for a few hours a week – should be represented by a lone worker policy, [according to HSE guidelines](#).

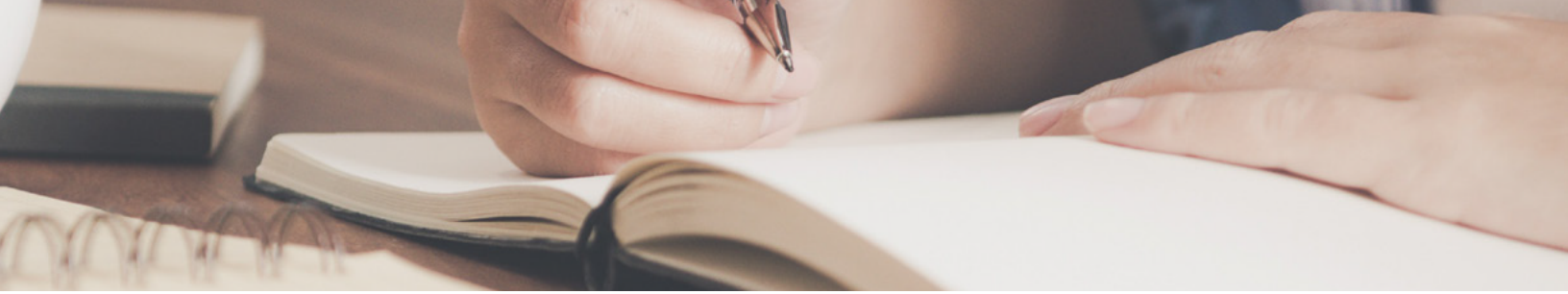
This may include manual workers, telecommuters, healthcare support staff, mobile workers, security wardens, etc. If you have any doubt whether your employees fit the 'lone worker' definition, you can [drop us a line](#) and we'll help you work it out.

And if you speak to your employees, they may alert you to their needs. [Studies show](#) that lone workers are often concerned for their health and safety, due to lack of in-person support from colleagues.

Most shockingly, [The Suzy Lamplugh Trust](#) found that 81% of lone workers have felt at risk from violence or aggression directed at them.

What's more: business owners need to take into account the potential negative impact of lone working on mental health – in one study, [18% of office workers](#) said that working from home was a major contributory factor to poor mental health.

So, having a thorough lone worker policy isn't just about legal compliance. It is about showing that you care about your workforce – taking active steps to protect your lone workers' wellbeing.



Step Three: What does your lone worker policy need to cover?

The specific details included in your lone worker policy will be dependent on your lone worker's job descriptions.

For some businesses, the risks may come from environmental dangers (e.g. chemical engineers handling hazardous materials). Other lone workers may be exposed to potential threat of violence from the public or volatile clients.

In many cases, the everyday risk factors – such as trips and falls, or health-related issues – need to be considered, too.

So before you write your lone worker policy, there's another important question you need to ask: how do you propose keeping your lone workers safe?

If the potential risk is inherent in their job – a tree surgeon needs to climb a tree, a hotel night manager needs to welcome guests even in the early hours – the risks cannot simply be removed.

Instead, companies need to invest in lone worker safety solutions, to help mitigate danger and give the worker access to 24/7 support.

Depending on the work being done, checking in with a lone worker by phone could be impractical. With [lone worker safety devices](#), you can be sure of where your team are, and in the event of an incident an alert will be triggered, allowing you to take responsive action. For example, with the [Protector™ by Vatrix](#), a worker's movements can be monitored and logged, with a time-stamped audit trail – all in a way that's entirely GDPR compliant.



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Step Four:

How to write a lone worker policy that's useful, practical and actionable

A lone worker policy document must reflect everyday experiences.

Remember: a lone worker policy document is designed to outline how people work when you can't supervise or oversee them. It's no good if it doesn't reflect their everyday experiences.

So before you write your lone worker policy – engage your audience. Ask them what their day looks like; what risks they face. This will ensure your document aligns with how they really work, not how a legal or health and safety executive in head office imagines they work.

Step Five:

To write a lone worker health and safety policy document, follow these steps:



Every health and safety document starts with a clear understanding of the risks involved.

1: Risk assessment

Every health and safety document starts with a clear understanding of the risks involved. And these need to be specific to lone workers, based around the work they do, where they work, how they work, and whether this is with others who might pose a risk (e.g. members of the public, clients, etc).

2: Produce a written policy

Now that the risks are understood, a policy document needs to set out a framework for managing and minimising these risks. This should include a reporting procedure and reasonable precautions, so that line managers and the lone workers themselves are actively involved in promoting staff safety, wherever they are.



A policy document needs to set out a framework for managing and minimizing these risks.

A policy document could include further steps taken to protect lone workers, such as devices to provide a level of supervision that isn't practical any other way.

Out of sight shouldn't mean out of mind, especially when risks are above average. And lone workers who can check in using dedicated lone worker safety devices are safer. That way, if anything were to happen, a manager can be alerted straight away.

Writing your lone worker policy won't be a case of 'copying and pasting' from someone else's – your lone workers' needs and how you propose to protect them will be different to even your closest competitors.

However, as a minimum, your lone worker policy should include the following:

- ➔ **A policy statement:** outlining that both individual staff and managers have a duty to assess and reduce lone working risks
- ➔ **Purpose and scope of the policy:** explaining what the document serves to achieve and who it applies to
- ➔ **Locations where lone workers are operating**
- ➔ **A thorough rundown and risk assessment of the hazards lone workers face**
- ➔ **Mandatory policies and procedures to manage and reduce those risks:** including personal safety devices – what they are, how to use them, and who is responsible for their upkeep – and agreed methods to call for help
- ➔ **Reporting and monitoring policies and practices:** necessary detail surrounding post-accident/injury procedures and on-going feedback about lone worker health and safety
- ➔ **An outline of training and annual assessments to ensure safety policies are updated.**

As this last point implies, your lone worker policy shouldn't live in isolation.

For one: companies need to make sure their lone workers fully understand the policy they've signed – and they should have the opportunity to raise concerns or give feedback.

Then, lone workers should have health and safety training tailored around their role and associated risks. This will educate them on how to cope with situations that could arise, so they can confidently – safely – approach their daily tasks.

And finally, a lone worker policy document should be revisited frequently. Risks can, and do, evolve. So your lone worker safety approach needs to be **reviewed at least once a year**, alongside other standard health and safety documents. And as new lone workers join they need to be onboarded and trained, according to the same standards.

[Do all of the above, and you can rest assured that you're taking every possible step to protect your lone workers.](#)





The importance of lone worker safety cannot be undervalued

>20% Of The British Workforce

With the rise in telecommuters and employees who work from home, that figure may already be too conservative

Lone workers already make up 20% of the UK workforce, and that number looks set to rise. Indeed, as more and more employees telecommute or work from home – it's possible that percentage figure is already too conservative.

As such, lone worker safety needs to be a major consideration for companies in all sectors.

Businesses around the world are embracing lone worker safety devices and platforms, [such as Vatix](#), to safeguard employees.

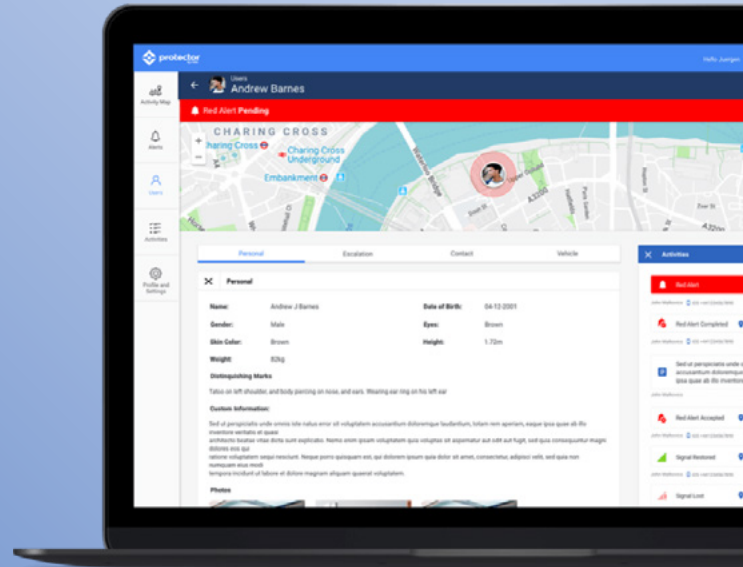
With Vatix, you can be confident your lone workers have the highest possible level of protection, 24/7 support, and that everything is being recorded. With on-going monitoring, your business is not only legally compliant, but you can learn from any incidents that do arise and continue to improve best-practice health and safety – protecting your workforce today, and into the future.



About The Application

Protector by Vatrix is the future of lone worker safety solutions. An advanced incident management and reporting portal, Protector stores all the information you need to handle any safety concern, including employee location and personal details.

Receive and accept alerts through our state-of-the-art software to keep your employees safe today. Gain access to company-specific reports and time-stamped audit trails to keep your employees safe tomorrow.



Protection That's Easy And Powerful

For superior technology and unrivalled support, choose Vatrix.

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