



Working Alone

Health and safety guidance on the risks of lone working

Working Alone

The New Testament Church of God (NTCG) is responsible for the health, safety and welfare at work of all its employees. NTCG also has the responsibility for the health and safety of any contractors or self-employed people doing work for them.

Employees have responsibilities to take reasonable care of themselves and other people affected by their work activities and to co-operate with NTCG in meeting their legal obligations.

Lone Workers

Lone workers are those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision, for example: people working on their own outside normal hours, e.g. cleaners and security, maintenance or repair staff.

Risk Assessment

NTCG has a duty to assess the risks to lone workers and take steps to avoid or control risks where necessary.

This must include:

- involving workers when considering potential risks and measures to control them;
- taking steps to ensure risks are removed where possible, or putting in place control measures, e.g. carefully selecting work equipment to ensure the worker is able to perform the required tasks in safety;
- instruction, training and supervision;
- reviewing risk assessments periodically or when there has been a significant change in working practice.

This may include:

- being aware that some tasks may be too difficult or dangerous to be carried out by an unaccompanied worker;
- when a risk assessment shows it is not possible for the work to be conducted safely by a lone worker, addressing that risk by making arrangements to provide help or back-up.

Completing a Risk assessment should help to decide on the right level of supervision. Lone workers should not be put at more risk than other employees.

Safe Working Arrangements

NTCG has the responsibility to identify situations where people work alone and where necessary, consider the following:

- Does the workplace present a specific risk to the lone worker, for example due to temporary access equipment, such as portable ladders that one person would have difficulty handling?
- Is there a safe way in and out for one person, e.g. for a lone person working out of hours where the workplace could be locked up?
- Is there machinery involved in the work that one person cannot operate safely?

- Are chemicals or hazardous substances being used that may pose a particular risk to the lone worker?
- Does the work involve lifting objects too large for one person?
- Is there a risk of violence and/or aggression?
- Are there any reasons why the individual might be more vulnerable than others and be particularly at risk if they work alone (for example if they are young, pregnant, disabled or a trainee)?
- If the lone worker's first language is not English, are suitable arrangements in place to ensure clear communications, especially in an emergency?

Training

It is the responsibility of NTCG to ensure that where there is limited supervision to control, guide and help in uncertain situations, adequate training is given. Lone workers need to be sufficiently experienced and fully understand the risks and precautions involved in their work and the location that they work in.

It is NTCG's responsibility to ensure lone workers are competent to deal with the requirements of the job and are to recognise when to seek advice.

Monitoring

Procedures must be put in place to monitor lone workers as effective means of communication are essential.

These may include:

- supervisors periodically visiting and observing people working alone;
- pre-agreed intervals of regular contact between the lone worker and supervisor, using phones, radios or email;
- manually operated or automatic warning devices which trigger if specific signals are not received periodically from the lone worker, e.g. staff security systems;
- implementing robust system to ensure a lone worker has returned to their base or home once their task is completed.

Emergency Procedures

Information regarding emergency procedures should be given to lone workers and where appropriate, have access to adequate first-aid facilities.