

# Lone Working Policy

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## Introduction

Lone Workers are Support Workers who work by themselves without close or direct supervision.

Lone working has been identified as a possible risk to Banquo's Support Workers; this policy sets out good practice guidance for those who work alone. Banquo will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that Support Workers who are required to work alone or unsupervised for significant periods of time are protected from risks to their health and safety. Measures will also be adopted to protect anyone else affected by lone working.

Lone working exposes Support Workers to particular hazards. Banquo's intention is where practicable, to entirely remove the risk from these hazards or, where complete elimination is not practicable, to reduce the risk to an acceptable level.

## Scope

**All Banquo Support Workers should follow client lone working policies, unless one does not exist, whereupon they should follow this policy.**

This policy must be followed in full when developing or reviewing and amending Company procedural documents.

Lone working has been identified as a possible risk to Support Workers; this policy sets out good practice guidance for those who work alone.

Support Workers that work alone are more vulnerable to risk around Lone working. Furthermore, lone working may mean that there are additional difficulties in obtaining assistance in the event of an incident such as accidents or vehicle breakdowns. Whilst recognising that this document is aimed at lone workers, the majority of practice can apply to other situations where Support Workers for Banquo are working remotely.

This policy is applicable to all Banquo Support Workers.

## Definitions

**Adult at Risk** – any person aged 18 years and over, who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental health issues, learning or physical disability, sensory impairment, age or illness and who is or may be unable to take care of him/herself or unable to protect him/herself against significant harm or serious exploitation.

**Child** - any person under the age of 18.

**Client** – an organisation, which engages with Banquo to purchase services. This includes, amongst others: Local Authorities, Care Homes, Universities, Parents/Carers and Private Sector organisations.

**Banquo** – is part of Prospero Group which is comprised of four entities: Prospero Teaching, Prospero Health & Social, Prospero Integrated and Banquo.

**Service User** – is defined to mean **Child, Children, Young Person** or **Adult**.

**Support Worker** – an individual working for Banquo.

## Accountability

Banquo expects all Support Worker's to abide by any support plans or risk assessments completed for the individual receiving support or, if absent upon shift arrival, carry out a dynamic risk assessment to assess any major concerns.

## Risks

Risks can be associated with many types of work, but it is generally assumed that Lone Workers face increased risk due to the isolated nature of their work. Risks can also take different forms, for example we must consider risks in terms of the potential for physical harm but also the risk of being more vulnerable to false accusations. It is therefore imperative that all Lone Workers are vigilant and conduct their duties with safety in mind at all times.

It is recognised that different roles place some Support Workers at a greater potential risk than others. For example:

- Working alone for a large majority of the time including supporting and visiting Service Users
- Working within Service Users premises
- Travelling between or on behalf of Client sites
- Transporting Service Users to other sites or appointments

Most risks come from the unknown, but trying to identify risks in advance is an essential tool in managing risk. All Support Workers should be familiar with the good practice guidelines and must follow these procedures.

## Implementation of Safeguards

Banquo's Support Workers are required to take reasonable care of themselves and others affected by their work and to co-operate with Banquo's in meeting their legal obligations with regards to Safeguarding, Health and Safety and other legislation.

In an attempt to manage or minimise risks as far as possible, Banquo have implemented a number of safe systems of working.

## Locations of Lone Workers

It is essential for safety that Support Workers communicate their location with the Banquo office.

Lone working procedures must be observed at all times. Failure to comply with the lone working procedures may result in safeguarding allegations raised against the Support Worker or termination of their work with Banquo.

Banquo will store details of the Support Worker's emergency contact and other details (photo, car registration, preferred contact number, if applicable) in accordance with our Data Protection Policy. These details will only be used in circumstances when the Support Worker has not followed the lone working procedure, or Banquo are unable to contact them and therefore have concerns for their safety and wellbeing.

## Mobile Phones

All Support Workers, who are regular lone working, will be required to have a mobile phone which they will be expected to carry at all times during their working hours. They must ensure the phone is sufficiently charged at all times. Please reference the Bring Your Own Device Policy.

## Identity Cards

An identity card with photograph will be issued to all Support Workers for identification purposes, along with the contact details of their main Banquo office.

## Use of Telephone Numbers

All contact with Service Users must be routed through the Banquo office unless explicitly agreed by both Banquo and the Service User in writing.

Support Workers must never under any circumstances give their contact number to Service Users unless explicitly agreed by both Banquo and the Service User in writing.

## **Meetings**

Support Workers attending meetings with Service Users should make every effort to attend these meetings with another Banquo Support Worker, Field Care Supervisor or Coordinator.

## **Incident Reporting**

In order to maintain appropriate records of incidents involving Lone Workers, it is essential that all incidents are reported to Banquo as soon as they occur. Support Workers should ensure that all incidents where they feel threatened or unsafe are reported even if this was not a tangible event or experience. Reports of these incidents are imperative in informing future visits, meetings, etc and will help to inform lone working policies and procedures.

Where a reported incident is related to an allegation against a Support Worker, this will be investigated by Banquo's Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) / Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and concluded in line with Banquo's Allegations & Misconduct Policy. All reported incidents will be recorded on Banquo's CRM system.

## **Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of Support Workers to ensure they refer to this Lone Working Policy before any lone working commences, comply all times and take reasonable care to protect themselves.

Banquo implements safe working systems for Support Workers to avoid or control risk where this is necessary and ensure systems are in place.

## **Training**

All Support Workers working for Banquo should know that a great deal of importance is placed on the health, safety and welfare of both our Service Users and Support Workers, and as such all Lone Workers should be aware of how to deal with situations when they feel they are at risk or unsafe. Support Workers should also be able to recognise how their own actions can influence or even trigger an aggressive response. E-learning and face to face training is provided and available to all Banquo employees.

## **Consequences**

Failure to adhere to this policy may result in triggering disciplinary procedures and could lead to termination of employment and referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service / relevant professional body, if applicable.

## **Data Protection**

Banquo will treat all Support Workers' data confidentially and in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulations 2018.

## **Enforcement**

This policy will be enforced by Banquo's CEO, Directors, Head of Compliance & Safeguarding, Head of HR and Data Protection Officer.

Failure to adhere to this policy may result in suspension / termination of the Support Worker and referral to the Disclosure and Barring Service / relevant professional body, if applicable.