

|                               |                             |   |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|
| Section: <b>D</b>             | Policy Number: <b>D-012</b> | Approval Date: <b>December 19, 2012</b> |
| Subject: <b>Working Alone</b> | Total Pages: <b>3</b>       | Revision Dates:                         |

## WORKING ALONE POLICY

Community Living-Central Huron is committed to providing and maintaining policies, procedures and guidelines, which will promote a safe and healthy work environment. The Agency will take every reasonable precaution for the protection of all employees, volunteers and people supported, striving to eliminate/reduce risk of any potential hazards which may result in personal injuries/illnesses. Every employee must protect their own health and safety by working in compliance with the law, following protocols and safe work practices and procedures, as noted below with the Precautionary Measures. Non-compliance with the Working Alone Policy and Procedures is subject to discipline up to and including dismissal from the Agency's employment and/or its services.

### Working Alone:

The definition of "working alone" means that the employee/volunteer is the only employee/volunteer in that work location, inclusive of being in a vehicle, or is in circumstances where the employee/volunteer cannot be seen or heard by another worker/volunteer in the event of injury, illness or emergency.

### Precautionary Measures: (Safe Work Practices)

"Precautionary measures" includes maintaining a distance that allows you to react to any movement of another person, and by approaching others in a non-threatening, respectful manner, using positive body language, dressing appropriately, complying with protocols of persons supported and being aware of circumstances, triggers, responsive behaviours of persons supported; all of which are consistent with the Nonviolent Physical Crisis Intervention (CPI) training.

Each Community Living-Central Huron work location has on-site an Emergency Preparedness Binder, which Staff are required to review on a monthly basis and when revisions occur. Included in the Emergency Preparedness Binder are a number of important items and information, inclusive of evacuation procedures; floor plans; emergency numbers such as the on-call Pager, 911; individual and location specific protocols; up-to-date Person Directed Plans; routines; etc. The location cell phone is to be kept charged at all times, and all employees are to take the cell phone with them when they are supporting individuals in the community.

As well, the residential locations, the Activity Centre and the Employment Support Program utilize a Communication Book to document pertinent information regarding people supported, concerns, or issues for incoming Staff to review as they begin their shift. Each month the Location Health & Safety Representative (LHSR) conducts an inspection of the location in which they work. The LHSR would document and bring to the attention of their Supervisor all workplace hazards. In addition, the work location Supervisor conducts sporadic inspections of workplace hazards and documents monthly their findings and corrective actions.

Staff who work out of an office location, are to record in the daily log book their whereabouts and the expected date of their return. It is important to balance the confidentiality of people supported and the health and safety of employees/volunteers.

### Employer Responsibilities:

The Employer will:

- ensure policies and procedures are developed and activated to address any identified hazards;
- ensure that a risk assessment is completed at each work location;
- ensure the Health & Safety Location Representative, where necessary, conducts a monthly inspection;
- provide training and orientation to Staff regarding their responsibilities, including the Health and Safety Policy and Procedures, Emergency Policy, site-specific protocols and individual protocols of persons supported;
- provide a cell phone for the work location/Program;
- provide some type of electronic personal safe guard emergency alarm/device, when necessary.

### Supervisor Responsibilities:

The Supervisor will:

- be responsible for being aware of this policy, procedures, precautionary measures and ensuring compliance by all employees and/or volunteers they supervise;
- ensure that risk assessments are carried out at the locations they supervise and communicating in writing any risks, policies and procedures to minimize such risks or hazards to Staff and/or volunteers;
- ensure training and orientation is provided to all employees and/or volunteers who work alone;
- ensure that all investigations concerning health and safety risks of working alone are conducted immediately and documented, following notification of such risks;
- respond to Workplace Hazard and Suggestion Reports immediately; take steps to reduce or eliminate all risks;
- complete the required documentation to notify the Union of any workplace hazards;
- take every reasonable precaution to respond to employees' concerns or correct any unsafe situation;
- visit the work location periodically and observe Staff working alone;
- periodically each month, visit the work location to conduct a hazard inspection.

### Employee Responsibilities:

The Employee will:

- participate in orientation and follow training and education;
- ensure they are aware of and follow all policies, procedures, precautionary measures and guidelines related to working alone;
- be knowledgeable about reporting procedures and reporting incidents; including the completion of appropriate forms, as soon as possible to ensure all details are included;
- immediately reporting in writing any concerns regarding health and safety to their Supervisor;
- follow site specific protocols and use precautionary measures as described above;
- comply with protocols/Support Plans of persons supported, being aware of circumstances, triggers, responsive behaviours of persons supported;
- record their whereabouts in the daily log book, where applicable.

**Note:** At any time should an employee or volunteer believe they are in imminent risk or danger, contact 911 immediately.

Reporting and Investigation:

It is the responsibility of all employees and volunteers to immediately report any and all risks or potential risks of working alone to their immediate Supervisor, using the Workplace Hazard and Suggestion Report. The Supervisor will investigate the risk(s) or potential risk(s), as soon as possible and take appropriate steps to address any continuing risks to the health and well-being of all employees and volunteers.

Evaluation:

Community Living-Central Huron is committed to looking at leading indicators of working alone, through surveys to employees and volunteers, and providing education and awareness as necessary. Supervisors will regularly audit employee and volunteer practices of working alone as well as review the monthly checklist for any noted hazards and corrections.