

## **LONE WORKING POLICY**

### **reviewed and adopted January 2012**

The aim of this policy is to ensure that SIGNAL FS Family Support ('SIGNAL FS') meets its statutory duty of care to employees by:

- ensuring that employees who work alone are not exposed to risks to their health or safety
- making recommendations to mitigate these risks
- establishing key principles of best practice for working from home

This policy relates to SIGNAL FS employees working from home and in our office space, and attending activities and events. Any reference to employees should also be taken to include volunteers. For further policies relating to Health & Safety please contact the SIGNAL FS Administrator.

#### **1. PERSONAL SECURITY WHILST WORKING ALONE**

(Please see SIGNAL FS Lone Working Risk Assessment Form attached)

Employees are recommended not to arrange to meet a visitor alone who is not known to them, either in their own, or the visitor's, home. Where practical, a neutral public meeting place should be organised.

For SIGNAL FS coffee mornings hosted in members' homes, it is recommended that a minimum of two other members attend, to enhance security for both the host and visitors.

If an employee is working alone in the office, either at the beginning or end of the day, it is recommended that they ensure that all access doors are locked.

If an employee is handling cash (for example collecting payments or depositing cash at the bank) it is recommended that reasonable steps are taken to ensure that this is not done alone.

It is recommended that employees have the SIGNAL FS mobile phone with them when working away from the office or home, for example during trips.

Any incidents (or 'near misses') that arise whilst working alone should be reported to the Chair or Manager within 24 hours, so that appropriate action can be taken as required.

#### **2. HOME WORKING**

##### **Responsibilities of home workers**

Employees who work permanently, or regularly from home, are responsible for ensuring that they comply with all the requirements of this policy and, in particular, they must:

- ensure that they complete their contractual hours of work and are available to carry out their duties during their core working hours
- ensure that they are free from domestic distractions whilst carrying out their duties. Childcare or other forms of caring support must remain fully in place during normal working hours
- ensure that the work space is adequate for a desk/work surface, office chair, PC, telephone and sufficient storage of essential paper files

- comply with the requirements of SIGNAL FS's Data Protection Policy in the storage, retrieval and manipulation of data, whether on paper or by computer
- attend meetings, Away Days, training, as required
- report sickness absence and hours of work as for any other employee
- ensure that they work in a way which maintains the health and safety of themselves and others, as appropriate

### **3. TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF HOME WORKING EMPLOYEES**

In all respects other than provided for by this policy, home working employees will retain the same terms and conditions of employment as office-based employees, as set out in their contract of employment.

If a home worker finds that it is no longer possible or convenient for them to work from home, SIGNAL FS will seek to accommodate them within an office, subject to the availability of funding and of suitable office accommodation.

Where an employee uses their own telephone line for Charity business, they may reclaim the cost of business calls. Costs will be reimbursed on the basis of receipted expense claims.

SIGNAL FS will not pay towards additional costs of home working (e.g. heating, lighting etc).

Equipment provided by SIGNAL FS is for the use of the employee only, and the security of any such equipment will be the responsibility of the employee.

All employees working from home with SIGNAL FS's agreement are covered by Employer's Liability Insurance.

SIGNAL FS recommends that employees clarify any limitations imposed by, for example, their landlord, mortgage provider or insurance policy in relation to working from home.

During the recruitment process candidates will be informed if home working is a requirement for their post; similarly, candidates for posts where home working is an option will be informed of the possibility. In both cases their suitability for home working will be assessed.

## SIGNAL FS LONE WORKING RISK ASSESSMENT FORM

ASSESSOR: Clare Sharpen of Sharpen Up Limited

DATE: 22/6/2011

| HAZARD  | THOSE AT RISK                    | RATING<br>L/M/H | EXISTING CONTROL<br>MEASURES  | ADDITIONAL CONTROL<br>MEASURES  |
|---|----------------------------------|-----------------|---|---|
| Meeting visitors alone, e.g. potential members  | Employees                        | Low             | 1:1 meetings take place in the office. Meetings at home only take place between people known to the employee.     | If an employee is uncomfortable about meeting with someone, it is recommended that they request attendance from another SIGNAL FS member.                                 |
| Meeting people alone at SIGNAL FS coffee mornings (hosted in homes)                         | Coffee morning hosts / employees | Low             | It is recommended that a minimum of two other members attend to ensure at least three people at a coffee morning. |   |
| An employee working alone in the office, either at the beginning or end of the day          | Employees                        | Medium          | The access doors are automatically locked with secure access only.  | If employees are aware that the office will be empty at certain times, it is recommended that employees endeavour to make arrangements to work elsewhere (eg from home).  |
| An employee handling cash (for example collecting payments or depositing cash at the bank). | Employees                        | Medium          | It is recommended that reasonable steps are taken to ensure that this is not done alone.                          | Where possible, endeavour that deposits are not made on regular times & days, and that cash is not carried on public transport or at higher risk times (e.g. after dark). |