

<b>Document Name:</b>	<b>Personal Safety and Lone Working Policy</b>
Document Version Number	2
Created on:	2 August 2016
Approved by the Board of Trustees on:	
Review Schedule	Every three years
Next review due	July 2026
Owner (Responsibility)	Trevor Maynard, Health and Safety Officer
Pass amendments to:	Board of Trustees, Chief Executive Officer
Revision History	02 August 2016 24 July 2023
Document Location	Google Drive folder: Policies (TWAM)

**Document Description**

This policy outlines TWAMs procedures for keeping its staff and volunteers safe. Personal safety is a top priority to ensure that all staff and volunteers can work and volunteer safely and securely. TWAM asserts that lone working is not inherently unsafe and proper precautions can reduce the risks associated with working alone.

The policy sets out how TWAM and its volunteers take responsibility for ensuring everybody is working or volunteering in a safe environment and making their personal safety their priority.

**Implementation and Quality Assurance**

Implementation is immediate and this Policy shall stay in force until any alterations are formally agreed.

The Policy will be reviewed every three years by the Health and Safety Officer, Chief Executive Board of Trustees, sooner if legislation, best practice or other circumstances indicate this is necessary.

All aspects of this Policy shall be open to review at any time. If you have any comments or suggestions on the content of this policy please contact Trevor Maynard, [trevorm@twam.uk](mailto:trevorm@twam.uk) or at Tools with a Mission, 2 Bailey Close, Hadleigh Road Industrial Estate, Ipswich, IP2 0UD 01473 210220.

## Personal Safety and Lone Working Policy

### Why we have this policy

Working alone is not illegal, but it can bring additional risks to a work activity. TWAM has developed these good practice guidelines to control risk and protect staff and volunteers. All those who are required to work alone should familiarise themselves with the guidelines and follow them.

Apart from ensuring the lone worker is capable of performing the tasks associated with their job description without supervision, the other most important factors to be certain of are:

- The lone worker has full knowledge of the hazards and risk to which they may be exposed
- All available information on clients is reviewed before visiting
- The lone worker knows what to do if something goes wrong
- A lone worker system is being utilised so that someone knows the whereabouts of a lone worker and the length of time that he/she will be working alone.

This policy outlines TWAMs procedures for keeping its staff and volunteers safe. TWAM asserts that the Board of Trustees has a duty of care to advise and assess risk for staff and volunteers when they work by themselves. Personal safety is a top priority to ensure that all staff and volunteers can work and volunteer safely and securely. TWAM asserts that lone working is not inherently unsafe and proper precautions can reduce the risks associated with working alone.

However, there are many situations which occur every day in which staff and volunteers may find their personal safety at risk e.g. collecting tools and equipment, local speaking and traveling. This policy provides advice on planning ahead, assessing risk and coping with difficult situations.

The main volunteer roles this policy applies to:

- Tool Collector
- Volunteer Speaker
- Community Fundraiser
- County Ambassador
- Van Champion

Whatever your role, we want to ensure you remain safe. That is the sole purpose of this policy. Much of the advice below is obvious and even common sense, but TWAM is responsible for ensuring it is known and adhered to, so please do take this policy very seriously.

**Empowering people with the tools that create livelihoods and transform lives**

Tools with a Mission, 2 Bailey Close, Hadleigh Road Industrial Estate, Ipswich, IP2 0UD

t: 01473 210220 e: post@twam.uk twam.uk

Registered charity No: 1104903 (England and Wales) VAT Registration Number 347292286

A company limited by guarantee and registered in England no: 5114575

### **Volunteers are expected to:**

- Take reasonable care of their own safety and that of others.
- Comply with any personal safety procedures detailed by Tools with a Mission.
- Raise any concerns with the Health and Safety Officer, Volunteering Coordinator or Centre Manager.
- Immediately report any accidents, incidents, injuries or 'near misses'
- Report any safety practices that need to be improved or risks not otherwise identified.
- Make sure they have a named contact who will know where they are going and what they are doing and can check when they get home safely. This is often a husband, wife, partner, neighbor or friend.

### **Reasonable precautions might include:**

- Checking directions for destination.
- Ensuring a vehicle is roadworthy and has breakdown cover.
- Ensuring someone knows where they are going and when they are expected home.
- Avoiding poorly lit or deserted areas.
- Taking care when leaving or entering empty buildings especially at night.
- Ensuring that equipment such as laptops or mobile phones are carried discreetly.

### **Volunteers working from home**

If working from home volunteers should:

- Take reasonable precautions to ensure that their personal addresses remain confidential.
- All numbers including ex-directory and mobile numbers can show up on caller display and retrieved on 1471. To avoid access to landline numbers dial 141 before dialing the number. To avoid mobile numbers being available please check the mobile phone's instruction manual.
- Remain in regular contact with your TWAM named contact.

### **Volunteer Local Collectors**

#### ***Before you leave home***

- Local Collectors should identify a person or persons who can act as their 'named contact' and ensure that their daily movements/appointments are known to this person. This is often a husband, wife, partner, neighbor or friend.
- Before any journey you should leave details with your named contact of where you plan to go, approximate times of when you expect to be there, details of any meetings you have arranged, including the name of the person you are meeting
- Ensure you have an appropriate means of communication. If taking a mobile phone, check it is fully charged and (for pay-as-you-go), has sufficient credit; leave it switched on; do not use it whilst driving

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### ***When you arrive at the tool donors home***

- Take and use any other personal protective equipment provided.
- Do not enter someone's home to collect goods, but wherever possible ask the donor to bring them to an external door.
- If you feel unsafe or threatened, make an appropriate excuse and walk away. If appropriate ring your named contact for advice and support (this may be under the pretext of checking whether we can accept the goods offered).
- A code word or phrase can be agreed and slipped into a telephone conversation alerting your named contact of your concerns without the person you are visiting being aware of your call for assistance. For example, using the phrase "I'm ringing to check we are not overstocked with hammers."
- Once the code word is confirmed, your named contact should be aware that emergency procedures should be enacted and the police called.
- In the unlikely event that you still have concerns then please walk away.

### ***When you arrive safely home***

- Your named contact should be informed of your safe arrival home.
- Think through what you would do if a problem should occur.

If the collector fails to inform their named contact of their safe return and they cannot be reached by phone and where there is genuine concern for the collectors wellbeing, their named contact should call the police and notify TWAMs Health and Safety Officer or Volunteering Coordinator by telephone.

## **Volunteer Speaker, Community Fundraiser and County Ambassador**

### ***Before you leave home***

- If visiting a church or community building, make sure you have clear directions and know where you can park safely.
- If meeting an individual, arrange the meeting to take place in a public place such as a cafe.
- Make sure you leave details with your named contact of where you plan to go, approximate times of when you expect to be there, details of any meetings you have arranged, including the name of the person you are meeting
- Ensure you have an appropriate means of communication. If taking a mobile phone, check it is fully charged and (for pay-as-you-go), has sufficient credit; leave it switched on; do not use it whilst driving.
- Think about where you will be going and what you will be doing; consider whether there are particular risks relating to that location or activity (e.g. an unusually isolated location, adverse weather conditions for driving). If in doubt, discuss it with the Volunteering Coordinator.

### ***When you arrive, where appropriate***

- On arrival make sure you meet the person whose name you have been given.
- If using their equipment, just have a quick check of plugs and cables.
- Make sure there are no trip hazards.

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- If anything causes concern, ask for it to be rectified.
- Make contact by telephone at specified times with your named contact, if you have agreed to do this

### ***When you arrive home safely***

- Let your named contact know when you have safely completed your activities.

In the unlikely event that you still have concerns then please walk away.

### **Traveling by car**

Many of these suggestions are obvious and common sense, but it is still good to mention them as TWAM is responsible for doing all we can to keep you safe, even if it is 'stating the obvious.'

- Plan your route and take appropriate maps/satnav.
- Ensure that the vehicle is in good order and that you have sufficient fuel.
- Take warm clothes in case of breakdown or bad weather.
- Keep valuables out of sight; female staff should not leave obvious signs that the driver is female (handbags, coats etc) on the seats.
- Park in well-lit areas, if possible with the car facing in the direction of exit; when returning to the vehicle, check the back seat.
- Carry a mobile phone for emergency use.
- Do not pick up hitchhikers.
- Carry a torch at night.
- If you see an incident, do not stop unless it is safe to do so; it may be safer to drive on and summon help.
- If you are forced to stop, keep your engine running and lock the windows and doors; leave sufficient space in front of the vehicle to be able to pull out and drive away; drive off if you feel threatened.

### **Road rage**

Unfortunately, this type of incident is becoming more common. If at any time you are confronted by this situation, it is important that you do nothing to escalate it further.

- Do not stop to confront the third party.
- If a car pulls in front of you and you are approached, stay in your vehicle with the doors locked and windows closed; keep the engine running and drive away as soon as possible.
- If you cannot get away make as much noise and fuss as you can; sound the horn, flash lights etc. To gain others' attention.
- If you think you are being followed or feel threatened, raise the alarm by using hazard lights and horn; if possible, drive on until you reach a busy area such as a 24 hour garage.
- If you are stationary and have a mobile phone, ring the emergency services.

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### **If you breakdown on a motorway or dual carriageway**

- Park as near as possible to an emergency phone.
- If you have to walk, wear high visibility clothing if possible.
- Leave your car by the passenger door.
- When making an emergency call, face oncoming traffic, so you can see if another vehicle is approaching.
- If appropriate tell the operator if you are a lone female.
- Never cross the carriageway.
- Wait behind the barrier, beside your vehicle if this is safe.
- Ask for identification from uniformed persons to ensure they are bona fide.

### **Traveling by public transport**

- Plan your route (outward and return) in advance.
- Try to avoid traveling alone late at night.
- Wait in busy, well-lit areas if possible; be aware of the location of exits.
- Have your fare/ticket ready and separate from other valuables.
- Try to keep one hand free.
- Sit downstairs on double-decker buses.
- Try to avoid falling asleep

### **Traveling on foot**

- Think ahead, be alert and aware of your surroundings.
- Keep one hand free if possible.
- Avoid short-cuts, underpasses or poorly lit areas.
- Walk facing on-coming traffic.
- Do not hitchhike or accept lifts from strangers.
- Keep valuables out of site and avoid areas where groups may gather e.g. Clubs, pubs etc.
- Avoid wearing earphones.
- If you carry a personal alarm, ensure that it works and that you can quickly access it.

### **Dog attack**

- Do not enter premises where an unfamiliar dog is loose
- If, when talking to a client, their dog causes you to feel uncomfortable, politely ask them to remove it.

### **Van Champions and driver's mate's**

- Drivers must ensure that their movements/appointments are logged. The **Drivers Collection Record Sheet** must be used to log all van movements. These are available from head office.
- Drivers should always carry a mobile phone and be contactable by their van manager/administrator, Refurbishment Centre Manager or named daily contact in case they do not return by the agreed time or fail to arrive at a collection location.

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- Please remember that it is against the law for mobile devices to be used whilst driving and TWAM will not be held liable for any fines or other outcome of criminal action for any driver caught by the authorities using their device whilst driving.
- Where there is genuine concern for a member of staff or volunteer's wellbeing (if they have not returned from a visit, maintained contact and/or cannot be contacted), the Van/ RC Manager or named contact should call the police.

### **In summary**

Staff and volunteers should know that their safety comes first. This policy should help you be aware of how to deal with situations in which you feel at risk or unsafe. Even though much of the advice contained is common sense, it always helps to be reminded and importantly to have a checklist to plan to.

Safety of everyone working with TWAM is paramount and we hope this policy will help keep everyone safe.

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