**Lone Working policy**

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 sets out a duty of care on employers to ensure the health, safety and welfare of employees whilst at work.

1.1 ‘Lone working’ refers to situations where staff, in the course of their duties, work alone with children, parents and foster parents in the community, in the homes of individuals or may be the only staff member present in another venue where children, parents and foster parents are present.

1.2 PCFS has a commitment to:

* supporting staff and managers both in establishing and maintaining safe working practices
* recognising and reducing risk
* provision of appropriate support for staff
* developing a clear understanding of responsibilities
* the priority placed on the safety of the individual over property
* providing appropriate training for staff

1.3 Staff responsibilities

All staff have a duty of care for themselves and anyone else who could be affected by their actions. All staff must consider foreseeable hazards and consider the nature of each visit and potential risky situations.

The following issues should be considered, as appropriate to the circumstances:

* the environment – location, security, access
* the context – nature of the task, any special circumstances
* the individuals concerned – indicators of potential or actual risk
* history – any previous incidents in similar situations
* any other special circumstances

1.4 Communication, checking-in and fall-back arrangements must be in place

* uptodate photo and contact details are on file for staff members
* uptodate “who to contact” details for staff members
* staff to ensure electronic calendar/diary is uptodate at all times.
* If delays or changes to appointment/meetings or charges of plans the office or your line manager should be informed.

1.5 In the event of concerns

**Purple File Procedure**

The established code to indicate a member of staff in distress is:

“I will need the purple file when I get back to the office”

If you hear this, follow the procedure below if it is staff to do so:-

* FIRST – check that they are at the address on their outlook calendar.
* Are you at…?
* Are you in danger?
* Do you need the police?
* Is there a weapon?
* Do you need a member of staff?
* Do you want me to call you back in 5 minutes?
* If no answer, dial 999 and call the police