Lone Working and

Violence in the Workplace

Procedures for Integrated Children’s Services

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**Lone Working Procedures**

# Introduction to Lone Working

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. Further legislation states every employer shall make a suitable and sufficient assessment of the ‘foreseeable’ risks employees might face in the course of their duties.

Although there is an overarching organisational KCC document regarding lone working and personal safety for **all KCC employees** [Lone working and personal safety guidance.docx (sharepoint.com)](https://kentcountycouncil.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/sites/KCCKNet/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B8BDCF371-32B7-4A06-87B6-36AC30A4299F%7D&file=Lone%20working%20and%20personal%20safety%20guidance.docx&action=default&mobileredirect=true),this document provides specific guidance on the health and safety arrangements to be considered by **staff within** **Integrated Children’s Services (ICS)** to eliminate/reduce the risk of harm and violence to individuals in the workplace, undertaking work activities or lone working.

These procedures should be used in conjunction with

[Lone working and personal safety guidance.docx (sharepoint.com)](https://kentcountycouncil.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/sites/KCCKNet/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B8BDCF371-32B7-4A06-87B6-36AC30A4299F%7D&file=Lone%20working%20and%20personal%20safety%20guidance.docx&action=default&mobileredirect=true)

[Risk assessment guidance](https://kentcountycouncil.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/sites/KCCKNet/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B398FFC30-CF3F-4C1B-AA77-D377EBD80324%7D&file=Risk%20assessment%20guidance.docx&action=default&mobileredirect=true&DefaultItemOpen=1)

[Covid-19 (coronavirus) - The latest advice and guidance (sharepoint.com)](https://kentcountycouncil.sharepoint.com/sites/KCCKNet/SitePages/Covid-19-(coronavirus)---The-latest-advice-and-guidance.aspx)

[Prevention and management of violence - social media, bullying and stalking guidance](https://kentcountycouncil.sharepoint.com/sites/KCCKNet/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7BBFF57C70-3DF3-49A9-B0AE-45736B64227A%7D&file=Prevention%20and%20management%20of%20violence%20-%20social%20media,%20bullying%20and%20stalking%20guidance.docx&action=default&mobileredirect=true&DefaultItemOpen=1)

[Prevention and management of violence at work guidance](https://kentcountycouncil.sharepoint.com/sites/KCCKNet/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B07D5C2F3-5570-4440-8CCD-C870B0E72B47%7D&file=Prevention%20and%20management%20of%20violence%20at%20work%20guidance.docx&action=default&mobileredirect=true&DefaultItemOpen=1)

[The Kent Code](https://kentcountycouncil.sharepoint.com/sites/KCCKNet/Shared%20Documents/Policy%20and%20Strategy/The%20Kent%20Code.docx)

# Definition of Lone Working

The Health and Safety Executive’s working definition of Lone Workers is:

‘Those who work by themselves without close or direct supervision, in a wide range of situations, regardless of whether they work in a fixed establishment or are mobile workers away from a fixed base.’

Many staff work in isolated situations, such as visiting families at home, hybrid working, staff travelling solo to and from family visits and working outside normal working hours. There are various work activities that may result in staff working alone including those who start work early, regularly work late, or who lock up buildings on their own at the end of the day.

# 3. Purpose of Lone Working Procedures

These procedures are to ensure adequate control measures are in place to safeguard all ICS staff who work alone at any point during their contractual duties. Managers and staff should:

* Assess and manage risks to staff.
* Provide safe places and systems of work.
* Identify training needs and provide information and training.
* Review and improve working conditions and practice.

Staff working alone or in isolation from others may be at particular risk, either because of circumstances of their day to day working or because an emergency may occur. These risks can be mitigated by ensuring regular contact is made and they are kept informed of any changes that may affect them.

All hazards should be identified, and all significant risks should be recorded on a risk assessment. These risks should be reviewed on a regular basis.

# 4. Roles and Responsibilities

ICS Leadership Team and all managers are responsible for providing safe systems of work for their staff and ensuring the Lone Working policy, guidance and procedures are effectively executed.

**Manager responsibilities**

All managers should be aware of and review the potential risks associated with lone working, carry out risk assessments to minimise these risks and act to reduce risks their staff face or that are present in their workplace. Guidance as well as the risk assessment forms are available on KNet to assist managers with this task. [Risk assessment guidance](https://kentcountycouncil.sharepoint.com/sites/KCCKNet/Health%20and%20Safety/Risk%20assessment%20guidance.docx?web=1) [Risk assessment blank form - 5 steps](https://kentcountycouncil.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/sites/KCCKNet/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B21335B23-9B11-4D53-892E-7D78BBBAB80D%7D&file=Risk%20assessment%20blank%20form%20-%205%20steps.docx&action=default&mobileredirect=true&DefaultItemOpen=1).

Managers must ensure their staff have read and understood the above relevant guidance as well as guidance contained in this introduction. These should be discussed with staff regularly at one-to-one meetings and team meetings and any risks that could apply should be identified. Managers must also identify training requirements and ensure that arrangements are made to meet them.

Lone workers may request additional support if they feel vulnerable. Any request should be carefully considered by managers to ensure the lone worker is sufficiently trained and has the level of competence to work alone.

**Managers should**:

* Assess and manage the risks to staff by ensuring risk assessments (Risk assessment blank form - 5 steps) are carried out, reviewed regularly, and shared with employees who are potentially at risk, especially when working activities deviate from normal practice and there is an identifiable increased risk, e.g., prior to a home visit.
* Attend relevant and appropriate training:
* [Lone Working](https://www.delta-learning.com/course/view.php?id=1753)
* [Personal Safety-Lone Working-KSCMP](https://www.delta-learning.com/course/view.php?id=2415)
* Identify and provide safe places within KCC buildings, implement procedures and safe systems of work into practice which are designed to eliminate or reduce the risks associated with working alone.
* Review working conditions, practices, and procedures to ensure staff groups and individuals identified as being at risk are given appropriate information, instruction and training.
* Ensure appropriate support is given to staff involved in any incident.
* Report and investigate any accidents/incidents caused as a result of lone working using KCC’s online reporting system (see [Accident Incident Reporting, Investigation and RIDDOR Guidance](https://kentcountycouncil.sharepoint.com/sites/KCCKNet/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B53F0B102-BAFD-46E8-8CC9-EE8A588C32CC%7D&file=Accident%20incident%20reporting,%20investigation%20and%20RIDDOR%20guidance.docx&action=default&mobileredirect=true&DefaultItemOpen=1) on KNet).
* Manage the effectiveness of preventative measures through the analysis of accident/incident reporting and investigations.
* Effectively monitor the wellbeing of lone workers which should include at least a check on the member of staff during and at the end of the working day.
* Ensure staff are suitable, fit and healthy to work alone and seek advice, if necessary, from KCC Staff Care Services (Occupational Health).
* Securely retain the emergency contact details of all team members to be used in emergency situations using the ICS Emergency Contact form shown in Appendix A.

**Staff member responsibilities**

All ICS 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.

Employees are required to:

* Take reasonable care of themselves and others affected by their actions.
* Familiarise themselves with the lone worker risk assessments in place for activities they are involved in.
* Attend training designed to meet the requirements of this procedure.
* Are aware and follow all information, guidance, and, procedures and training provided, and apply the safe systems of work designed for safe working in their service/team.
* Report all accidents/incidents which may have occurred whilst lone working, including those affecting the health and safety of themselves and others using KCC’s online reporting system.
* Maintain any personal safety equipment provided to ensure it is in a good working condition, and only use for the purpose for which it is intended.
* Use the ‘buddy system’ by phoning the ‘buddy’ to confirm safety (see Section 5).
* Use the ‘Purple File’ procedure, where necessary as shown in Appendix B (this is separate to the ‘buddy system’ and involves calling the main team/office/hunt group number as agreed locally).
* Update Outlook Calendar every day and ensure it reflects details of lone working arrangements and appointments. All team members and managers, including business support should have access to calendars.
* Complete and keep updated their ICS Emergency Contact Details form (Appendix A).
* Ensure they have all the correct and up to date contact details of their ‘buddy,’ line manager and relevant Service Manager in case of an emergency.
* Have made themselves aware of the nearest place of safety.
* Have made themselves aware of the function on their mobile phones to make a call direct to the emergency services. [**How to make an emergency SOS call from your mobile phone**](https://www.which.co.uk/news/article/how-to-make-an-emergency-sos-call-from-your-mobile-phone-axuyN8J982Hx)
* Are aware of the on-site security procedures.

Show their KCC Identity Card when introducing themselves to service users with photo and employee number clearly visible.

# 5. ICS Safe Systems of Working

ICS is adopting the ‘Buddy System’ as the Safe Systems of Working when lone working. It is acknowledged that all teams work in different ways and they will have to choose the best way which works for them.

The ‘Buddy System’ operates where each member of staff will be allocated a ‘buddy’ who they will be required to liaise with regularly when working alone or when hybrid working arrangements apply and staff may routinely split their time between workplace and home. Managers will ensure that all staff are allocated a ‘buddy’ from within their team and ensure the correct level of support appropriate cover is available to ensure their personal safety. Please see appendix D for an example of a ‘Buddy System’’.

**Staff will:**

* Update their Outlook calendar each morning before undertaking any appointments e.g., visits, meetings to ensure the details of their visits and meetings are clearly shown.
* For all home visits and incidents of lone working staff must put the appropriate data management reference/ID number (e.g., Liberi/EHM/CDY/Core +/Synergy) in their appointment alongside any other non-specific details about the visit, such as ‘visit to Mum’s/Dad’s address–.’
* Information, including telephone numbers and addresses must be up to date and accurate on all appropriate data management systems.

**The ‘buddy’ will:**

* Ensure they are available by phone to speak to their ‘buddy’ partner who is working alone at the end of the day.
* Update their Outlook calendar daily each morning to ensure their appointments are clear and to check the calendar for their ‘buddy’ partner. Their Outlook calendar should be updated of any changes during the day, where possible.
* Keep a clear record of the information provided by their ‘buddy’ partner.
* Contact line manager in the event of ‘no call being received’ and line manager to follow escalation route shown in Appendix D.

In the event of an emergency staff must inform Senior Managers as appropriate including the relevant Assistant Director. Managers should share with all staff the Major Incident Contact List that has the out of hours contact details of all Assistant Directors across ICS (see Appendix C). It is the responsibility of Senior Managers to ensure these details are up to date.

# 6. Home Visits

Staff visiting a child, and family in their own home need to take particular care and plan the visiting taking a number of factors into account.

* Consider the nature of the visit and identify any hazards/risks shown on the relevant system and/or referral information provided. Please use [Risk assessment blank form - 5 steps](https://kentcountycouncil.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/sites/KCCKNet/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B21335B23-9B11-4D53-892E-7D78BBBAB80D%7D&file=Risk%20assessment%20blank%20form%20-%205%20steps.docx&action=default&mobileredirect=true&DefaultItemOpen=1)
* Where the hazards are considered high risk, the first visit should take place in an office or other controlled environment. If a home visit is essential, a joint visit between two trained staff should be agreed by the relevant manager.
* Ensure the risks are reviewed on a continuous basis and should the risk level rise to an unacceptable level then lone working should stop.
* Family and contact details must be kept up to date and consideration should be given as to whether a joint visit between two staff is required.

The lone worker’s line manager should be aware of the visit details and are responsible for the monitoring that staff return safely, either directly or through the ‘buddy.’

**As a lone worker you should:**

* Consider whether you need to use the ‘Purple File’ procedure by either calling the office whilst visiting the family or setting up a call from your ‘buddy’ system. Shown in Appendix D
* Where possible, leave your car where you can get away quickly if necessary.
* Check your mobile phone is charged and working before the visit.
* When entering the room where the meeting will take place, reassess the risk.
* Consider the impact of the information you will be imparting and the effect this may have on your safety.
* Are there other people in the room who may be aggressive?
* Is there a dog in the room? In most cases, it is best to ask for the dog to be shut in another room.
* Can you sit somewhere where you can exit quickly?
* An upright chair is easier to get up from than a sofa, if you have a choice.
* Does a member of the family appear to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs or otherwise likely to behave unpredictably?
* If you are content that the risks remain acceptable, continue with the visit but be alert to any signs of aggression.
* Plan an excuse to return to the car, (e.g., for a document) so that you can use this at a moment’s notice if it becomes necessary.
* Always be prepared to terminate the visit if you feel threatened in any way even if the feeling is only a ‘gut instinct’.
* Update the information on the ICS system immediately after the visit so ensuring the information is available for future visits by others.

# 7. KCC Buildings

It is important that ICS business support and other staff act professionally in welcoming visitors to KCC buildings. In some situations, they may be working alone and safe systems of work must be in place to control the risks from the members of the public that we are working with.

**Staff should:**

* Understand their role and the role of the team within the building.
* Know and work closely with their buddy.
* Know how to respond to the first signs of aggression.
* Know what to do in any foreseeable emergency and understand the ‘Purple File’ Procedure.
* Attend training if this is necessary to help keep safe.

Managers need to consider environmental issues such as enabling good communication with service users, providing an escape route for reception and/or building staff and ensuring appropriate security measures when staff are separated from the rest of the building. Managers are responsible for ensuring staff are aware of these safety measures.

Ideally, meeting rooms should be designed so that there is clear visibility into them. This provides a measure of security for any lone worker. Members of staff should consider the circumstances carefully before carrying out meeting alone with a child or family.

It is recommended that staff do not arrange to meet anyone when they will be alone in the building.

**Key Holders**

A risk assessment and relevant training and support to understand Lone Working Procedures is required for all key holders. This includes when they are carrying out normal work activities and when attending the premises in the event of an intruder alarm activation.

# 8. Protecting Home Workers and Hybrid Working

When an employee is working from home, permanently or temporarily, or routinely splitting their time between their workplace and home (sometimes called hybrid working) managers should consider:

* Keep in touch with staff and consider how they will do this. Regular contact is required to make sure employees are healthy and safe.
* Ensure that contact details for all employees are up to date.
* Consider what work activity employees undertake, whether it is being undertaken safely and for how long.
* Consider whether control measures are in place to protect them.

For information on correct ergonomic workstation set-up when working at home see the display screen equipment (DSE) guidance on KNet and KELSI.

[Are you sitting comfortably](https://kentcountycouncil.sharepoint.com/sites/KCCKNet/SitePages/Are-you-sitting-comfortably-.aspx)

[DSE Workstation Assessment Form](https://kentcountycouncil.sharepoint.com/sites/KCCKNet/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7BEA5109B4-F700-4E76-89BC-FEBEEF79E762%7D&file=DSE%20Workstation%20Assessment%20form.docx&action=default&mobileredirect=true&DefaultItemOpen=1)

Managers should ensure that Lone Working principles are adhered to by staff working from home or within hybrid working arrangements including ‘Purple File’ and ‘buddy’ systems. Appendix I gives some additional advice to follow for working at home due to Covid-19. Managers and staff should also consider whether “Work Smart” principles apply for staff and flexible working arrangements can be considered when and where necessary. [Work Smart (Flexible Working) Guidance for Employees](https://kentcountycouncil.sharepoint.com/sites/KCCKNet/Shared%20Documents/HR/Work%20Smart%20(Flexible%20Working)%20Guidance%20for%20Employees.docx?web=1)

**Confidentiality**

As staff are now working at home for long periods, please be vigilant about how you make calls and share information. It is important to turn off devices such as Alexa, Siri and Google Home as they work by recording information in order that the analytics can respond to your requests. Remind yourself of our [Information Governance Policy.docx (sharepoint.com)](https://kentcountycouncil.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/sites/KCCKNet/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7BA69954A9-0E13-41AD-81DC-F05852813375%7D&file=Information%20Governance%20Policy.docx&action=default&mobileredirect=true&DefaultItemOpen=1) and [DSE - Reasonable adjustments when working from home.docx (sharepoint.com)](https://kentcountycouncil.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/sites/KCCKNet/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7BEE343304-F919-41C3-959E-4CC7EDFC9917%7D&file=DSE%20-%20Reasonable%20adjustments%20when%20working%20from%20home.docx&action=default&mobileredirect=true&DefaultItemOpen=1).

**Providing support on mental health**

Work-related mental health issues must be assessed to measure the levels of risk to employees. Where a risk is identified managers must take steps to remove or reduce it as far as is reasonably practicable. If a lone worker has a pre-existing mental health condition, managers may need to consider making reasonable adjustments to their work or workplace and this may require additional interventions. Support and further guidance can be accessed via KNet. [The wellbeing support you need right now (sharepoint.com)](https://kentcountycouncil.sharepoint.com/sites/KCCKNet/SitePages/The-wellbeing-support-you-need-right-now(1).aspx)

**Violence in the Workplace Procedures**

# Introduction to Violence in the Workplace

These procedures set out the mechanisms which ICS considers necessary to manage the risk of violence that staff may encounter whilst carrying out their work with service users accessing KCC building or within detached or outreach settings.

General guidelines on the prevention of incidents including avoiding confrontation and how to deal with incidents are detailed in the [Prevention and management of violence at work guidance.docx (sharepoint.com)](https://kentcountycouncil.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/sites/KCCKNet/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B07D5C2F3-5570-4440-8CCD-C870B0E72B47%7D&file=Prevention%20and%20management%20of%20violence%20at%20work%20guidance.docx&action=default&mobileredirect=true&DefaultItemOpen=1).

Further guidance for managers and staff is available in Appendix G. Staff must ensure any incidents are recorded as soon as possible and the relevant manager informed. Consideration should be given to the possibility of violent and aggressive situations by undertaking a risk assessment. Appropriate measures should be put in place to reduce the risk to staff working alone.

KCC uses the Health and Safety Executive’s definition of work-related violence to identify those incidents that represent unacceptable behaviour by staff, service users or members of the public. The definition is ‘any incident in which a person is abused, threatened or assaulted in circumstances relating to their work’. This includes:

* Physical assault
* Harassment, verbal aggression or abuse; face-to-face or by telephone, email, text, or social media
* Threats of violence to staff or their families
* Attacks by animals incited by their owners or keepers.

Violence could also be described as behaviour that produces damaging or hurtful effects, physically or emotionally, on other people. The violence may be intentional or not, it may result from serious threats, abuse or assault. It may relate to sexual, racial harassment or other discriminatory behaviour.

# Purpose of the Violence in the Workplace Procedures

The nature of some employees’ work may lead to employees of ICS being brought into conflict with persons who may commit acts of violence. These procedures are designed to cover good practice and will not eliminate the occurrence of violent incidents but aims to minimise the risk.

Staff should discuss any issues and concerns with their line manager immediately, who is responsible for ensuring that all staff work within the boundaries specified in these procedures.

# Violence and Aggression

ICS should offer a safe environment for all employees and service users.

All staff should be aware of [The Kent Code](https://kentcountycouncil.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/sites/KCCKNet/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B3575AC0C-9976-4545-8007-DC5658F599FA%7D&file=The%20Kent%20Code.docx&action=default&mobileredirect=true&DefaultItemOpen=1). The public expects the highest standards of conduct and service from all employees of KCC. The basic standards of conduct, as set out in this document, also apply to volunteers, agency workers and others working within KCC such as those who are on work placements and work experience. This Code forms part of your conditions of service. It is your responsibility to read and apply the standards set out in this and relevant documents including professional codes, policies and guidance (such as those issued by Social Work England, the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC), Public Health, the Nolan Principles (see Appendix 1 within the Kent Code). Any employee acting outside the standards could be subject to disciplinary action.

Violence and aggression towards staff should never be tolerated. No member of staff should ever feel threatened or fear for their safety during the course of their work. ICS will ensure that all appropriate policies and procedures are in place and provide the necessary training to ensure staff can undertake their duties. It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that these are followed.

When service users are accessing KCC buildings it is important staff have a team approach and have clear boundaries with regards to behaviour. This is not usually personal and highlights the necessity for all staff to be aware of the Kent Code and description of what constitutes unacceptable behaviour.

Building trust and respect takes time and a relationship is easily destroyed by an inappropriate reaction to someone’s behaviour It is important to try to remain calm and de-escalate the situation, while considering the safety of all involved.

# Prevention of Incidents

It is important the risk assessment ([Risk assessment blank form - 5 steps)](https://kentcountycouncil.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/sites/KCCKNet/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B21335B23-9B11-4D53-892E-7D78BBBAB80D%7D&file=Risk%20assessment%20blank%20form%20-%205%20steps.docx&action=default&mobileredirect=true&DefaultItemOpen=1) considers the environment, the staff team, and any actions in response to potentially volatile situations. If staff are meeting a child or family, where there are known risks or there are potential risks, consideration should be given to alerting other staff in the building and sharing information with business support staff at the reception area. Further guidance for managers and staff is available in Appendix G.

Service users must be made aware of the code of conduct) and the consequences of their actions. [The Kent Code](https://kentcountycouncil.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/sites/KCCKNet/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B3575AC0C-9976-4545-8007-DC5658F599FA%7D&file=The%20Kent%20Code.docx&action=default&mobileredirect=true&DefaultItemOpen=1)

Confrontation can never be fully eliminated but the following may help:

* It is always vital to be familiar with the area you are working in.
* Never use secluded or badly lit areas (e.g., alleyways, stairwells) where a risk assessment has not been undertaken.
* Always ensure calendars are up to date with full details of whereabouts. It is recommended to always carry a fully charged mobile phone, for outreach work or home visits.
* Never get into an ‘I must win’ situation which may include hostility towards a service user, including verbal or physical abuse. It may also include ignoring the rights of others, belittling or criticising others, and overriding someone’s feelings and wishes.
* Use the ‘Purple File’ procedure when appropriate – see Appendix B.
* Always have a plan of action. Expect the unexpected.
* Be aware of group dynamics and of the people you are working with.
* Be aware of surroundings, feelings of others and listen to what is being said.
* Never press your point with someone who is under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
* Use a risk assessment to consider whether
* 2-1 working is required for a meeting or a session.
* A session should be held in an office space.
* An event/activity should be cancelled.

The following general guidelines should be followed by all staff if they feel they are involved in a potential aggressive situation:

* Protect yourself, others and the aggressor in that order.
* Remove yourself and others if necessary and safe to do so and get help (initiate lockdown procedure if appropriate – see Section 5).
* Do not risk injury to person to protect property.
* Do not turn your back on the individual at any time.
* Ensure your exit from the room / area is clear.
* Follow any behavioural intervention programmes written in service users’ risk assessments.
* Remain calm, do not confront the individual over their behaviour at this time unless it is judged safe to do so.
* Adopt a non-threatening and open-body language posture.
* Always remain respectful.
* Allow the individual concerned space. Try and remain at the very least an arm’s length away from the individual. If you have been trained, use Team Teach guidelines if safe to do so and appropriate to the situation.
* Try and alert other members of staff that you may be facing a problem and may require assistance – use the Purple File Procedure if support is needed and there is an increased danger associated with calling out for help – See Appendix B.

If lone working, follow the section on Lone Working. Ensure any incidents are recorded (See Section 15) as soon as possible and keep the relevant manager informed.

Appendix G provides checklists to support in the prevention of incidents. An ICS Notice for Centres and Hubs is available in Appendix H.

# Building Lockdown Process

All KCC buildings must plan for this eventuality. Staff should read and adhere to Kent County Council’s [Dynamic Lock Down Policy](https://kentcountycouncil.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/sites/KCCKNet/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B6C8C0F7D-0686-47AC-972E-F18D3EB3BA82%7D&file=Dynamic%20Lock%20Down%20Policy.docx&action=default&mobileredirect=true&DefaultItemOpen=1). Every building must have a localised building “Dynamic Lock Down” (DLD) procedure which indicates how the building (or parts of it) is sealed off so no one is able to enter or leave until the situation is resolved.

**If incident is outside of the building:**

* The building must have an agreed process to alert all staff. (Consider Purple File Procedure - Appendix B).
* Have appointed keyholders who immediately lock external doors.
* Call Police immediately. Use 999. Give the Police as much information as you can about the incident, including Description/Name of aggressor(s) if known, type of behaviour and whether armed.
* Staff should keep visitors safe in building and where possible continue normal services.
* Do NOT leave the building to challenge the person.
* Wait for Police to give an all clear before unlocking doors.

(Note: Police are not always able to attend in a timely manner, if this is the case do not leave the building/safe space but continue to update 999 with regards to the situation and take advice).

**If incident is inside the building:**

* The building must have an agreed process to alert all staff. (Consider Purple File Procedure – Appendix B).
* Move staff and service users to a safe place. Note the ‘safe place’ will need to be agreed locally and must be an area that is secure.
* Call Police immediately. Use 999.
* Give the Police as much information as you can about the incident, including a Description/Name of aggressor(s) if known, Type of behaviour and whether armed.
* Staff should remain calm but consider additional ways to block entry through internal doors while also considering an alternative emergency exit. This might be through a fire exit, other doors or windows.
* Do NOT challenge or approach the person, unless a clear judgment can be made that it is safe to do so.
* Wait for Police to give an all clear.

**For all incidents:**

* Ensure all staff are aware of lines of responsibility, accountability and leadership. All staff must be aware of relevant contact numbers – See Incident Response Template – Appendix K.
* Decide whether the staff or the Police should inform parents (where applicable).
* Inform Senior Managers as appropriate including relevant Assistant Director. Managers should share with staff the Major Incident Contact List that has the contact details of all Assistant Directors across ICS (See Appendix C) It is the responsibility of Senior Managers to ensure these details are up to date.

# Dealing with Incidents

When dealing with any incident, staff should be aware of their own safety and that of others. If the incident escalates into violence, staff should not intervene alone or if they will be put at risk by doing so. Protect yourself, others and the aggressor in that order. Workers must remain impartial.

In the event of a violent incident in a building, all members of staff should be made aware immediately, to assist effectively. All members of staff should be prepared to act as witnesses to the incident. The most senior member of staff present should take charge and working together as a team and all staff should follow their lead.

If a situation has arisen in a session where it is considered a child poses a risk to others including staff, e.g., in a children’s centre or youth hub, a programme of alternative work would be agreed with the child, parents and if necessary, any professional involved. The aims would be to modify behaviour and to reintegrate the child back into mainstream activity. If a situation arises where it becomes necessary to contact parents/carers, or if parents/carers come into a building after an incident has occurred, remain calm and explain the situation without passing judgement or showing bias towards one person. If more than one set of parents/carers are present, it may be a good idea to try and keep them separate, and to prevent them seeing the other person involved.

Incidents may occur between service users and members of the public, other user groups and local service providers. In these cases, there could be a multitude of underlying issues, but the warning signs of a potential incident remain the same. Workers should use interventions appropriate for the situation and accept complaints from members of the public in a calm and rational manner.

All incidents must be recorded (see Section 15) and the relevant Senior Managers informed (See Incident Response Template – Appendix K and Appendix C. The Major Incident Contact List is available from line managers or the Front Door Service/Out of Hours Service in an emergency).

Any incidents that arise and the subsequent actions taken should be discussed at team meetings and the discussion should be recorded. Staff members involved should be given the opportunity to access support, as required, locally from peers, their line manager and if necessary, from wider county services such as Support Line.

# Damage to Property

Damage to property constitutes criminal damage and should not be tolerated. Property relates to buildings, vehicles, equipment and personal property belonging to staff and service users. Each building should have their own guidelines of what to do in situations where someone is deliberately causing damage. The safety of staff and service users is paramount, so a plan should be in place that will facilitate stopping the damage, closing the building or withdrawing from a situation such as in a detached setting.

The act of damage to KCC property is not usually personal against workers. However, incidents of vandalism still need to be treated as serious and reported (see Section 16). It is important to remember that buildings left not alarmed and/or unsecured will render insurance null and void. It is always important to ensure that proper locking-up procedures are carried out.

# Damage to Personal Property

As a general rule, staff should keep personal items to a minimum when visiting homes or public areas. They are expected to take out their own insurance to cover any risk to personal property.

# 9.Unplanned Physical Interventions

Unplanned or emergency use of physical interventions may be required when service users behave in unpredictable ways. An effective risk assessment procedure together with well-planned preventative strategies will help to keep emergency use of physical interventions to an absolute minimum. However, staff should be aware that in an emergency the use of reasonable restraint is permissible if it is safe to do so and the only way to prevent personal injury (e.g., Team Teach for staff trained in this method see section 12).

Even in an emergency, the restraint used must be proportionate. It should be commensurate with the desired outcome and the specific circumstances in terms of intensity and duration. Before using physical intervention in an emergency, the person carrying out the intervention should have a reasonable belief that any adverse outcomes associated with the intervention (for example injury or distress) would be less severe than the adverse outcomes of not implementing the intervention.

Any immediate assessment of the best course of action should include calling for help. Remember - protect yourself, others and the aggressor in that order. If an unplanned physical intervention takes place, details must be recorded on the relevant system and managers informed. An investigation should be conducted by the relevant manager and an incident form completed. An HS157 accident/incident form can be accessed via the health and safety pages on KNet, KELSI or here [HS157](https://kentcc-self.achieveservice.com/en/AchieveForms/?form_uri=sandbox-publish://AF-Process-e6a99e70-6315-489f-9ac6-4ee4886fcef6/AF-Stagec4d2c58f-628f-4fc6-8186-85339a2086cc/definition.json&redirectlink=/en&cancelRedirectLink=/en&consentMessage=yes).

# 10. Assault by a Service User or Service User is Suspected of Being Armed

If a service user commits an assault, whether using a weapon or not, or if a member of staff suspects or receives information that a service user is carrying some form of weapon, the best course of action is to call Police and request their attendance.

It is important to remember that the service user may have no violent intent. Many service users claim that they are carrying a weapon for ‘protection’ against bullies or other threats. The service user may themselves be a victim. However, such outcomes can only be considered after the situation is under control. If weapons are present, the Police are best placed to assist the centre/hub in getting control of a situation.

* Do NOT challenge or approach the service user.
* Consider initiating building lockdown procedures (See Section 5). This will depend on the suspected whereabouts of the Service User and the likelihood of further assault if the lockdown is initiated.
* CALL POLICE immediately. Use 999.
* Give the Police as much information as you can about the person, including:
* Description
* Name if known
* Behaviour and suspected action
* Whether armed
* Trained staff should be prepared to offer First Aid.
* Ask POLICE to call an ambulance if there are casualties.
* Once the Police have been called, they take charge of the incident. Follow their instructions, including no attempt to clear or tidy up any area where an incident took place until Police advise it is safe to do so
* Inform Senior Managers. (See Incident Response Template – Appendix K and Appendix C.

# Workforce Development

ICS staff must follow safe working practices. Staff should receive appropriate training with their staff induction on the issues associated with lone working and with regard to the prevention and management of violence to help them deal with situations accordingly. [E Learning Lone Working](https://www.delta-learning.com/course/view.php?id=1753) and [KSCMP Personal Safety- Lone Worker](https://www.delta-learning.com/course/view.php?id=2415)

Team Teach training for positive behaviour support is a requirement for care staff within the Strengthening Independence Service short breaks units. The short breaks units have Team Teach trained trainers who train the staff who work directly with the children in the Level 2 Behaviour Management training. This is a requirement for Ofsted within The Children’s Homes (England) Regulations 2015 as Short Breaks are a regulated service. All other staff in the short breaks service, such as Kent Enablement and Prevention Service (KEPS), Admin, domestics, handy people are trained with the 1-day basic Team Teach.

All staff should explore issues and experiences in supervision or with their colleagues in team meetings.

# 12. Recording and Reporting

Form [HS157](https://kentcc-self.achieveservice.com/en/AchieveForms/?form_uri=sandbox-publish://AF-Process-e6a99e70-6315-489f-9ac6-4ee4886fcef6/AF-Stagec4d2c58f-628f-4fc6-8186-85339a2086cc/definition.json&redirectlink=/en&cancelRedirectLink=/en&consentMessage=yes) should be completed and if appropriate, an [Accident reporting HS160 form](https://kentcountycouncil.sharepoint.com/sites/KCCKNet/Health%20and%20Safety/Accident%20reporting%20HS160%20form.docx?web=1) as soon as the situation has been resolved. This is in respect of incidents experienced by members of staff in the course of their duties at work. They should be completed following any assault or threat, including sexual or racial harassment, even if there has been no physical contact.

NOTE - It is important all incidents are reported electronically so the level and seriousness of incidents across the County can be monitored and reported on centrally.

The forms should ideally be completed by the employee/s involved, and their line manager. If this is not possible, the line manager should complete the forms, but the employee should indicate their agreement to the contents.

Incidents should be recorded on the relevant ICS systems and records flagged, as necessary. ICS staff must ensure the recording of this information is always kept updated and ensure the detailed information is contained within the notes and running records for the child, and family. This will help to ensure the safe working for those staff lone working. Service Managers are responsible for ensuring incidents are logged and monitored. If the incident is a criminal offence, consideration needs to be given to reporting to the Police. In the first instance staff should discuss this with their line manager and if necessary, the relevant Assistant Director.

Specific risk assessments [Risk assessment blank form - 5 steps](https://kentcountycouncil.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/sites/KCCKNet/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B21335B23-9B11-4D53-892E-7D78BBBAB80D%7D&file=Risk%20assessment%20blank%20form%20-%205%20steps.docx&action=default&mobileredirect=true&DefaultItemOpen=1) should be completed by managers for individual cases and situations. Copies of the risk assessment should be uploaded and held on the relevant ICS system e.g., EHM, Core+, Care Director Youth, Liberi and Synergy.

ICS staff may have to attend court due to a violent episode e.g., witness for the defence, witness for the prosecution, plaintiff or defendant. In all cases, staff should keep their line manager informed of the situation.

Staff should all participate in a debrief session and should all be offered a range of support mechanisms that can be requested at any time after the incident as outlined in Section16.

# 13. Support Available to Staff

KCC offers support to any member of staff who may be involved in an incident in the workplace.

Line Managers have a ‘duty of care’ with regard to the physical and emotional health and general welfare of their staff and should be the primary source of support in the event of a violent incident.

Staff Care Services (Occupational Health) aims to promote, maintain and protect the health and wellbeing of all employees, by providing expert, professional advice on health issues that are affecting health and wellbeing at work. Information given to Occupational Health is strictly confidential and can only be shared with an employee’s written consent.

Support Line is a service that offers counselling for staff paid for by KCC. Information discussed between counsellor and Service User remains strictly confidential. In the case of violent incidents, Support Line offers a ‘debriefing’ service. This should be arranged no sooner than 48 hours but no longer than two weeks after the incident. Group debriefing sessions can also be arranged but only for very small groups in exceptional circumstances.

Other support mechanisms include:

* Medical support – staff can receive support through their GP. In the event that an employee does not consider themselves fit to attend work following an incident, medical evidence will be required.
* Trade Unions - Local Government employees may be members of a Trade Union. Employees who choose not to can still receive information and support although they will not be entitled to representation.
* The Police – staff can get assistance from their local police station as a result of a violent incident, even if there is no intention of a prosecution. The Police can advise and give information on how to apply for compensation if employees suffer an injury, loss or damage as the result of an incident.
* Victim Support - A national charity providing a free and confidential service.

### Appendix A

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### Appendix B



### Appendix C

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### Appendix D



### Appendix E

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### Appendix F



### Appendix G



### Appendix H



### Appendix I



### Appendix K



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