



5 Step Risk Assessment Action Plan Example

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1. Risk Assessment:

Make sure all off-site work is risk assessed before the employee goes out. For a quick assessment use the 90 second rapid risk assessment tool available at www.worksafeguardian.com.au/lone-worker-risk-assessment.

If there is a low level of risk, or a rapid risk assessment score of 10 - 15, carry on as normal following standard company safety procedures. If you require assistance with developing suitable safety procedures a WHS consultant may be required. Companies such as WorkPro specialise in workforce compliance.

If there is a medium level of risk, or a rapid risk assessment score of 16 - 23, attempts should be made to lower the score. There are several ways this can be done, e.g. by acquiring further information, ensuring staff have a mobile phone and a lone worker safety solution etc.

If there is a high level or risk, or a rapid risk assessment score of more than 24, serious consideration needs to be given to lowering the score or reducing the risks.

Simply added a mobile phone and a lone worker safety solution can decrease your rapid risk assessment score. It can take you from a high risk level down to a medium risk level, or from a medium risk level down to a low risk level.

2. Training:

All employees who qualify as lone workers should be provided adequate training in the following areas:

Risk assessment - a risk assessment tool should be provided to all lone working employees. If the employee regularly works alone in the same area a thorough risk assessment should be performed. If the employee is regularly in and out of the office several times in a day, the rapid risk assessment may be more appropriate.

Diffusion or de-escalation skills - proper training in diffusion and de-escalation tactics can ensure that a situation is managed safely before it becomes dangerous or threatening. While these are essential skills for lone workers they should not be considered a solution to all problems. They are best used as a compliment to other safety measures, such as a check-in service and means of contact.

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Break away or disengagement techniques - again, there should be training provided so lone workers are able to free themselves from any potentially violent situation and raise an alert. Like the de-escalation skills, these techniques should not be confused with a false sense of safety. Once the employee has managed to disengage themselves they still require the appropriate tools to raise an alert quickly.

3. Lone Worker Safety Solution:

All lone workers should be equipped with a lone worker safety solution. Lone worker safety solutions are specifically designed to increase the safety and security of employees working alone. The best of these solutions have added features like manual location entry for more accurate location information, shake to activate so an alert can be raised in an instant, and automatic reminders to check-in.

4. Mobile Phone Accessibility:

All lone workers should be equipped with a working mobile phone. If they do not have a mobile phone it is important that one is provided to them while they are at work.

Ideally all lone working employees should be equipped with a smartphone loaded with a lone worker safety solution. Separate devices have been expressed as a hindrance to staff usage, but because employees are likely to take their phone anyway many companies find this a more practical solution. The progress in technology also means that mobile application are a lot more capable and reliable than they were in the past.

5. Fixed Premises Security:

If employees work alone but in a fixed location, ensure that this premises is secured and alarmed. Make sure that any alarms are professionally monitored and ensure there is a check-in procedure if the alarm has or has not been set by a certain time.

The 5 Step Risk Assessment Action Plan is adapted from Brennan 2010.
(Brennan, W. (2010). Safer lone working: Assessing the risk to health professionals. The British Journal of Nursing, 2010, 19(20).)