North Solihull foodbank

Lone Volunteering Policy

Introduction

Your safety is our priority and we never want you to take any unnecessary risks when volunteering for us. Our Lone Volunteering Policy will support you to stay safe if you are volunteering alone.

Purpose and scope

This policy is designed to provide clear guidance and a framework for volunteers who may need to undertake and manage lone activities as part of their role.

This includes:

- alerting volunteers to the risks presented by lone volunteering
- identifying the responsibilities each person has in such situations
- describing procedures and precautions that will minimise risks.

Related Policies and Procedures

Lone Volunteering Risk Assessment:

Health and Safety policy:

Definition of lone volunteering

A lone volunteer is anyone who carries out their role in isolation from others.

This may include those:

- volunteering separately from others
- carrying out their role at home

- collecting or delivering donations
- volunteering alone outside normal hours.

Potential hazards of volunteering alone

People who volunteer alone will face the same risks as others doing similar tasks. Additionally, they may encounter other risks such as having an accident when there is no one to call for help.

Food bank commitment to you

We will:

- ensure volunteers are appropriately trained
- assess the potential risks volunteers may face in their role and reduce these as much as possible, considering:
- the environment – location, security, access
- the context - nature of the task, any special circumstances
- the individual's concerns – indicators of potential or actual risk
- history – any previous incidents in similar situations
- any special circumstances.
- ensure volunteers understand any risks associated with lone volunteering
- implement measures and systems that promote the health, safety, and wellbeing of volunteers
- ensure regular risk assessments are completed and implement alternative arrangements if required.

What we expect from volunteers

Anyone lone volunteering must:

- obtain advance approval from their main contact (on-site)
- notify their main contact of their arrival and departure (on-site / travelling)
- notify their main contact if joined by an unexpected visitor (on-site)
- notify their main contact when they have completed their volunteering (on-site / travelling)
- take reasonable care of their own safety
- comply with the food bank's health and safety policy
- raise with their main contact:
    - any safety or security concerns
    - any safety or security practices that need to be improved or risks not otherwise identified.

Reasonable procedures and precautions

Examples of reasonable precautions include:

Off-site / Travelling

- checking directions to the destination prior to leaving
- ensuring vehicle is roadworthy
- avoiding poorly lit areas
- ensuring that equipment such as laptops or mobile phones are carried discreetly
- never visiting home addresses unless accompanied by another volunteer or employee.

On-site

- never using ladders or steps unaccompanied
- ensuring that doors remain locked, with keys left in the lock should you need to leave quickly
- taking care when entering or leaving empty buildings, particularly at night.

The Trustees approved this lone volunteering policy at the trustees meeting held at Auckland Hall on the 23rd January 2026

Name: Simon Hogan Signed: Simon Hogan

Position: Chairman of Trustees Date: 23/1/2026