

10 Tips for Protecting Workers When They're Alone



Being left alone to work is many workers' idea of a dream job, until something goes wrong and no one is there to help them. That's why employers must take reasonable steps to ensure the health and safety of [workers who work alone](#), such as implementing a [working alone policy](#).

Types of workers who may work alone and so be at risk, particularly to workplace violence, include:

- Retail workers who work late night shifts
- Deliverymen
- Cab and bus drivers
- Custodians and security guards
- Commercial truck drivers
- Workers who work in remote areas, such as in forests or oil fields
- Workers who travel to meet clients, such as therapists, real estate agents and sales people.

Here are 10 tips for ensuring the safety of workers who work alone:

1. Conduct a workplace hazard assessment to determine the hazards faced by lone workers and appropriate measures to protect them.
2. Set up a check-in procedure for workers to ensure that they're safe. If they'll be working in areas where cell phone service isn't available, consider the use of other

technology such as a satellite phone.

3. If a worker doesn't respond to a check-in call, try again a few minutes later and if there's still no response, send help.
4. Where appropriate, install a security system with video surveillance cameras. But be careful that you [balance video surveillance with the privacy needs of employees who work alone](#).
5. Thoroughly investigate incidents in which lone workers encounter problems. Talk to them about what happened and ask them for their ideas on avoiding problems in the future.
6. Consider assigning a minimum of two workers to jobs, if possible.
7. Train your workers on what to do if they encounter potentially violent people on the job.
8. Consider providing a personal locator beacon with a GPS interface to employees who work in remote locations. (Learn how to [legally use technology to track workers for their safety](#).)
9. If you have retail workers who work alone, ensure that lighting is sufficient around the workplace and that workers are highly visible to the public, such as through large windows. Workers are far more vulnerable to being attacked if they can't be seen by passers-by.
10. Encourage workers to immediately report any situations where they feel their safety may be at risk.