



Personal Safety at Work Policy

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1 1ST HOMECARE AND PERSONAL SAFETY – OVERALL POLICY

1st Homecare takes seriously its duties and obligations with regard to the health and safety of its employees. It recognises that it has a duty to take reasonable care to ensure, so far as it is reasonably practicable to do so, the health, safety and welfare at work of all its employees. 1st Homecare will not knowingly place a carer in a situation that is dangerous for them, either due to the environment in which they work, or the people with or for whom they are working.

Carers, as employees, also have a duty to take reasonable care of themselves and others. They are required among other things to:

- Work safely, following all 1st Homecare's health and safety policies and procedures and in line with training received
- To co-operate in meeting statutory obligations and to contribute positively to health and safety at work
- Report accidents and any incidents that may have led to injury or damage as well as any "near miss" incidents, in accordance with the Accidents, Incidents and Emergencies Policy
- Inform the Office or the On call manager immediately of dangerous situations or potentially dangerous situations at work, and any defects in health and safety arrangements

Employees should refer to the 1st Homecare Health and Safety Policy for more details regarding the health and safety provisions relating to their employment with 1st Homecare. The purpose of this Policy is to focus on those measures that are in place for the personal safety of 1st Homecare's carers, particularly recognising that much of a carer's work is performed alone.

2 RISK ASSESSMENTS AND PERSONAL SAFETY IN CLIENT'S HOME

Every client is assessed prior to the beginning of a care package and at regular intervals after that, as often as may be necessary. The risk assessment will focus on risks within the client's physical environment that may arise from the tasks to be carried out for the client, including risk of falls and COSHH risks, taking account also of the physical, emotional and psychological condition of the client. It is the responsibility of the carer to report any change to the work environment or situation, which they feel is or may be detrimental to their safety.

It is important that each carer safely performs each task that they undertake within a client's home. Risk assessments and reviews highlight and as far as possible eradicate or else seek to reduce physical hazards within a client's home but carers must also be alert to the way in which they perform tasks, to ensure that they are protecting themselves as well as the client. For full details relating to specific tasks, please refer to the following:

- Health and Safety Policy for details of 1st Homecare's policy on COSHH
- Food Shopping & Handling Policy
- Medication Policy
- Moving and Handling Policy
- Accidents, Incidents and Emergencies Policy

3 DEALING WITH CLIENTS WITH CHALLENGING BEHAVIOUR

From time to time, carers may care for clients who display inappropriate or challenging behaviour. Such instances may be rare but carers must be prepared to deal with these types of behaviour, even displayed by clients with whom they have a good relationship. For full details of the manner and tone to employ in these situations, please refer to the Challenging Behaviour Policy. 1st Homecare will not knowingly place a carer in a situation where physical harm is likely to occur to them.

4 LONE WORKING

1st Homecare is aware that the majority of carers work alone, in some instances very early in the morning, or late at night. The steps set out below are intended as measures to protect carers when working alone. Carers are responsible for taking reasonable care of themselves and should follow the steps below and take part in training.

1st Homecare will:

- Conduct risk assessments that take account of lone working, identifying the range of hazards, degree of risk, control measures and safe systems to manage the risk, and review these at regular intervals
- Ask clients where possible to make any reasonable alterations that may help carers' personal safety e.g. put up lights outside houses
- Ultimately withdraw from providing services to a client if carers are exposed to an unacceptable degree of personal risk that could not be managed
- Will provide appropriate training for carers to make sure they are competent in safety matters and to assess risk
- Record and investigate all adverse incidents and concerns relating to lone working that are raised by staff and give appropriate support to staff involved in any incident

Carers should do the following:

On arrival at the client

- Always be alert to the location, the time of day, the condition of the client and any history relating to the client, and always read the risk assessment relating to the client and the Care Plan
- If driving, park as close to the home as possible
- Avoid parking in dark and isolated spots – park under streetlights where possible
- Take only what is needed into the house - leave personal possessions locked in the car boot
- Wear a coat over the uniform (if worn)
- Assess the situation on arrival and not enter the client's home if the carer has any concerns – make an excuse not to go in if the person answering the door gives rise to concern e.g. they are drunk, aggressive
- Always show an identity badge to the client
- Check on entering how the door locks – carers should not allow the client or anyone else to lock the door with a key
- Be aware of access and exit points in the client's home – look for an escape route in case problems arise
- Ask for any animals to be put in another room
- Remain alert, watch for any changes in mood, movements or expression

Journeying to clients

- Try to keep to well-lit paths: avoid short cuts through dark areas or areas which are not used much by others
- Look out for danger, keep an eye out for anyone lurking about, and avoid groups/gangs.
- If possible, carry a personal alarm or whistle
- Always have a fully charged mobile phone and phone charger. If there is no reception and you break down, you will need to assess the situation and choose

the safest option. One action might be to go to the nearest house and ask to make a call.

- Ensure your car has sufficient petrol for the visits, that the battery is charged, lights are working and tyres at correct pressure and in good condition
- Carry a blanket, spade, food, water, wellies and a torch in the car
- If your car breaks down, turn your car's hazard warning lights on if possible. Advisedly have a reflective triangle, and position this on the same side of the road as your car, at least 45 meters/147 feet behind it as required by the Highway Code. TAKE GREAT CARE IN PLACING THIS ON THE ROAD AND PICKING IT UP, AND NEVER USE ONE ON A MOTORWAY. Also advisedly have reflective clothing or a reflective strip to put on so you are more visible.
- If your car does break down, call for help, then let the Office or On call manager know, and wait in a safe place – the car if this is safe, otherwise the nearest safe location, away from the road. If waiting in the car, ensure the doors are locked.
- If an unknown person approaches you while you are in the car, keep the doors locked and drive away if possible, or if not, either call the Police or use the car horn to attract attention from other motorists or pedestrians. Do not get out or open a window

Other safety measures

- Always tell someone e.g. family or friends that you are going to work and what time you are expected home, and make sure the person has the 1st Homecare contact number.
- Call the Office or On call manager (depending on the time of day) after a visit to a client who has a previous history of violence or a medical condition that may make them prone to violence, to say you are safe
- If at any time during the call you feel you feel in danger, call 999 immediately and request assistance
- Report to the Office or On call manager all adverse incidents and concerns relating to lone working
- Inform the Office or On call if you are delayed for any reason (and if appropriate, let the family member or friend know you will be later home than expected)

- If in any doubt at any point, get guidance from the Office or On call manager, always from a safe place. If at any time you feel in danger, call 999 and ask for the Police.

5 GENERAL

This Policy may be amended at any time. 1st Homecare will notify employees if it is amended.

CHANGE HISTORY

Issue	Date	Description of Change and Reason
1	2012	First Issue
2	December 2013	Second Issue
3	November 2014	Third Issue – formatting changes and insertion of review date
4	October 2016	Fourth Issue – changes to information about use of reflective triangles and deletion of requirement to telephone On call when shift ended
5	February 2017	Fifth Issue – changes to make applicable to both businesses
6	December 2018	Sixth Issue – general check and change to Oxford address
7	January 2020	Seventh Issue – inclusion of KL address
8	September 2022	Eighth Issue – minor changes to wording, no major changes

DOCUMENT CONTROL

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