



# Staying safe when volunteering alone

## Lone volunteering checklist

This checklist is for MS Society volunteers visiting a new person, entering a new environment or travelling alone. It offers suggestions for things to consider, but is not a fully comprehensive list. For further details, see our [Lone Working and Volunteering Policy and Procedure](#).

You must never make a home visit alone. See [Staying safe when volunteering alone – A guide for MS Society volunteers](#) for our rules on making home visits.



See [Lone volunteering](#) on our volunteer website for more information

You should always discuss your concerns about lone volunteering with your [Coordinating Team](#) before you undertake them. You can also speak to your [Local Networks Officer](#) or other staff contact.

We never want you to take any unnecessary risks when volunteering for us. If in doubt, follow your instincts and do not put yourself in a risky situation. If you feel uncomfortable or unsafe, leave the situation as quickly as possible.

### Who are you meeting?

- Total strangers/members of the public?
- People who have, or may have a history of violence, aggression?
- People with drug, alcohol or mental health problems?
- People who are likely to welcome your presence?
- On their own or in larger groups?

### Where will the meeting/event take place?

- In a busy area where there is open access to the public?
- In a rural or isolated area?
- In someone else's home or territory?
- On the street amongst members of the public?
- In an environment where alcohol is being drunk?
- Will you be travelling by public transport/own car/on foot?
- If by public transport – how frequent is the service?
- If in own car – how easy and close to the venue is parking?
- Does someone know where you will be and who you are meeting?
- Will you be able to communicate with colleagues or call for back up if feeling threatened? What is mobile phone signal like?

### When will the meeting/event take place?

- During office hours when there are many people around?
- Late at night or early in the morning when you will be more isolated?
- During the hours of darkness which may alter your perception and ability to respond to difficult situations?
- How often will you be able to keep in contact with volunteer or staff colleagues?

### What will you be doing?

- Dealing with cash?
- A security role or enforcing a rule?
- Assessing for or denying a service?
- Discussing sensitive issues/delivering bad news?
- Carrying valuables, equipment or medical supplies?

Staying safe when volunteering alone: Lone volunteering checklist v1	
Content owner:	Executive Director of People
Editor:	Volunteer Resources Editor
Signed off:	May 2017
Review date:	May 2018