

Personal Safety Policy

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Julia's House is committed to maintaining the safety of all staff and volunteers to the best of our abilities by ensuring that their working environment is as safe as is reasonably practical. It recognises that individuals will be expected to work alone both in community settings and on occasions in the offices, shops and hospice buildings.

Aim

This policy aims to outline the prescribed measures that should be taken by all staff and volunteers to maintain their own safety, as far as is reasonably practical, whilst at work whether that is alone or working with others and should be read in conjunction with the Health & Safety Policy. It offers advice for all on personal safety, referencing the Suzy Lamplugh Trust Personal Safety at Work and Lone Working Guidance.

Working in Julia's House premises

Julia's House premises could be an office, a shop, or a Hospice.

The frequency of lone working at any base should be kept to a minimum. If possible you should try and plan activities so they can be carried out in office hours so as to minimize the risk to any member of staff or volunteer. If an office is located in a multiple occupancy building such as Barclays head office then this reduces the risk of lone working. Staff can be alone in their office as long as other offices in the building are occupied and their office door is locked. Whenever possible no employee should be left to vacate and secure the building alone.

Under no circumstances should a volunteer be put in a position of lone worker within any Julia's House work premises unless they have completed the Key Volunteer Program.

Lone workers include:

- Staff or Volunteers who work outside of office working hours on their own
- Staff or Volunteers who work in establishments where only one person is on the premises at a time

When lone working cannot be avoided the following procedures should be followed.

A Buddy Protocol for lone working should be in place for all Julia's House employees and volunteers who are undertaking work on its behalf. This Protocol will be identified by each department as per Appendix 1.

All staff who may need to be in the building on their own should ensure they are familiar with the following:

- Fire alarm and evacuation procedure.
- Building alarm and locking/unlocking the premises procedure and have the appropriate keys with them.
- Closing time of the building in a multi-occupancy building
- The member of staff should park their vehicle as close as possible to the exit door. If necessary the vehicle should be moved there prior to other staff leaving

the building for the day. This is particularly important during the winter months when visibility and weather conditions may be poor.

- At all times the entry door to the offices and Hospices **must remain locked** and access only by being let in by member of staff or using a key or electronic code to gain entry.
- The door should only be opened if the identity of the caller can be verified via a speaker, window or CCTV, if this is available, and they are known to the member of staff or expected.
- If the caller is unknown to the member of staff they should be asked to make an appointment for another time or if appropriate referred to the main office if this is open.
- When the last person leaves the building they must ensure that all local lock up procedures are followed.
- If a member of staff has to work in a building on their own they should follow their departmental buddy Protocol.

Working in the community

When lone working cannot be avoided the following procedures should be followed.

A Buddy Protocol for lone working should be in place for all Julia's House employees and volunteers who are undertaking work on its behalf. This Protocol will be identified by each department as per Appendix 1.

Lone workers may include:

- Staff or Volunteers who work away from their fixed base, out in the community or in other people's homes on their own.
- Staff or Volunteers who work outside of office working hours on their own
- Staff or Volunteers who may be visiting Julia's House supporters or partners.

It is the responsibility of all staff and volunteers to act in a safe manner and not to place themselves at risk by their actions. If at any time staff are concerned for their own safety e.g. unknown adults / teenagers on site and intending to stay for the duration of visit, then they should cancel the visit and contact the identified buddy.

Under no circumstances should a volunteer be put in a position of lone worker within any Julia's House work premises unless they have completed the Key Volunteer Program.

If anyone is concerned that their own safety is in imminent danger they should contact the Police immediately and then follow the procedure for an adverse incident.

Staff and volunteers should not give their personal contact details either phone or e-mail to non-staff members in any circumstances.

Prior to visiting a private property for the first time staff have a responsibility to ensure that they have as much background information about the residents and environment as possible prior to a visit.

All visits must be logged according to departmental Buddy Protocol which will record the start and finish time, location and names of staff involved in the visit.

Wherever visits are to be undertaken regularly in a community setting e.g. community sits then a risk assessment for each location should be undertaken at the time of their initial visit and documented then shared appropriately. This assessment will include identifying who lives in the property or has free access to the property, environmental factors such as external lighting and parking arrangements and care related issues such as manual handling issues.

All staff and volunteers should carry a mobile phone with them when working in the Community. They should ensure that the phone is fully charged. If staff are working in areas where phones must be switched off e.g. hospitals then please let the Buddy know your phone is off and if possible provide an alternative contact number e.g. department visiting in hospital, for emergency use for the duration of the visit.

All changes to visit arrangements must be notified to the identified Buddy.

Staff should ensure that their personal and emergency contact details are kept up to date in their personnel file.

All staff must communicate they are safe to the Buddy as soon as possible on completion of the visit.

If a member of care staff has not made contact according to the Buddy Protocol after 1 hour past their agreed call in time then the Buddy must initiate the Emergency response according to the Buddy Protocol.

Monthly audit by each department should be undertaken of visit diaries and Buddy Protocols to ensure that all visits are logged and arrivals home are documented.

Line Managers to be notified if staff in their team do not log visits in the diary.

Lone Worker Buddy Protocol

Julia's House requires all Staff and Volunteers undertaking Julia's House business to comply with the agreed departmental Buddy Protocol. This Protocol defines the pre-agreed intervals of regular contact between the lone worker and supervisor. This Protocol also ensures a robust method is followed to ensure a lone worker has returned to their base or home once a task is completed.

Tracing lone workers:

Ensuring traceability is important in keeping staff safe. Tracing is different to tracking; it is about making sure someone knows where you are and what you are doing and most importantly, knows exactly what to do if you don't return or check in at the expected time. Remember it is important not to rely solely on a tracing Protocol: someone knowing where you are will not help prevent a difficult situation arising. It may help to raise the alarm if you do not return or make it a little easier to summon help if you need it, but it doesn't make you invincible. You should still ensure you do all you can to stay safe and never enter into situations where you think your personal safety could be at risk.

Buddy Protocol

The Buddy Protocol involves team members partnering up to let each other know when they have arrived at appointments and when they are leaving. The 'buddy' is a nominated person who the lone worker can contact at any time for the duration of their shift and takes responsibility for contacting the other if they have not signed in or out when expected and raising the alarm should the need arise.

A lone working Buddy should:

- Have access to all the required contact details for the lone worker(phone number, email address, home address and information about their next of kin)
- Have details of the lone workers vehicle (make, model and registration number)
- Be clear on the lone workers projected movements during each visit. The buddy must know where the lone worker is meant to be at all times
- If the lone worker does not get in touch at the agreed intervals, attempt to contact the worker every 10-15 minutes for up to an hour, before escalating the matter
- If the lone worker can still not be contacted after an hour, notify their manager/supervisor in the first instance and then contact the emergency services if the lone worker remains out of contact
- The buddy should be available to contact during their visit. This means considering shift patterns, early/late working, and ensuring there are no gaps of unaccounted for time during the handover from one buddy to another. Careful consideration should also be given to contingency arrangements: what happens if the nominated buddy is sick or on leave? Is there someone else who is knowledgeable to take over? How will this be communicated to the lone worker?

When should a buddy be contacted?

- At pre-agreed intervals (either via phone, text, email or an app)
- When they are in a safe place at the end of the work activity
- When they have finished a meeting
- If there are any changes to the original plan
- If a conflict arises during their shift or they experience violence or criminal damage
- If their vehicle breaks down or has an accident
- If they feel unsafe at any time
- Before using public transport to inform their buddy of their intended route and timetable
- If they have an accident or sustain an injury
- If they get lost
- If any other incident occurs

Knowing what to do is vitally important for the 'buddy'. No colleague should be left to decide the next course of action without support and guidance from line management. It is equally important for the lone worker to know exactly what to expect in the way of help or assistance. Buddy Protocols such as these must be enforced and failure to follow them would be grounds for disciplinary action.

Before you set out you should ensure that someone knows:

- Where you are going – You must leave the full address and telephone number. Try to also leave the details of how you are getting there
- How long you are going to be – if possible, try to leave information regarding the expected length of the visit or meeting. Let others know if you are coming back to the office or going straight on somewhere else. If your plans change, let your buddy know.
- The purpose of your visit – Are you going to meet somebody in order to deal with a difficult subject and will you be welcome? Leave as many details as possible about the person you are going to see, such as name and a brief description. This information may help someone to judge how quickly he or she may need to raise the alarm if you fail to report in or return. If you are going to meet someone who is unknown to you, make sure your colleagues or 'buddy' are aware of this.

Key information that should be kept on file:

- Contact telephone numbers – including your home and mobile number and a number for your next of kin or the people you live with, if applicable
- Car details – include make, model, colour and registration number
- Medical information – any health issues that may affect you whilst lone working
- A recent photo of all staff

Appendix 1.

Care Buddy Protocol

A Julia's House Nurse will be On Call 24 hours. Our planned respite hours of care are between 8 am to Midnight. On Call will aim to respond within 20 minutes of a call. The Nurse On Call is not an emergency service and in the event of an emergency all staff and families should call 999. There will be a Strategic On Call service provided by a LN or Director of Care to provide support to the On Call Nurse who should also aim to respond within 20 minute of a call and they have access to your contact and next of kin details.

All visits in the community to be logged according to the agreed Care bookings schedule. This includes single visit by the FSS team and Nurses.

1. A Single person visit should be identified by “***Lone**” prior to the details on the calendar entry or schedule.
2. Visits with more than 1 member of staff.
 - Staff to arrive together whenever possible. If agreed within a risk assessment then staff may enter the property and await other member of staff. If that second member of staff does not arrive within 15 minutes then to phone the On Call Nurse.
 - Both staff to leave a property together and ensure both are safe or in their own vehicles before leaving the area. This may mean driving to an agreed location to check.
 - In the event of anyone not meeting the pre agreed times to call the On call Nurse who will activate the Emergency Response Protocol.

Emergency Response Protocol triggered 30 minutes after agreed call in time.

- Lone workers have 30 minutes to call into the Hospice answer phone 01202 389837 after the end of the scheduled appointment finish time.
- The On call nurse will check the answer phone for messages half an hour after the lone worker sit finishes.
- If the lone worker does not get in touch at the agreed intervals, attempt should be made to contact the worker every 10-15 minutes for up to an hour, before escalating the matter.
- If the lone worker can still not be contacted after an hour from the agreed call in time, notify the Strategic On Call in the first instance and then contact the emergency services. (i.e. Emergency services can be contacted 1 ½ hrs after the end of the appointment)
- If at any point there is reason to believe harm has come to any individual there should be no delay in contacting the police.

Fundraising Buddy Protocol

Individuals who anticipate they will be undertaking a period of lone working should agree with their manager an individual who will act as a Buddy.

All visits to be logged by the agreed Buddy.

1. Visits with more than 1 member of staff.
 - Staff to arrive together whenever possible. If agreed within a risk assessment then staff may enter the property and await other member of staff. If that second member of staff does not arrive within 15 minutes then to phone the Manager.
 - Both staff to leave a property together and ensure both are safe or in their own vehicles before leaving the area. This may mean driving to an agreed location to check.
 - In the event of anyone not meeting the pre agreed times to call in, the Buddy/Manager will activate the Emergency Response Protocol.

Emergency Response Protocol triggered 30 minutes after agreed call in time.

- If the lone worker does not get in touch at the agreed intervals, attempt should be made to contact the worker every 10-15 minutes for up to an hour, before escalating the matter.
- If the lone worker can still not be contacted after an hour, notify the Buddy/Manager in the first instance and then contact the emergency services.
- If at any point there is reason to believe harm has come to any individual there should be no delay in contacting the police.

Retail Buddy Protocol

The Retail On Call team will act as the buddy for the trading hours of 09.00-18.00 Monday-Sundays. The retail buddy protocol will be on a register basis at the start of the day and at the end of the day will be via an on call text in basis. The Retail On Call buddy is not an emergency service and in the event of an emergency all staff should call 999.

Stages of lone working

- The retail on call buddy will take a register every morning by 10.00am to record the member of staff on shift and any lone working times throughout that day. If there is a period of any unexpected lone working after this phone call, the lone worker should notify the retail buddy immediately.
- The retail on call buddy will record any lone working and confirm with the lone working staff member how often they wish to check in (a minimum of every 4 hours) and a suitable method of communication to be agreed (phone call).
- Retail Buddy to contact lone working staff member at required time via agreed method of communication (this is to be repeated until the lone working time finishes).

- Lone worker to keep mobile phone and personal safety alarm on them at all times.
- Any member of staff locking up at the end of the day to text – 07387261376 – to let the on call buddy know they have safely left the building this has to be done by 5.30pm, Monday-Saturday (this number would be the only number they contact to do the end of day procedure), and by 4.30pm on a Sunday.
- The on call member of staff would check off shops from the texts.
- After 5.30pm (4.30pm on Sundays) the on call buddy would follow the emergency response protocol for any unaccounted persons.

NB Lone working drivers MUST be monitored by the Creekmoor admin team and the driver MUST contact Creekmoor admin team when they are entering and leaving a donors property to perform a collection, no volunteer should be entering a donor's property alone.

Emergency Response Protocol triggered 30 minutes after agreed call in time.

- If the lone worker is not contactable at the agreed intervals, attempts should be made to contact the worker every 10-15 minutes for up to half an hour, before escalating the matter.
- If the lone worker can still not be contacted after half an hour, notify the Area Retail Manager or Assistant Area Retail Manager by telephone in the first instance who will then decide an appropriate method of action which may involve contacting the emergency services.
- If at any point there is reason to believe harm has come to any individual there should be no delay in contacting the police.

Advice on Personal Safety

adapted from the Suzy Lamplugh guidance on Personal safety at work and Lone w

Public transport:

- Obtain timetable and fare information before travelling
- Hide anything that would make you identifiable as an employee of that organisation
- When waiting for public transport after dark, try to wait in well-lit areas and near emergency alarms and CCTV cameras
- If something or someone makes you feel uncomfortable, act upon your instinct. It may be better to move seats before a problem arises.

Taxis and Cabs:

- Use reputable firms and minicabs in the area.
- Try to make bookings for outbound and return journeys before you leave
- If you cannot book in advance, make sure you keep the details of several taxi firms with you in case the first firm you call is busy or your booking does not arrive
- When making a booking, ask for the driver and car details and confirm them when the taxi arrives to be sure you are getting into the right car.
- When getting in the taxi always make sure that you sit in the back seat, not in the front.

Driving:

- Put together an emergency kit for your car. This might include an extra coat, a torch, bottle of water, spare change and an emergency mobile telephone charger
- Join a vehicle recovery service and check the representative's ID when they respond to your call
- When driving to meetings, try to plan where you will park before you go. If safer to do so, park as close to your destination as possible. If you will be returning after dark, consider what the area will be like then and try to park near street lights.
- When approaching your car, be aware of your surroundings, have your keys ready and before entering, quickly check that no one is inside.
- Do not keep equipment such as laptops or medical supplies on a front seat where they could be grabbed through a window; ensure they are kept out of sight and secure in the boot of your car when not in use
- Keep your doors locked in built up areas or in stop-start traffic
- If you break down, be aware of your surroundings and only get out of your car when and if you feel safe to do so

- Road rage incidents are rare and by not responding to aggression from other drivers, can often be avoided
- If the driver of another car forces you to stop and then gets out of their car, stay in your car, keep the engine running and if you need to, reverse to get away
- When parking in a car park, consider where the entrances and exits are. Try to avoid having to walk across a lonely car park to get to your car. Park away from pillars/barriers. If you can, reverse into your space so you can drive away easily.
- Using your vehicle as an office:
- Try to keep all valuables out of sight (e.g. locked in the boot of the car)
- If you have a mobile phone, keep it near you while you drive. Remember to use a hands-free kit if you use the phone whilst driving
- If you are working on paperwork in the car, keep doors locked and try to remain aware of your surroundings. Think 'is this a safe place for me to park?'
- Try not to use isolated car parks, for example at motorway service stations
- If you are approached and feel uncomfortable, use your horn to attract attention or discourage the other person.

Walking/Out and about

- Do you carry many bags or lots of paperwork – how do you think this affects your personal safety and ability to move quickly? Can you find a way to carry less? Try to keep at least one hand free whenever possible
- Consider carrying a personal safety alarm
- Remain alert and aware of your surroundings at all times
- A confident appearance (walking tall, normal pace, arms relaxed) will make you look less vulnerable
- Try to avoid danger rather than confront it – keep to well-lit or busy streets and avoid danger spots as much as possible
- Walking away from an argument can be a simple but effective way to prevent an incident.

Hotels

Before booking into a hotel, consider the following questions:

- Does the hotel have a secure car park?
- Are staff available 24 hours?
- Do the rooms have phones, spy-holes or chains on the doors?
- Is there somewhere you can eat in the hotel?
- Try to avoid using your room as a meeting room – most hotels will have a café or meeting room you could use.

Valuables

- Only carry the minimum necessary while working and do not draw attention to yourself by overtly displaying valuables (e.g. mobile phone, expensive jewellery)
- If you have to carry valuable equipment (e.g. laptops) ask your employer for guidance on how to do this as safely as possible
- Your safety is always more important than your possessions. If someone tries to steal your possessions it is safer to give them up

- Do not attempt to recover any stolen goods yourself; contact the police.

Working alone from a fixed base

- Follow the agreed protocol for visitors to the building (you may decide not to allow any visitors into the building when only one person is there)
- Consider displaying opening times that only include times when there are two or more people in the office
- Ensure your Buddy knows you are working in the office alone and, if possible, when you plan to leave. Let them know when you have left – make sure you follow the Buddy Protocol.
- If you spend time alone with clients in your workplace, consider how you would raise the alarm if necessary. It may be wise to have a discreet way of calling for assistance so that you can get help before things get out of control.
- Consider a room that locks where you could retreat to if necessary and ensure that it contains a phone
- Keep doors and windows locked if possible
- If there is an intercom Protocol, ensure that it is always used appropriately
- When working after dark, consider drawing the blinds so that people outside cannot see in.

Working alone at the front-line

- Ensure that you have a charged mobile phone with you.
- Be aware of any alarm Protocols to summon assistance or the Police
- Try to ensure that any cash is kept out of sight
- Never try to stop a thief on your own – always give up cash or valuables if threatened

Working in isolated/rural areas

- Ensure that you have a charged mobile phone with you. Try to identify another means of communicating with others in case mobile phones may not work in some areas
- Walk away from situations you consider threatening – avoidance is often the best defence

Working from home

- Try not to advertise the fact that you work from home to the public.
- Use neutral territory for meetings
- Use the buddy Protocol with someone so that they know your plans for the day. Let the person know if your plan changes
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Working in other people's homes or premises

- Give some thought before you arrive to what exit strategies you could use if you felt uncomfortable or threatened. Thinking about these in advance will help you recall them quickly in a time of stress. For example, you could say 'I'm sorry I've left some paperwork in the car'. This would give you time to de-stress before returning or could allow you to phone from the safety of your car saying you have been called back to the office and will re-arrange the appointment

- Be mindful of the fact that you are entering someone else's territory. Your presence there may be unwanted or pose a threat
- Be prepared to show ID, explain your reason for visiting and wait to be invited in before you enter
- Conduct your own 'Dynamic Risk Assessment' on the door-step before you enter. If you feel at all uncomfortable, make an excuse and leave
- Do not enter the premises unless the person you expect to meet is there. If they are not, say you will return later or re-arrange for another day
- Give the person you are visiting some indication of how much of their time you expect to take and try to stick to it
- As you enter, make a note of how the door opens and closes so that you can leave quickly if necessary
- Take note of your surroundings and possible exits
- Take in only what you need and avoid spreading your belongings out – this could give the impression that you are taking charge of the surroundings and would slow you down if you needed to leave in a hurry
- If you are uncomfortable with any animals in the room, ask to have them removed
- Don't give rise to aggression by reacting negatively to bad, dirty or smelly surroundings

Dealing with violence and aggression

No one can say with any certainty what they would do if faced with difficult or stressful situations. Many factors can affect the way you behave; from your own confidence and experience to how you are feeling on the day. There are no right or wrong answers but it will help if you think through the options ahead of time.

- Be aware of changes in the behaviour of the person you are with, especially if they seem to be becoming more angry or irritated
- Try to use your own communication skills to defuse a difficult situation early on. Think about what you say and how you say it
- If the person you are with is getting angry, try to remain calm
- Try to distance yourself both physically and emotionally
- Use tension control techniques – remember these need to be practised to be really useful

If all else fails, your aim is to get away.

- Be assertive but avoid meeting aggression with aggression
- Use Exit strategies – have a pre-planned way to excuse yourself from a difficult situation (e.g. I just have to pop back to the car to get some notes/equipment)
- Apply diversion techniques
- Use your voice – shout a specific instruction such as 'call the police' or pretend to see someone and call out for their help
- Use a personal safety alarm if you have one
- If you have had to withdraw from an unsafe situation, inform your line manager

After a violent or aggressive incident, you may need help with:

- Reporting the incident (or concerns, near misses, verbal/physical abuse) to management or the police

- Arranging time off work
- Transport home or to hospital
- Replacing belongings lost or damaged in the incident

If a serious incident has occurred, the relevant risk assessment should be reviewed and changes made where necessary.

A colleague should always be available to provide support immediately after an incident. If you need to provide support to a colleague:

- Allow the other person to talk as much as they wish.
- Remember that verbal abuse can be just as upsetting as physical attack
- Avoid criticising their actions or speculating. You can discuss later what can be learnt for the future
- Remember that people respond differently – some people may want time off work and others may want to go back to work
- Ask them what help they need
- Advising how to access counselling support

Before setting off for an appointment, try to decide for yourself if you feel safe and confident. It is far better to think about this in the relevant safety of your workplace. It may be a good idea to write a checklist which you could read and tick off before you leave. Remember you can conduct your own Dynamic Risk Assessment at any time during your appointment.

Questions for your checklist could be:

- - Do I really need to make this visit/meeting and do I have to make it alone? Could I ask the client to come to the office/centre?
- - Have I left all the relevant information on the whiteboard/in my diary/with a buddy?
- - Have I done my personal safety checks?
- - Do I have a mobile phone that I can take, with emergency numbers programmed in? Is it charged and topped up?
- - Do I feel confident to go?
- - Do I need to carry a first-aid kit or should I have done first-aid training, or is there adequate first-aid facilities?

Unless you can answer 'Yes' to all of the above questions or you are happy that you have put in other measures to keep yourself safe, then you should not go. Work with your team or line manager to solve the problems before you leave.

Remember that a mobile phone will not prevent an aggressive incident but can be useful for summoning help. Do not let a mobile phone make you complacent. Remember that coverage is just one thing that can prevent mobiles from not working.

Assessing the risks

People work alone in many different environments and for many different reasons. It is vital that proactive measures are put into place to help keep you safe when lone working. To examine the risks involved you must look at the people involved, the environment in which you are working and the tasks you are required to do.

People:

- Who are you likely to meet? Do any of the people you meet pose any significant threat to your personal safety? Is there a risk of violence or aggression?

Environment:

- Where are you working? Are you in a place that has open access to the public? Are you going into someone else's home or territory? Are you working out on the street amongst members of the public? Are you visiting a rural or isolated area? Are you able to communicate with base or call for back up if you feel threatened? Are you able to let somebody know where you are, what you are doing and if your plans change? Do any of the places you go to pose a significant threat to your personal safety?
- When are you working? Is it during office hours when there are many people around? Is it late at night or early in the morning when you are more isolated? Do the hours you work pose a significant threat to your personal safety? Is there a safe way in and out?
- Are there any reasons why the lone worker might be more vulnerable than others (for example if they are young, pregnant, disabled or a trainee)?

Task:

- What are you doing? Are you dealing with cash? Are you enforcing a rule? Are you denying a service? Are you carrying valuables or medical supplies? Are you supervising groups of young people? Does the task you are carrying out pose a significant threat to your personal safety? Are there safeguarding issues or changes to level of care/support provided?
- Is the task too difficult or too dangerous to be carried out by an unaccompanied worker?
- Is there equipment that one person would have difficulty handling?

If there is a problem:

- How will you call for help?
- Who will respond?
- What will they do?

If you don't report back at the end of your shift/day:

- Who will notice?
- What will they do?

Considering the answers to these questions may help you to recognise potential problems and areas that may pose specific risks.

Prevention

Employers must implement safe Protocols of work and control measures that prevent or reduce the risks identified as part of the risk assessment. Such as:

- Means of raising the alarm
- Mobile phone (check that you have signal and battery life)
- Visiting or working in pairs
- Access to electronic diaries with lists and times of visits
- Buddy Protocols
- Regular checks by supervisor or work colleagues
- Equipment such as sat-nav and a torch for visits to unfamiliar areas or at night
- Parking permits (to allow parking closer to clients home)
- A contact that staff can inform of their location before they enter and after they leave a client's home or when locking up a building