

HR05 – Drugs and Alcohol Policy

XXXX Council

COUNCIL LOGO

Adopted:
Revised:
Review: Biannually or as changes are required.

HR05 - Drugs & Alcohol Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1. We have duties to protect the health and safety of those who work for us. We want to create a safe and professional working environment for everyone. One of the ways we do this is by making clear what we expect in relation to alcohol and drugs at work and the support we will offer if you face issues with alcohol and drug misuse.
- 1.2. This Policy sets out:
 - a What we mean by 'drugs' and 'alcohol'
 - b Our rules on alcohol and drugs at work and at work-related social events
 - c The support we can provide should you struggle with alcohol- and drug-related issues
 - d [Our policy on [testing] [and] [searching]]
 - e What will happen if you breach our rules on alcohol and drugs
- 1.3. This Policy applies to everyone who works for us – employees, officers, consultants, self-employed contractors, casual workers, agency workers, volunteers and interns.
- 1.4. Please note that this Policy does not form part of any contract with us. We reserve the right to amend or remove it.

2. What substances are covered by this Policy?

- 2.1. When we talk about 'drugs' under this Policy, we mean illegal drugs, psychoactive substances (often known as legal highs), and any other drugs (including prescription drugs) which may affect your ability to carry out your duties fully and safely.
- 2.2. 'Alcohol' means any drink containing alcohol, regardless of its strength.

3. Our rules on drugs and alcohol at work

- 3.1. You must not come to work under the influence of alcohol or drugs (other than prescription drugs which have been prescribed for you).
- 3.2. You must not consume or be under the influence of alcohol or drugs (other than prescription drugs) at work or in a vehicle being used for work.
- 3.3. You must not bring alcohol or drugs (other than prescription drugs) into the workplace. There may be occasions when you are able to bring alcohol into the workplace for social events, but you must only do so with the consent of your [*line manager*].

- 3.4. If we reasonably believe that you are under the influence of alcohol or drugs at work, we may suspend you and start an investigation under our [*Disciplinary Policy*]. We will treat such behaviour as potential gross misconduct.

4. Prescription drugs

- 4.1. If you need medication for a genuine medical condition while working, you should only bring in enough for your own use. Such medication should be kept safely, in accordance with instructions and out of the view of other people. If your medication needs to be stored in a fridge, you must use a clearly labelled, sealed container.
- 4.2. Medication can have side effects that affect performance. If this applies to you, please raise it with your [*line manager*] so that we can take medical advice if necessary and consider any adjustments that we might need to make.
- 4.3. It is your responsibility to seek advice from a doctor or pharmacist about the possible effects of your medication on your fitness to do your job.
- 4.4. We want to protect your health and safety, as well as that of your colleagues [*and our customers*], so if you have any drug-related impairment, you must tell us straight away.

5. Drugs and alcohol at work-related social events

- 5.1. You may, on occasion, attend work-related social events where alcohol is available. Such events may involve entertaining [*customers*] or may be internal social events. If you choose to drink at such events, then you must be responsible with regard to your alcohol intake and behave appropriately at all times.
- 5.2. You must not bring, sell or buy any drugs at work-related activities.
- 5.3. These rules apply to events at the workplace and away from the workplace if you are representing us (whether officially or by association).
- 5.4. We may ask you to leave any event if you behave in breach of these rules, and you may subsequently be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

6. Searches

- 6.1. We may conduct searches for alcohol and drugs in our workplace. We may search areas including desks, lockers, vehicles and filing cabinets. If we have reasonable cause to believe that you have brought drugs or alcohol to work with you, then we may, in addition, conduct a search of your bags and clothing. Any failure to agree to such searches will be treated as potential misconduct and will be handled under our [*Disciplinary Policy*].
- 6.2. If we discover alcohol or drugs following a search, then you may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal under our [*Disciplinary Policy*] following an appropriate investigation.

7. Testing¹

- 7.1. We operate a random drug testing program for the following categories of staff: [*insert roles covered by random testing*].
- 7.2. We have a testing programme for those working in these positions as we have identified a significant health and safety risk should people working in these positions be under the influence of alcohol, drugs or other substances whilst working.
- 7.3. Drug screening is carried out by an external provider. Arrangements, including what drugs will be screened for, will be provided at the time of testing.
- 7.4. We will seek your agreement to take part in our testing program. Any refusal to consent will be viewed as a potential disciplinary offence under our [*Disciplinary Policy*].
- 7.5. We may also, on occasion, ask that you consent to drug or alcohol screening if we have reasonable cause to believe that you have been under the influence of either at work. Any refusal to consent in these circumstances will be treated as a potential disciplinary offence under our [*Disciplinary Policy*].

8. How we will support you

- 8.1. There is support available to you if you face challenges around drug and alcohol misuse. You are not alone. We urge you to talk to us before it becomes an issue at work. You should approach your [*line manager*]. They will offer support.
- 8.2. If you think that a colleague may have an issue with alcohol or drugs, then you should encourage them to seek help. If they do not seek help following your approach, then you should contact your [*line manager*] to share your concerns. Any disclosures will be treated confidentially.
- 8.3. We will offer support if you face issues with alcohol and drugs, including:
 - a Referral for treatment
 - b Time off work to attend any treatment
 - c Adjusting your duties to support your recovery
 - d Implementing any other reasonable support recommended by those treating you
- 8.4. If you agree to enter treatment for drug and alcohol issues at a time when disciplinary or performance improvement processes are ongoing, then we may pause these processes as a supportive measure pending the outcome of treatment. We may then discontinue or restart such processes as we see fit.

¹ Testing is not likely to be appropriate in most businesses unless you undertake a risk assessment and deem it necessary for health and safety reasons. Any such assessment should be documented. You can only test for drugs with the consent of the employee. If they don't consent, then you cannot force the issue. You can, however, include a provision in their contracts of employment stating that they must agree to submit to testing and that withdrawal of that consent will be treated as serious misconduct. This will give you a degree of control over the process.

9. Confidentiality

- 9.1. We appreciate the sensitivity of issues related to alcohol and drugs, and we will aim to maintain the confidentiality of any person experiencing alcohol- and drug-related issues. However, this will not always be possible.
- 9.2. If you seek help or treatment through [HR] or occupational health and ask that your issues are not shared with your [line manager], then we will respect this unless doing so could put you or your colleagues at risk or pose a risk to the business.

10. Breaches of this Policy

- 10.1. Breaches of this Policy may result in disciplinary action being taken against you under our [Disciplinary Policy], leading to the termination of your employment with us. If you carry out services for us, we may terminate your contract with us.

11. Useful links

- 11.1. The following internal policies contain useful links and guidance [Delete/amend as appropriate]:
 - a [Wellbeing Policy]
 - b [Data Protection Policy]
 - c [Disciplinary Policy]
- 11.2. There are external organisations that can offer guidance and support, including:
 - a FRANK – <https://www.talktofrank.com/>
 - b Narcotics Anonymous – <https://ukna.org/>
 - c Alcoholics Anonymous – <https://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/>

12. Administration of the Drugs & Alcohol Policy

- 12.1. [Insert relevant person or department] is responsible for the administration of the Drug & Alcohol Policy. Should you have any feedback, please contact [insert contact details].