



Alcohol and Drugs Misuse Policy

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Alcohol and Drugs Misuse Policy

This policy covers all employees, officers, consultants, contractors, casual workers and agency workers.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment and we may amend it at any time.

We have an obligation under health and safety legislation to maintain a safe working environment for all workers and visitors to our premises.

When an employee's performance or ability to carry out their duties is affected by the misuse of alcohol or drugs, we must take steps to ensure the health and safety of the employee, other employees and members of the public is not compromised.

Employees also have an obligation under health and safety legislation to take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work.

What is alcohol or drug misuse?

The consumption alcohol or the use of illegal or non-prescribed drugs that affects your health, performance or the ability to carry out your duties is "misuse".

Alcohol or drug misuse can lead to:

- sudden change in behaviour pattern
- tendency to become confused
- irritability
- abnormal fluctuations in mood and energy
- impairment of job performance
- poor time-keeping
- increase in short-term sickness absence
- increased health and safety risks for you and other people
- deterioration in relationships with other people.

Consumption of alcohol and use or possession of illegal drugs at work

You are expected to arrive at work fit to carry out your job and to be able to perform your duties safely without any limitations due to the use or after-effects of alcohol or drugs (whether prescribed, over the counter or illegal). The use of drugs also includes the use of "legal highs" or psychoactive drugs which are legal substances which have the effect of illegal drugs.

The consumption of alcoholic drinks during working hours is strictly forbidden, as is the taking of drugs (other than those prescribed or legally taken for a medical condition).

All employees are required to be free of any undue influence of alcohol or drugs while at work.

Intoxication by reason of drink or drugs, and the possession of illegal drugs at work may lead to action under our Disciplinary Procedure and could result in dismissal.

We expect you to demonstrate responsible behaviour at work, work-related functions and work-related social events and to act in a way that will not have a detrimental effect on our reputation. If you entertain clients or represent us at external events where alcohol is served, you are considered to be "at work"

regardless of whether you do so outside normal working hours. Consequently, we will expect you to remain professional and fit for work at all times.

Managers should act to prevent excessive consumption of alcohol by any member of staff and should take steps to deal with any unacceptable conduct. Any such behaviour may lead to disciplinary action.

You must comply with drink-driving laws and drug-driving laws at all times. Conviction for drink-driving or drug-driving offence may harm our reputation and, if your job requires you to drive, you may be unable to continue to do your job. Committing a drink-driving or drug-driving offence while working for us may lead to action under our Disciplinary Procedure and could result in dismissal.

If you are prescribed medication you must seek advice from your GP or pharmacist about the possible effect on your ability to carry out your job and whether your duties should be modified or you should be temporarily reassigned to a different role. If so, you must tell your line manager without delay.

Alcohol or Drug misuse

Alcohol or drug misuse is a level of drinking or use of illegal drugs that persistently affects an employee's work or affects it on an occasional basis.

If you tell us you have a problem with alcohol or drug misuse we will normally deal with the matter in confidence as a health issue. We will try to deal with cases of alcohol or drug misuse supportively and confidentially. This may include:

- (a) Referral to appropriate treatment providers, where necessary in conjunction with your GP.
- (b) Time off work to attend treatment.
- (c) Adjusting your duties or other support as recommended by your GP or specialist during treatment and for an agreed period afterwards, subject to operational requirements and feasibility.

There may be circumstances where these may not be possible or appropriate. We may then use the disciplinary procedure or performance review procedure.

If conduct related to alcohol and drug misuse amounts to criminal conduct the disciplinary procedure may be used, and we may inform the Police.

We will not randomly test employees, but we reserve the right where we suspect alcohol or drug misuse to require an employee to have a medical examination, which may include tests to determine the presence of alcohol and/or drugs.

We reserve the right to conduct searches for alcohol or drugs on our premises, including, but not limited to, searches of lockers, filing cabinets and desks, bags, clothing, and packages.

Your responsibilities

If you think you have a problem with alcohol or drug misuse you should seek help from your doctor or a counselling or advice service as soon as possible.

If you think your ability to carry out your duties at work may be affected by alcohol or drug misuse, you must tell us. You should contact the Human Resources Department.

If you notice a change in a colleague's pattern of behaviour you should encourage them to seek assistance through the Human Resources Department. If they will not seek help themselves, you should draw the matter to the attention of your line manager. You should not attempt to cover up for a colleague whose work or behaviour is suffering as a result of an alcohol or drug-related problem.