

Drug and alcohol policy template

This template is intended as a guide to be used as a basis for writing your own policy. Your organisation's drug and alcohol policy should be tailored to the circumstances of your particular workplace and some of the sections listed here may not apply to your business. Alternatively, there may be sections missing that are required for your organisation.

It is essential that you perform your own research to determine what should be included in your organisation's drug and alcohol policy.

Name of organisation:	
Policy completed by:	
Person responsible for implementing policy:	
Signature:	
Date:	
Date of next review:	



Table of contents



1. Introduction.....	3
2. Policy objectives.....	4
3. Scope.....	5
4. Key definitions.....	6
5. The law.....	7
6. Drug and alcohol training.....	8
7. Identifying drug and alcohol misuse.....	9
8. Reporting.....	10
9. Prohibited behaviour.....	11
10. Special considerations.....	13
11. Manager and supervisor responsibilities	14
12. Support and rehabilitation assistance.....	15
13. Relapse.....	16
14. Disciplinary action.....	17
15. Return to work.....	18
16. Drug and alcohol testing.....	19
17. Searches and confiscation.....	20
18. Review.....	21
19. Drug and Alcohol Policy certificate of receipt.....	22

1. Introduction

recognises that substance misuse is a medical and social issue that can have both a personal and professional impact on employees, as well as affecting the success and reputation of the business.

This policy demonstrates the organisation's commitment to providing a healthy, safe and productive workplace for its employees by supporting those suffering from substance misuse in the workplace to rehabilitate and protect their employment, as far as possible. In turn, this will reduce the safety risks posed to employees by drug and alcohol misuse in the workplace.

Through this policy, we emphasise that any employee who willingly seeks help for drug and alcohol misuse will receive the appropriate support and treatment for their situation with disciplinary procedures pursued only as a last resort. This policy also ensures the confidentiality of disclosures and subsequent support as far as is reasonably practicable.

Note that this policy should be read and used alongside other relevant organisational policies.

2. Policy objectives

- To ensure compliance with appropriate drug and alcohol legislation.
- To encourage individuals concerned about their or their coworkers' drug and alcohol use to seek help.
- To establish clear terms and conditions regarding substance misuse by employees of the organisation in order to prevent incidents occurring that may result in disciplinary action.
- To minimise safety risks created by substance misuse at work.
- To support early identification of substance misuse at work.
- To facilitate incidences of drug and alcohol misuse to be handled in the appropriate manner, based on the circumstances, and outline to staff both the support available for and potential consequences of misusing substances.
- To educate employees on the effects and consequences of using and misusing drugs and alcohol.
- To familiarise employees with rules regarding drug and alcohol testing, searches and confiscation.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all employees of who hold a contract of employment with the organisation, including apprentices, volunteers, directors and governors.

4. Key definitions

Substances	For the purposes of this policy, these are illegal drugs, alcohol, medications and other substances, such as solvents, that are taken in order to alter the taker's mental or physical state. This includes prescription or over-the-counter medication that is then misused, meaning it is used for purposes other than its intended or prescribed use.
Substance misuse	For the purposes of this policy, this is the problematic use of drugs and/ or alcohol and can range from long-term problematic use to intermittent occurrences. It can include consuming harmful amounts of alcohol (resulting in alcohol-related health complications or incidents), a dependence on alcohol, the frequent and excessive use of drugs or a dependence on drugs.

5. The law

The **Health and Safety at Work Act (1974)** outlines an employer's duty to protect the health, safety and welfare of employees and anyone else who will or may be affected by their behaviour, as far as is reasonably practicable.

The **Misuse of Drugs Act (1971)** prohibits the production, supply and/or possession of illegal drugs.

Under the **Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations (1999)**, is committed to carrying out a risk assessment to identify potential workplace hazards and put controls in place to minimise these risks. This includes hazards relating to drug and alcohol use.

The **Road Traffic Act 1988** makes it an offence to drive or attempt to drive a motor vehicle on a road or other public place whilst unfit through drink or drugs and an offence if the person is in charge of a motor vehicle while under the influence of drink or drugs.

Under the **Employment Protection (Consolidation) Act (1998)**, staff will be provided with 12 weeks' notice of any changes to this policy.

6. Drug and alcohol training

The organisation recognises the importance of providing training on drug and alcohol use and misuse for all employees, in order for them to fully understand the effects and consequences. Training will also facilitate employees and employers to identify signs of drug and alcohol misuse in the workplace as quickly as possible.

Drug and alcohol information will be disseminated through multiple channels, including the intranet, written and email communication and through in-person training, which all employees, including management, are required to attend.

New staff members are required to read and sign this policy during their induction and new managers will be trained on their responsibilities in carrying out this policy. This policy is also readily available for anyone to access and read on the organisation's intranet. If you have any problems accessing this policy, please contact HR.

7. Identifying drug and alcohol misuse

Management must make use of the 'reasonable suspicion' symptom checklist and document their observations and any behaviours that create suspicion of substance misuse by employees. A combination of behaviours is the best indicator that someone is suffering from substance misuse. Examples of behaviours that may create reasonable suspicion include:

- **Smells** (including the smell of alcohol on an individual or coming from their belongings or storage space, body odour or urine).
- **Body** (such as unexplained weight loss or dental problems).
- **Unusual movements** (for example, someone may be jittery, wobbly or move particularly slowly).
- **Eyes** (for example, dilated pupils, red and/or watery eyes, unusual eye movements).
- **Emotional state** (for example, aggressiveness, rudeness, depressive mood, paranoia or anxiety, euphoria).
- **Speech** (for example, slow, slurred, rambling).
- **Actions** (for example, unauthorised absences from work, numerous small incidents, poor or inconsistent work performance, breakdown of work relationships).

We recognise that any of these factors may have causes other than substance misuse, so encourage managers to consider all of the information when identifying an issue.

8. Reporting and reporting process

If you suspect that your colleague is misusing substances at work, you should encourage them to speak to their manager, supervisor or member of HR staff. If they are unwilling to report it themselves, you must report it, particularly if the person works in a safety-critical role.

As an employee, if a coworker discloses a drug or alcohol misuse issue to you, you should encourage them to speak to their manager, supervisor or HR department.

Employees are encouraged to report any suspected violations of this policy to their manager or the HR department.

You should keep any information relating to a coworker's drug and alcohol misuse confidential beyond their manager, supervisor and/or the HR team.

9. Prohibited behaviour

The following behaviours are prohibited from being performed during scheduled work hours at _____, including while on-call, while present on _____'s work premises, while operating machinery or vehicles owned or leased by _____ or conducting any other business within work hours.

This extends to any breaks during the work day, including lunch breaks, and when representing the organisation in any capacity, including off-site, during scheduled work hours.

<p>Employees are prohibited from the following activities:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">→ Possessing, consuming, purchasing, selling or dispensing alcohol or illegal drugs, or prohibited legal drugs.→ Working under the influence of alcohol, illegal or prohibited legal drugs.→ Discussing the use of illegal substances outside of work, during work hours.→ Acting in a way that could bring the reputation of the organisation into disrepute, inside or outside of work, through the use of, or interaction with, illegal substances.
<p>Employees have the following responsibilities relating to the use of legal drugs:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">→ Carrying prescribed or over-the-counter medication in a labelled container.→ Being able to provide evidence of the legal prescription of medication when asked.→ Seeking medical advice regarding possible adverse effects of prescription or over-the-counter medications they take that may influence their ability to work safely.→ Not using legal drugs that have not been legally obtained or prescribed, or using legal drugs outside of their intended purpose (for example, using prescription medication for longer than the time prescribed by their doctor).→ To disclose to their manager or supervisor when they begin taking any prescribed medication that could affect their ability to perform their role safely. It is the responsibility of the employee's manager or supervisor, in collaboration with a medical professional where required, to determine if the employee is safe to work or not. Where there is a risk to safety, they should be temporarily moved to a different role or task until they are able to perform their role safely.

9. Prohibited behaviour

While _____ recognises that employees have a right to privacy in their lives outside of work, it also recognises that off-the-job involvement with drugs and/or alcohol can impact an employee's work. Where drug or alcohol use outside of work impacts on an employee's ability to perform their role at work, _____ reserves the right to pursue supportive or disciplinary measures, depending on the circumstances.

Employees who are charged with or convicted of crimes involving illegal drugs must report this conviction to HR or their manager or supervisor as soon as possible. The organisation will then determine the impact this charge has on their eligibility for employment in the employee's particular role and any necessary follow-up action. If a charge or conviction is withheld, this will result in disciplinary action.

10. Special considerations

There are some circumstances in which the terms and conditions of this policy may be altered, such as work-organised social events outside of work hours, including Christmas parties and leaving parties. When this is the case, it is up to the discretion of _____ to communicate these changes to employees. Employees are prohibited from acting in any way that may harm the reputation of the organisation and this may lead to disciplinary action.

11. Manager and supervisor responsibilities

Managers and/or supervisors have the following responsibilities:

- Ensuring employees have read and understood this policy, both during their induction period and after, ensuring employees know how to raise any concerns or suspicions with them.
- Initiating conversations with employees regarding suspected substance misuse, where required.
- Raising any disclosures, concerns or suspicions with the HR department so that an appropriate investigation can be launched.
- Maintaining confidentiality, where appropriate.
- Providing staff with support and maintaining regular contact throughout their recovery.
- Monitoring staff for changes to behaviour that may indicate, according to the reasonable suspicion checklist, that a member of staff may be suffering from substance misuse.
- To keep a record throughout an investigation into drug and alcohol misuse, starting with the first disclosure or suspicion.

12. Support and rehabilitation assistance

is committed to providing support for any employee seeking help for drug and alcohol misuse. We prioritise support and assistance over disciplinary action in the first instance, except in situations where an employee has breached other policies that make them liable to immediate disciplinary action.

Employees who advise their supervisor or manager of their medical problem relating to drug or alcohol misuse, and who have not engaged in any misconduct or repeated poor performance at work, and who demonstrate commitment to take necessary remedial action, will be provided with support to achieve this.

Where practicable, the organisation will help individuals suffering from substance misuse to find external support for their recovery. External support may be sought in the form of:

- The individual's GP - this may lead to a referral for specialist substance misuse, treatment and/or counselling services.
- Telephone or online helplines.
- Self-help groups.
- Substance misuse charities.

Your manager or supervisor will consider making alternative working arrangements for you when they determine that your role may be facilitating your drug and alcohol misuse.

Absence for treatment and rehabilitation will be regarded as normal sickness absence, with full pay provided for this period. This includes any scheduled appointments for substance misuse treatment.

13. Relapse

We recognise that relapse is a common occurrence during the recovery process from drug and alcohol misuse. In most cases, we will support staff members through two relapses following the initial support process. Any subsequent relapse will be treated on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration the needs of the organisation and the best interests of the individual.

14. Disciplinary action

Any violation of this policy may be grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal. If an employee is unwilling to seek or accept support, continues to breach the conditions of this policy and/or continually performs below satisfactory levels, this may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal. If there are subsequent occurrences of breach of policy, following support, this will result in dismissal.

For single breaches of this policy that do not equate to gross misconduct and/or breach the laws stated above, this will be treated as a conduct issue, with disciplinary action pursued accordingly and support offered.

If an employee does engage in gross misconduct or breaks the laws regarding drug and alcohol misuse, this would be grounds for dismissal and the police may be involved, where appropriate. Employees found to be in possession of illicit substances while at work will be dismissed at once and the police will be contacted.

Employees whose role involves driving vehicles or operating machinery for work may be removed from these positions if found to have been driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol, at work or otherwise. Appropriate support or disciplinary action will be pursued depending on the employee's willingness to receive help.

Employees who knowingly put themselves and others at risk by performing safety-critical roles while under the influence of illicit substances will be removed from their role, temporarily or permanently.

If an employee admits to substance misuse and is willing to seek help following a serious misconduct incident, they may require both support and disciplinary action.

Employees with unsatisfactory performance who remain in work while receiving support for substance misuse may be placed on a 'Performance Improvement Plan', requiring them to show continual improvement in their performance over a period of time. If performance does not improve, alternative disciplinary action may be required.

15. Return to work

Where support for drug and alcohol misuse involves an employee taking time away from work, their manager will keep in regular contact with them throughout. The organisation seeks to return employees to their original roles wherever possible. However, we recognise and respect that this is not always in the best interests of the individual.

If the employee is not able to fulfil the responsibilities of their role following treatment, alternative roles or duties will be considered.

16. Drug and alcohol testing

Substance testing is a condition of employment at

Refusal to comply with testing may result in disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, where there is valid reason to believe that an employee has violated this policy and refusal to test prevents a medical determination of substance use.

The HR department must be consulted before sending any employee for drug or alcohol testing.

The employee's manager or supervisor and a representative from the HR department will meet with the employee to explain the reason for testing, including observations noted and the requirement for the employee to undergo testing within a period of time.

Drug and/or alcohol screening may be performed on employees in the following circumstances:

1. Upon an offer of employment. Refusal to submit to testing will result in disqualification from further employment consideration.
2. Where there is probable cause to suggest that an incident is the result of substance misuse. An incident constitutes an event where equipment, machinery, vehicles or property belonging to or one of its employees comes to harm.
3. Where there is valid reason to believe that an employee is under the influence of substances at work (including where possession of or impairment by prohibited substances is observed).
4. As follow-up testing for an employee who has previously breached this policy but has retained employment.
5. For employees working in safety-critical roles.

The results of drug or alcohol testing will be kept confidential to the extent required by law.

Employees who are unwilling to partake in drug or alcohol screening where there is a requirement according to their role, or where there is reasonable cause to believe that they are violating the terms of this policy, will be treated as though they have received a positive result and be subject to dismissal.

17. Searches and confiscation

maintains the right to search its premises for prohibited substances, including drugs and alcohol. Employees who are found to be withholding prohibited substances or who refuse to cooperate with searches will be disciplined, up to and including dismissal.

Searches may be conducted at any time. Areas open to search include work areas, storage areas, staff rooms, lunch rooms and lockers.

Where the organisation has reason to believe that an individual is breaking the law relating to drugs and alcohol at work, such as possessing or dealing illegal substances, a search of their personal effects will be conducted.

18. Review

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure that it remains up-to-date and effective. It is subject to review and change at any time, including in response to workplace incidents and changes to relevant legislation.

19. Drug and alcohol policy certificate of receipt

I hereby certify that I have received, read and understood
Drug and Alcohol Policy and agree to follow the terms and conditions outlined here.

Employee name:	
Employee signature:	