

Swaffham Town Council

ALCOHOL AND DRUG ABUSE POLICY

Purpose

Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs can seriously impair an individual's judgement and reactions leading to an increased risk of accidents and injuries occurring.

The aim of this policy is to ensure the safety of all employees, councilors and visitors by having clear rules in place regarding use and possession of alcohol and drugs, and to support those who have reported a problem with alcohol or drug dependence.

For the purpose of the policy:

Alcohol dependence is defined as: *"The habitual drinking of intoxicating liquor by an employee, whereby the employee's ability to perform his/her duties is impaired or his/her attendance at work is interfered with, or he/she endangers the safety of others"*.

Drug dependence is defined as: *"The habitual taking of drugs by an employee other than drugs prescribed as medication, whereby the employee's ability to perform his/her duties is impaired, or his/her attendance at work is interfered with, or he/she endangers the safety of others"*.

Principles

- All employees will be treated consistently and fairly in line with this policy.
- The rules on alcohol and drugs will be strictly enforced.
- Those who admit to having a problem with alcohol or drugs shall be fully supported by the Council, Town Clerk, Deputy Clerk and Line manager.
- Employees with an illness related to alcohol or drugs are encouraged to disclose this at the earliest opportunity to ensure support and help with treatment.
- All matters concerning alcohol and drugs shall be treated as confidential.
- This policy is designed to comply with relevant legislation such as the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 Scope
- The Company's alcohol and drugs policy applies to all employees.
- The rules laid out in this policy apply to all employees and contractors.
- Misconduct in relation to alcohol and drugs will be managed through the Council's Disciplinary Policy – **EH Policy (D) 001 Disciplinary Policy & Procedure**
- Poor performance in relation to alcohol and drugs will be dealt with in line with the Council's Capability Policy – **EH Policy (C) 008 Capability Policy & Procedure**.
- Problems with attendance or a long-term alcohol/drugs related illness will be managed in line with the sickness absence policy and the capability policy.

Rules

During working hours and at all times whilst on work premises employees must be free from the influence of drugs or alcohol.

This will help to ensure the health and safety of employees and others with whom they come into contact, to maintain the efficient and effective operation of the business, and to ensure customers receive the service they require.

For those reasons, the following rules will be strictly enforced.

No employee shall –

- report or try to report for work when deemed unfit by the Town Clerk, Deputy Clerk or Line Manager
- due to alcohol or drugs (whether illegal or not) or to substance abuse;
- be in possession of alcohol or illegal drugs in the workplace;
- supply others with illegal drugs in the workplace;
- supply or consume others with alcohol in the workplace, except in the course of work duties e.g Town Clerk / Council approved events the bar;
- consume illegal drugs or abuse any substance whilst at work.

In addition, employees or contractors must –

- ensure they are aware of the side effects of any prescription drugs;
- advise the Town Clerk, Deputy Clerk or Line Manager immediately of any side effects of prescription drugs, which may affect work performance or the health and safety of themselves or others e.g drowsiness.

Contravention of these rules is gross misconduct and the Council will take disciplinary action for any breach of these rules.

In the case of agency workers or contractors, services may be terminated immediately upon a breach of these rules.

When there is reasonable belief that an individual is under the influence of alcohol or drugs on reporting for work or during the course of work, (e.g.if there was a strong smell of alcohol on the person's breath), they must be sent home immediately.

A search may also be carried out in line with the Council's Staff Search policy.

In addition, possession of or dealing in illegal drugs on Council premises will, without exception, be reported to the Police.

Help and support

The Council will endeavour to ensure that advice and help are made available to any employee who feels they have a problem with alcohol or drug misuse.

In the first instance, individuals will be encouraged to seek help from their General Practitioner. Under these circumstances and with the employee's consent, a referral will be made to the Occupational Health service.

It may occasionally be necessary to request that the employee refrains from work temporarily or undertakes restricted duties to ensure their own safety and that of others. The Council may also allow additional time off (normally unpaid) for employees to obtain treatment or attend support groups.

Any employee who seeks the assistance of the Council in finding treatment for a drugs or alcohol problem has the Council's complete assurance of confidentiality.

Useful links:

Alcoholics Anonymous Tel 0845 769 7555 www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk

ACAD (Advice and Counselling on Alcohol and Drugs) www.acad.org.uk

FRANK Tel 0800 776 600 (24 hours) www.talktofrank.com

NHS (Information and advice from the National Health Service) www.nhs.uk