

DRUG AND ALCOHOL POLICY

DIVISION	BUSINESS UNIT	RESPONSIBILITY AREA
Corporate Services	Organisational Practices	Human Resources - Safety

OBJECTIVE:

The aim of this policy is to ensure a safe workplace, free from the effects of drugs and alcohol. The policy is directed towards the welfare of the individual and safety and health of other people.

POLICY:

- 1
 - a) This policy applies to all personnel at the workplace, including staff, volunteers, contractors, management and Councillors;
 - b) Persons under the influence of a drug or alcohol in the workplace pose a serious safety and health risk not only to the user, but to all those who work with the user. The workplace includes Council premises, parks, reserves, vehicles, plant or any other Council building or physical asset; and
 - c) If a Manager or Supervisor has justifiable cause to believe an employee is under the influence of alcohol or drugs, the Chief Executive Officer (or appropriate employee) may have the employee removed from the workplace and may initiate any reasonable action considered necessary. Suitable arrangements should be made to ensure the person gets home safely. If it is believed that the use of drugs or alcohol renders risk to the health or safety of the employee, co-workers or the public, the Chief Executive Officer reserves the right to remove the employee from duty pending an urgent medical examination to determine fitness for duty.
2. Drug and Alcohol Testing

Drug testing in the workplace may be carried out only if a substantial risk exists for the employee, co-workers or public. Testing is limited to the following circumstances:

 - a) Where an employee's impairment by drugs poses a substantial and demonstrable safety risk to the employee or to other people;
 - b) Where there is reasonable cause to believe that the employee to be tested may be impaired by drugs; and
 - c) Where the drug test can identify the presence of a drug at concentrations which may cause impairment.
3. Procedure for dealing with Drug and Alcohol Use
 - 3.1 The procedure for dealing with drug and alcohol abuse is divided into three stages:
 - a) Discussion between the employee and immediate Supervisor;
 - b) Discussion between the employee, Supervisor, Manager and representative (optional); and

- c) Disciplinary action.

3.2 Stage One

- a) The employee and immediate supervisor should participate in Stage One, although the employee may request a representative to be present. An observer should be present if an employee representative attends;
- b) This first discussion should be presented as a counselling session. Procedural fairness must be observed and the supervisor must clearly state the performance related reasons for the interview and the employee must be given the opportunity to respond. The supervisor must clearly state what standards of performance are required;
- c) The supervisor should offer assistance by encouraging the employee to participate professional counselling sessions, although the employee is not obliged to accept;
- d) A timeframe for review should be established. The employee should be informed of expected changes, on going performance monitoring by the supervisor and the compulsory interview at the end of the review period;
- e) The employee should be made aware of possible consequences if there is no significant improvement;
- f) The supervisor should prepare a brief summary of the interview and give two (2) copies to the employee. After reading the summary, the employee should sign one (1) of the copies and return it to the supervisor. This copy should be placed on the employees personnel file; and
- g) The review should be held at the prescribed time. The points discussed should respond exactly to those raised at the first interview; improvements should be acknowledged. Continuing problems, such as continued decline in performance, and any new performance based problems should be identified and discussed. The supervisor should again prepare a summary of the interview.

3.3 Stage Two

If there is still no improvement in the employee's performance a second meeting should be held using the same procedure as the first, although the employee should be made fully aware of the possible consequences if there is no significant improvement and that this represents a final warning.

3.4 Stage Three

Conduct by an employee while under the influence of alcohol or drugs is likely to be subject to disciplinary action in line with the Council's disciplinary procedures.

4. Social Occasions

The Chief Executive Officer may approve the consumption of alcohol on Council premises under some circumstances, ie social functions. The Council has a 'responsible host' attitude and on such social occasions, a range of drinks

including low and non-alcoholic drinks will be provided along with a proportionate level of snack type foods. Employees are encouraged to organise alternative transport prior to the function to avoid the possibility of their driving under the influence.

5. Prescription or Over The Counter Drugs

5.1 Prescription or over the counter drugs can be used for a wide range of reasons however it is also known that use of prescription or 'over the counter' drugs may impair a person's ability to perform safely or efficiently.

5.2 There are several types of drugs that may impair performance, including:

- a) Hypnotics and sedatives;
- b) Antidepressants;
- c) Antihistamines;
- d) Stimulants and appetite suppressants; and
- e) Analgesics/Codeine.

5.3 Employees taking prescribed drugs should obtain written advice from their doctor as to the effects of the drug that may be relevant to their job performance. They should also advise their Supervisor/Manager that they are taking a medication which, on the advice of their medical practitioner, is likely to affect their job performance.

5.4 It is important to note that the employee has a responsibility to perform at a safe standard while at work. If prescription medication is impairing an employee's safe standard of work, the employee has a responsibility to take time off work. If a work accident occurs due to the actions of an employee on prescribed medication, that employee will be asked to take sick leave (if available) or leave without pay until they are fit to return to work.

5.5 All matters pertaining to this policy will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and any employee of the Shire of Plantagenet who is interested in receiving counselling services should seek approval from their Supervisor.'

ADOPTED:

LAST REVIEWED: 28 APRIL 2009