

Alcohol and drug

V1.0 November 2025

This policy sets out our organisation's approach to managing alcohol or drug misuse at work.

We have a duty to take care of the health and safety of all our employees and others affected by our activities. It is important for us to ensure that staff behave in an appropriate, professional, and responsible manner at work and that alcohol or drug misuse does not create a health and safety risk.

At the same time, we genuinely care about the health and wellbeing of our workforce and are invested in creating an environment where everyone can thrive.

We recognise that alcohol or drug dependence is a medical condition. If you disclose, or we suspect, that you have an alcohol or drug problem, we will take a non-judgmental and supportive approach to ensure that you get the help that you need.

The policy does not form part of your contract of employment, and we reserve the right to amend it at any time.

Scope

This policy applies to anyone working for us. This includes employees, workers, contractors, volunteers, interns, and apprentices.

What is alcohol or drug misuse?

Alcohol and drug misuse is when an individual drinks alcohol, or takes illegal drugs, medicines, or substances such as solvents, in a way that is harmful.

Early warning signs of alcohol or drug misuse include:

- unexplained or frequent absences;
- a change in behaviour;
- behaving in an aggressive or reckless way;
- unexplained dips in productivity;
- accidents or near misses;
- performance or conduct issues;
- sudden changes of mood; or
- breakdown in relationships with colleagues.

If you notice obvious signs of alcohol or drug misuse in a colleague, you should report your observations and/or suspicions to your line manager any alternative manager.

Your conduct at work

We have a duty to ensure a safe working environment and not to expose you and others affected by our activities to any unnecessary risk.

For this reason, it is strictly prohibited to:

- drink alcohol or take drugs that are likely to render you unfit or unsafe for work during any period that you are working;
- work, or report for work, while under the influence of alcohol or drugs;
- supply others with alcohol or drugs during working hours or in the workplace;
- store alcohol or drugs at the workplace such as in lockers and desk drawers; or
- be over the legal drink-drive alcohol limit if you need to drive for work reasons.

If we suspect that you are unfit or unsafe to undertake your work because you are under the influence of alcohol or drugs, you may be suspended from your duties until the matter is investigated.

Work-related social events

You may drink alcohol if you are at a work-related social event, provided that you are given permission by your line manager in advance.

You should remember that you are representing the organisation during any work-related social event or while entertaining clients and you should drink in moderation. The provision of free alcoholic drinks by the organisation is not an excuse to drink excessively.

You should always take steps to ensure that you are well within the legal drink-drive alcohol limit if you are going to be driving home after an event or in the morning after an event.

Illegal drugs

If you are found in possession of illegal drugs during your working hours, or at a work-related event, we will have no option but to report the matter to the police.

Side effects from prescribed medication

If you are prescribed any medication that influences your ability to carry out your work safely, you must tell your line manager or any available manager.

This is particularly important if you work in a role where safety is critical.

Breach of policy

Any breach of this policy will be treated as a disciplinary offence, although we will always consider the circumstances of any case, including whether you are receiving support for a drug or alcohol-related problem, before deciding on the appropriate penalty.

Alcohol and drug testing

We reserve the right to test for alcohol and drugs, either randomly or in specific circumstances

Requesting support

We recognise that alcohol or drug dependence is a medical condition that can cause mental, physical, and social deterioration.

If you think that you may have an alcohol or drug problem, we urge you to speak to your line manager and be as open as possible so that they can help you get the help you need. If for any reason you are unable to approach your line manager, you can speak to any alternative manager.

We understand that asking for help can be difficult, but any health-related information disclosed by you during discussions with your line manager or any alternative manager. will be treated sensitively, in confidence and in a non-judgmental way.

Occupational health

If we suspect that you have an alcohol or drug problem, we may refer you to occupational health so that they can advise on the type of support that may be appropriate. Occupational health may also signpost you to external sources of help and advice.

Employee assistance programme

Help and support is also available through our employee assistance programme (EAP). You can use our EAP to speak to an independent adviser on a confidential basis about any issue that is troubling you. To access the EAP website, go to <https://wisdom.healthassured.org/login> and enter the following log in details to create your account:

Organisation code: MHA 25 87 67

External sources of help

There are various organisations that provide help and support relating to alcohol or drug dependence, including:

- [Alcohol Change](#), which is a national charity working to help reduce problems caused by alcohol;
- [Drinkaware](#), which is an independent charity, which works with others to help reduce alcohol-related harm by helping people make better choices about their drinking;

- [Drinkline](#), which is a free confidential helpline for people who are concerned about their drinking;
- [FRANK \(Talk to Frank\)](#), which offers confidential help and advice on drugs; and
- [The Health and Safety Executive \(HSE\)](#), which has produced guidance on managing drug or/and alcohol abuse at work and signposts the help and support available to those affected.