

ALCOHOL, SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND ADDICTION POLICY

Policy Date	March 2021
Review Date <i>when under review, this policy should continue to be used</i>	March 2024
This policy is non-contractual	
Version <i>This policy may be amended prior to the review date to comply with any new, relevant legislation or organisational change that affects how this policy is used</i>	1
Related Policies	Managing Sickness Absence Managing Change Protocols (Redeployment) Capability Disciplinary Health & Safety

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1. Purpose

- 1.1. Havant Borough Council and East Hampshire District Council are committed to providing a safe working environment ensuring the health, safety and welfare of all employees. This includes promoting good health and wellbeing for all our employees.
- 1.2. The Councils' will take all reasonable steps to reduce, if not eliminate, the risk of injuries or incidents occurring due to employees suffering from the effects of alcohol, substance abuse or addictive behaviours including but not limited to gambling.
- 1.3. This policy sets out how Havant Borough Council and East Hampshire District Council will manage incidents of alcohol and/or substance abuse in work (irrespective of work location). It also details the type of support available to staff who are or might be suffering from an alcohol or substance abuse issue.
- 1.4. The fundamentals within this policy will be applied to other addictive behaviours having an adverse effect on employees.

2. Scope

- 2.1. This policy applies to all employees of the council regardless of gender, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, disability, sexual orientation, age, trade union membership or public interest disclosure status. It also applies to part time and fixed term employees.

3. Principles

- 3.1. Employees must not report to work whilst impaired through alcohol, drugs or other substances (whether illegal or not).
- 3.2. Employees must not be in possession of alcohol or illegal drugs on the Councils' premises.
- 3.3. Employees must not consume alcohol, illegal drugs or take or use any substances in a non-permitted way whilst at work or whilst representing the Councils'. Specific reference is made to those driving Council owned vehicles and those using their own vehicles on Council business.

In addition:

- 3.4. All employees must be made aware of their responsibilities regarding alcohol and substance misuse in the workplace. This will be done via the induction process for new starters, and via line managers raising awareness of this policy through internal health & wellbeing communications.
- 3.5. Employees who have an alcohol and/or substance related problem will be encouraged to seek help, in confidence, at an early stage.

3.6. Employees who volunteer an alcohol and/or substance related problem will be dealt with sympathetically, fairly and consistently.

3.7. The Councils' will where possible assist an employee with a drug and/or substance related problem back to the workplace, if appropriate.

4. Substance and Alcohol Abuse

4.1. The misuse of alcohol, drugs or substances by employees might become apparent in a variety of ways. The following could be an indication of a problem:

- Absenteeism/poor time keeping
- Change in appearance (unkempt)
- High accident levels
- Decline in work performance
- Mood swings
- Misconduct
- Hand tremor
- Weight loss
- Refusal to appear on screen in digital meetings

4.2. If a manager or employee has reasonable grounds to suspect that an individual has reported for work in an unfit state through the use of alcohol*, or illegal drugs that could cause harm to themselves and/or others in the course of their duties, they must immediately notify any available manager. The employee will be immediately instructed to stop work, and if appropriate sent home or suspended from their duties by the manager. The length of suspension will be determined by the available manager, in consultation with HR and Health & Safety.

*[*For alcohol, an unfit state will normally be defined as someone who is over the legal limit stipulated for driving i.e. 35mcg/100ml of breath alcohol concentration or in the opinion of management, the individual's performance is impaired, or their behaviour may cause embarrassment, distress or offence to others].*

4.3. Employees who behave in a manner contrary to normal standards of conduct due to occasional excessive use of alcohol, drugs or other substances will be dealt with under the relevant Councils' Disciplinary Policy.

4.4. Employees must inform their line manager if they are taking prescribed medication which may influence their ability to carry out their work safely and must follow any instructions subsequently given. In these circumstances, advice must be sought from the HR and Health & Safety Teams, with follow up from Occupational Health where relevant.

4.5. If a manager suspects an employee of having a long-term substance misuse problem, they must discuss this with a member of both the HR and Health & Safety teams before taking any action. It is likely that guidance will be sought from Occupational Health.

- 4.6. Health & Safety risk assessments are reviewed annually by all services, and due consideration is given to those services which employ members of staff who operate machinery and drive on Council business.

5. Sanctions

- 5.1. Convictions of employees for drug or alcohol offences can damage public confidence in the Council and its services, irrespective of the role performed by that member of staff and whether the offence was committed at work or not. Broadly we would look at each case to establish what the best course of action is when it comes to supporting the individual towards a healthy recovery.
- 5.2. Employees must not attempt to sell, distribute or supply alcohol whilst on Council premises or whilst representing the Council [this excludes licensed personal gifts between staff]. If an employee is found to be in possession of an illegal substance, the contravention will be reported to the Police.
- 5.3. Any breaches of the above will be viewed by the Councils' as gross misconduct and may lead to suspension and disciplinary action, which could result in dismissal.

6. Drug and/or Alcohol Dependency

- 6.1. An employee suffering from drug and/or alcohol dependency should declare this to their line manager or to HR. The Councils' will usually provide reasonable assistance if the employee acknowledges that they have a drug and/or alcohol dependency problem.
- 6.2. The Council's reserve the right to move to a disciplinary process if the employee is unwilling to engage with Occupational Health and any subsequent medical support that may be offered at cost to the employee's service area, with the aim of developing a plan for recovery.
- 6.3. Absences for treatment and/or rehabilitation will be treated in the same way as any other sickness absence. The provision of counselling and support can be accessed via the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP). Full details of external support organisations available, including the EAP are listed in Appendix 1. These organisations can help managers/staff/HR/Unison to support colleagues with these problems and/or support staff who are experiencing these issues with friends and family members.

7. Disqualification from Driving

- 7.1. Any employee who becomes disqualified from driving (and who drives as part of their job role) either temporarily or permanently, must let their line manager know immediately.
- 7.2. The line manager would then raise the matter in confidence with HR, who would look to approach redeployment on the basis of:
- The nature of the contravention
 - The likely duration of the disqualification
 - The needs of the service area
 - The employee's skillset

- Any vacant posts

7.3. If the disqualification is permanent and redeployment is not possible, the employee would be managed in line with the Council's Capability procedure.

8. If an accident occurs whilst Driving on Council business

8.1. Any accident that occurs whilst driving on Council business, resulting in damage to property and/or injury to persons – must be reported to the Police. The Police may take a sample of breath (to detect the presence of alcohol) at the scene of the incident, and the HR and Health & Safety teams may request that the employee's line manager refers the employee involved in the accident to Occupational Health.

Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed every two years or earlier at the request of either UNISON or EHDC/HBC.

Appendix 1

External Agencies Contact Details for Employees dealing with Alcohol and Drug Related Problems

1. Occupational Health (Cordell Health)

Cordell Health is the councils' Occupational Health service, which is a service for staff and managers aimed at preventing ill health and supporting those with health conditions. Cordell Health provide independent, professional advice for work related concerns. Referrals can be made online by the Manager working with HR. Face to face, Skype, and telephone consultations are options for appointments.

<http://intranet/basic-page/occupational-health>

Access to Occupational Health is by management referral only.

2. Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)

This free and fully confidential service is available for any member of staff. There is a helpline and also a comprehensive website to help staff with the following areas;

- ☐ Work advice
- ☐ Counselling
- ☐ Financial wellbeing
- ☐ Legal information
- ☐ Family issues
- ☐ Childcare support
- ☐ Medical information
- ☐ Substance abuse

EHDC staff - username: Hampshire, password: EAP

HBC staff - username: Havant, password: EAP

Free 24-hour confidential helpline on 0800 030 5182

<https://healthassuredeap.co.uk/> (External website link)

<http://intranet/basic-page/employee-assistance-programme-0> (Intranet link)

3. Action on Addiction

Registered charity with treatment centres for all addictions, throughout England. They also provide support for families and children

- Tel: 0300 330 0659 or email: admin@actiononaddiction.org.uk
- Website: www.actiononaddiction.org.uk

4. Options Alcohol & Drug Counselling & Information Service

Free counselling, information and advice services for people over age 55 with substance misuse problems in the Southwest.

- Address: 147 Shirley Road, Southampton SO15 3FH
- Phone: 023 8063 0219
- Email: southampton@optionscounselling.co.uk

5. Drinkline

Helpline offering support to those worried about their own or others alcohol consumption

- Tel: 0800 7 314 314

6. Drinksmarter

Web resource offering advice and handy tools on sensible drinking

- Website: www.drinksmarter.org

7. AddAction

Nation-wide drug and alcohol treatment agency which provides links to local groups.

- Email: info@addaction.org.uk
- Website: www.addaction.org.uk

8. Alcoholics Anonymous

A fellowship who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism

- Confidential Helpline - 0845 769 7555
- Email: help@alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk
- Website: www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk

9. National Drugs Helpline

A free and confidential service available 24 hours, 7 days a week.

- Tel: 0800 77 66 00

10. Narcotics Anonymous

A confidential service, run by volunteers who are recovering addicts, available 24 hours, 7 days a week.

- Tel: 0300 999 1212
- Website: www.ukna.org