
Alcohol and Drug Policy

SHARED SERVICES



Council of the
ISLES OF SCILLY

May 2015

REVISIONS TO SOURCE DOCUMENT

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INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This policy applies to all employees of the Council of the Isles of Scilly. This policy has been developed in line with the Council's overall vision and strategy and reflects the duty of care the Council has to all permanent and temporary employees as well as volunteers and contractors, whether employed on a full-time or part-time basis.
- 1.2 The Council recognises its obligation under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the mental and physical well-being at work of its employees. The Council also draws to the attention of its employees their individual responsibility under the Act to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and for those who may be affected by their acts or omissions whilst at work. In particular under UK legislation on Aviation this policy covers all personnel working in aviation i.e. ATCO's, ATCA's, Air Ground Operators, Fire Service Personnel.
- 1.3 The Council recognises that alcohol and substance abuse is a major health and social concern that should be treated in a constructive and confidential manner. It believes that early identification and appropriate treatment is the most effective way of dealing with such abuse.
- 1.4 The Council aims to work with employees, assisting those affected to acknowledge the problem, and to encourage employees who recognise that they may have a problem to voluntarily seek advice and help.

DEFINITION OF ALCOHOL AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

- 2.1 Within the terms of this policy 'abuse' relates to misuse of alcohol, prescribed or non-prescribed drugs and other related substances which intermittently or continually interferes with an employees work capacity, capability or conduct.

WHO THIS POLICY APPLIES TO

- 3.1 This policy is particularly relevant for employees who are in safety critical roles; responsible for hazardous works or processes; those directly responsible for the safety of vulnerable young people or adults; providing essential elderly care or those operating or supervising the operation of vehicles and/or machinery. For these people where it is suspected that their work is impaired as a result of sporadic, irregular, regular, negligent or deliberate misuse of alcohol or any other substance.
- 3.2 This policy covers **all** employees as well as volunteers and contractors, and they **must not** consume any alcohol on attending work or at any time during their working day and / or non-prescribed drugs above the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration cut-off levels. This also applies if you are on-call or standby, and you must inform your line manager if you are not fit to attend a call out due to the consumption of alcohol and / or prescribed or non-prescribed drugs. Employees should

re-arrange their on-call arrangements in advance if there are circumstances which would prevent them from carrying out their duties.

- 3.3 It is medically acknowledged that the effects of drugs and alcohol can continue for several hours (e.g. on average it takes one hour to breakdown 1 unit of alcohol) time after use and employees must take account of this.

TESTING

- 4.1 The Council has a duty of care to its employees and the Community, therefore, those who are suspected of reduced competence whilst at work, due to drug or alcohol misuse will be immediately suspended on full pay, and referred to the Council's Occupational Health Physician for medical determination of fitness to work. The GP at the Health Centre may undertake breath, urine, hair or blood testing to inform their determination of fitness to work and this may inform a support plan provided by Occupational Health. When screened for drugs, tests see if levels exceed a particular cut-off level. This is the same principle as screening against the legal drink drive limit.
- 4.2 Air Traffic Controllers will be given minimal notice of the intention to undertake random testing. If a positive result is found, further (usually blood) testing will be undertaken. A confirmed positive result should be reported to the relevant regulatory authority; in the UK the report should be sent to the Medical Department of UK CAA for aviation licence holders.
- 4.3 Any employee who is suspected of being under the influence of alcohol or drugs may be tested, and any refusal to cooperate will be taken into consideration when making a management decision on the case. A confirmed positive result will be reported to the relevant Professional Body such as the Health Care Professionals Council or Care Quality Commission or other relevant Professional Body.
- 4.4 Cut-off levels are generally different from drug to drug but will be based upon the research and guidance of SAMHSA (The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration - USA).

INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY

- 5.1 It is important that employees accept that drinking within reasonable norms outside of the workplace, can be differentiated from a condition that requires help, and that possession and supply of controlled drugs could constitute a criminal offence. Employees who suspect, or know that they have an alcohol or substance related problem, are encouraged to seek help and treatment voluntarily either through their own GP, the Council's Occupational Health Service which can be accessed via Human Resources, CareFirst or through resources of the employee's own choosing.
- 5.2 If any employee, specifically due to their medical condition, takes prescribed or non-prescribed medication of a stimulant or sedative nature that may impact on their work, they are required to inform their manager. Employees are advised to read the details of

the medication they are taking to assess the effects this will have on their ability to carry out their duties at work. Depending on the nature of the employee's duties, medical advice may be sought from the Council's Occupational Health Physician about their fitness to perform their normal duties.

MANAGERIAL RESPONSIBILITY

- 6.1 Managers should neither seek to, nor be expected to, diagnose drug or alcohol dependency or abuse, or to recommend treatment. Only those medically qualified to do so should make an assessment. In such cases managers should immediately place the employee on precautionary medical suspension (on full pay) and refer them to Occupation Health for assessment.
- 6.2 Managers must provide training and carry out risk assessments of all tasks undertaken within their area of responsibility, to minimise work related pressures. They must take into account individual health status, personality and attitude, matching the employee's aptitude with the service task requirements, integrating health & safety criteria into job specifications and safe working procedures.
- 6.3 Employees who come to the notice of management as possibly having an alcohol or substance related problems, through observation, complaint or by disciplinary proceedings should be offered the opportunity to seek immediate advice and, if necessary, treatments from appropriate agencies.
- 6.5 Employees will be granted, if necessary, leave to undergo treatment. This treatment will be treated as sick leave within the terms of the appropriate sick pay scheme. The Occupational Health Service will monitor and report on the medical progress of the treatment.
- 6.6 On return to work following a period of treatment, the employee will normally be able to return to the same job. This may not be the case where, on the advice of the Occupational Health Physician the effects of the alcohol/substance abuse make it impossible for the employee to resume the same job or where resumption of that job would be inconsistent with the long-term resolution of the employee's alcohol/substance problem. In this case alternative employment opportunities within the Council will be explored.

CASE SUPPORT AND MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE

- 7.1 In all cases of suspected alcohol or substance misuse or dependency, the service will be required to inform Human Resources of its suspicions.
- 7.2 To assist services in managing these cases, a meeting will be arranged by Human Resources involving a representative of the service in which the employee works, (normally not less than Officer level), a Human Resources representative and an Health

& Safety representative and / or Trade Union Representative to consider the circumstances and to determine an appropriate course of action.

- 7.3 Arrangements for the meeting should normally be made within 5 working days of Human Resources being informed of the alleged misuse or dependency. It is anticipated that this group will meet at regular intervals to monitor progress and may at onset or subsequent stages involve representation from the Council's Occupational Health provider.
- 7.4 These procedures are intended to ensure not only that appropriate support is available to the employee but also protection for the manager and the Council in fulfilling their obligations under this policy.

REFUSAL OF ASSISTANCE

- 8.1 Should an employee refuse or discontinue any programme of assistance, then this or any unacceptable behaviour or inadequate standard of work will be dealt with through the Council's Capability, Disciplinary or Ill-Health Procedure as appropriate.
- 8.2 Following return to employment, after or during treatment, should work capability again suffer as a result of an alcohol/substance related problem, each case will be considered on its merits and if appropriate a further opportunity for help and treatment will be offered. Cases of persistent alcohol and / or substance misuse will be managed through the appropriate policy.

CONFIDENTIALITY

- 9.1 The confidential nature of any records of employees with an alcohol, drug or other substance related problem will be strictly preserved, as with all sensitive issues raised with Human Resources.

SUPPORT

- 10.1 The Council have a number of contacts to support employees who have alcohol or substance misuse related problems and encourage employees who recognise that they may have a problem to voluntarily seek advice and help. Further advice and support can be provided by Human Resources and through CareFirst.
- 10.2 Addaction is working in partnership with the Council of the Isles of Scilly and Community Safety Partnership to offer islanders extra support to reduce the amount of alcohol they consume.
- 10.3 Addaction is a national drug and alcohol treatment charity that works with 50,000 people in 120 locations across Scotland and England including the Isles of Scilly. Services are delivered by teams of experienced, dedicated and committed individuals with expertise in providing drug and alcohol interventions and supporting people to change their lives. For further information and contact details, please see Appendix 1.

- 11.1 The Council undertakes to offer information, training, advice and support to its employees on the dangers associated with alcohol and substance abuse and to offer information on sensible drinking limits.

Addaction is working in partnership with the Council of the Isles of Scilly and Community Safety Partnership to offer islanders extra support to reduce the amount of alcohol they consume.

We now have a dedicated key worker to work with residents of the Isles of Scilly to assess how much they are drinking, whether they are worried about their intake and help put in steps to cut back. Extra training is also being given to professionals so there are more people able to support residents.

The training will mean anyone worried about their alcohol consumption can visit a number of services and take part in some simple exercises to look at their drinking, whether it is of concern and get help with reducing or stopping altogether. Services include nurses, GPs, police, adult and children's services and hospital staff.

If they feel they would like to take steps to get more support with an alcohol issue, there is now a Skype facility to talk to professional Addaction staff in Cornwall either as a one off or for regular one-to-one sessions. The new Skype facility is in addition to a telephone appointment service, both of which are completely free and confidential.

Problem drinkers, who end up causing anti-social behaviour through drinking, may also be asked to complete some awareness exercises as part of a new project with the police. Officers could ask offenders to take part in the alcohol awareness programme as part of a conditional caution if they feel it will be of benefit.

Manager Darren Jones said: "We're excited to be able to offer Isles of Scilly residents extra support and to be working well with so many other organisations on the islands. The more support we can offer people, the more they can address any issues that have been building up and get on with enjoying life in such a beautiful and unique location."

To get in touch with Addaction call Darren on: 07580 670675 or d.jones2@addaction.org.uk

For more information about Addaction, please visit www.addaction.org.uk