

TORPOINT TOWN COUNCIL

DRUGS AND ALCOHOL POLICY

RENEWAL DATE:- April 2016

NEXT RENEWAL DATE: - April 2018

Reviewing Body: - Finance and Personnel Committee

TORPOINT TOWN COUNCIL

DRUGS AND ALCOHOL 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, workers, 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 and workers will be treated consistently and fairly in line with this policy.
- Rules on DRUGS AND ALCOHOL will be strictly enforced.
- Those who admit to having a problem with alcohol or drugs shall be fully supported by their 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 Council's Drugs and Alcohol policy applies to all employees.
- The *rules* laid out in this policy apply to all employees, workers and contractors.
- Misconduct in relation to alcohol and drugs will be dealt with in relation to the council's appropriate policies.
- Poor performance in relation to alcohol and drugs will be dealt with in line with the council's appropriate policies.
- Problems with attendance or a long-term alcohol/drugs related illness will be managed in line with the council's appropriate policies.

Rules

The Council's policy is that during working hours and whilst on duty at the 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 Council, and to ensure customers receive the service they require. For those reasons, the following rules will be strictly enforced.

No employee, worker or contractor shall -

- report or try to report for work when unfit* 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;

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- supply others with alcohol in the workplace, except in the course of work duties. For example serving customers drinks at the bar or at Civic functions for example Civic Parade;
- consume alcohol or illegal drugs or abuse any substance whilst at work.

*Whether an employee is fit for work is a matter for the reasonable opinion of management.

**Illegal drugs include but are not limited to heroin, cannabis/marijuana, cocaine, ecstasy and amphetamines

***Civic Functions and other Civic Activities – On the occasion when an employee is asked to work at a Civic Function when there is the likelihood of alcohol being available, an employee will be notified when the work duty period ends by the Town Clerk or his nominated deputy. After this announcement an employee is free to engage with others in partaking of alcohol on a social basis (unless he/she has notified the Council that he has a problem with alcohol when he/she will be prohibited from partaking).

In addition, employees, workers or contractors must –

- ensure they are aware of the side effects of any prescription drugs;
- advise their line manager or a member of the management team immediately of any side effects of prescription drugs, which may affect work performance or the health and safety of themselves or others. For example, drowsiness.

Contravention of these rules is gross misconduct and the Council will take disciplinary action for any breach of these rules, which may include summary dismissal. 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, (for example if there was a strong smell of alcohol on the person's breath), they must be sent home immediately.

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.

Some useful links to websites are provided below.

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