



POLICY: ALCOHOL AND DRUG USE

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Copies of this Policy may be made available in alternative formats on request.

Previously agreed by the Board
Previously approved by the Board
Agreed by the Board
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POLICY: ALCOHOL AND DRUG USE

All reference to 'we', 'our' or 'us' in this Policy should be read as meaning Sandbourne Housing Association.

1. Purpose and aim of the Policy

- 1.1 Under the Health and Safety and Work Act, and related legislation we have a duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety and welfare at work of all employees. Similarly, employees have a responsibility to themselves and their colleagues.

2. Alcohol

- 2.1 The consumption of alcohol may impair the safe and efficient running of the business and/or the health and safety of our employees.
- 2.2 The consumption of alcohol by our employees' agents or contractors on our premises is normally forbidden.
- 2.3 If any employee is under the influence of alcohol or their performance or attendance at work is affected as a result of alcohol, they may be subject to disciplinary action and dependent on the circumstances, this may lead to suspension or dismissal of the employee or termination of the contract with the agent, contractor or supplier.
- 2.4 Consumption, possession or distribution of alcohol on our premises without a good reason as determined by the employer may lead to disciplinary action and possible suspension or dismissal of the employee or termination of the contract with the agent or contractor.
- 2.5 If it is suspected that there has been a breach of the normal prohibition on alcohol, or work performance or conduct has been impaired through suspected alcohol abuse, we reserve the right to require our employee concerned to undergo a medical examination to determine the cause of the problem.
- 2.6 If our employee refuses to undergo a medical examination in such circumstances, his/her refusal may be dealt with in accordance with our disciplinary procedure

- 2.7 In the event of a positive test or an admission of a problem, the options set out below in respect of drugs will also be available (at our discretion) in respect of alcohol misuse.

3. Use of drugs

- 3.1 The possession, use or distribution of drugs for non-medical purposes on or in the locality of our premises, including at official events, e.g., the Annual General Meeting or training, is strictly forbidden. For the purposes of this Policy, drugs are only possessed or used for medical purposes where they have been prescribed or otherwise obtained from a chemist/pharmacy or other medical professional.
- 3.2 If the employee is under the influence of drugs and their performance or attendance at work is affected as a result of drugs, they may be subject to disciplinary action and dependent on the circumstances, this may lead to their suspension or dismissal.
- 3.3 If the employee is prescribed drugs by their doctor, which may affect their ability to perform their work, they should discuss the problem with the Chief Executive or their line manager immediately.
- 3.4 If it is suspected there has been a breach of the prohibition on substances, or our employee's work performance or conduct has been impaired through suspected substance misuse, we reserve the right to require the employee concerned to undergo a medical examination to determine the cause of the problem.
- 3.5 If the employee refuses to undergo a medical examination, in such circumstances their refusal will be dealt with in accordance with our disciplinary procedure.
- 3.6 If, having undergone a medical examination, it is confirmed that the employee has been positively tested for a controlled drug, or they admit that there is a problem, we reserve the right to suspend them from their employment to allow us to decide whether to deal with the matter under the terms of the disciplinary procedure or whether it would be more appropriate simply to support the employee on the basis that they undergo treatment and rehabilitation.
- 3.7 In the latter case, in return for not taking disciplinary action, the employee agrees that we will determine, in consultation with our medical advisor, an appropriate period of time during which the employee will be required to undergo medical treatment. During the period of rehabilitation, we will determine whether the employee is fit to return to work. If the employee is not judged to be fit to return to work, they will take leave of absence, which may be unpaid, until they are fit to return. If the employee is certified as sick during some or all of the rehabilitation period, they will be entitled to our sick pay arrangements.

- 3.8 If, at any time, our employee disobeys an instruction given with regard to the rehabilitation or suffers a relapse during or following treatment, we reserve the right to withdraw support and to proceed to deal with the matter under the disciplinary procedure.
- 3.9 On the employee's return to work, after having been declared fit for work by our medical advisor, should there be any recurrence of the original problem or the employee's performance has been impaired by the problem and they can no longer perform at the required level, they will be subject to disciplinary action or capability action, whichever we consider more appropriate.
- 3.10 We reserve the right to search our employee or any of their property held on our premises at any time if there are reasonable grounds to believe that the prohibition on substances is being or has been infringed and we reserve the right to inform the police as per 3.12.
- 3.11 If our employee refuses to comply, their refusal will normally be treated as amounting to gross misconduct and will entitle us to take disciplinary action.
- 3.12 We reserve the right to inform the police of any suspicions we may have with regard to the use of controlled drugs by any of our residents, employees, agents, contractors or visitors on or in the locality of our premises or at official events or training.

4. Equality impact assessment/Protected characteristics (as at 7 May 2025 or later amendments/additions)

- 4.1 Neutral.

5. Consultation arrangements

- 5.1 Our employees will be consulted on any substantive changes to this Policy and any reasonable suggestions will be taken into account before the Policy is approved by the Board.