

Alcohol & Substance Misuse Policy Employee Wellbeing

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Contents

1.	Purpose	2
2.	Scope of the Policy	2
3.	Definitions	2
4.	Statement	2-3
5.	Responsibilities	3
	5.1 Directors / Heads of Service / Senior Managers	3-4
	5.2 Line Managers and Supervisors	4
	5.3 Employees	4
	5.4 People, Digital and Policy	5
	5.5 Occupational Health and Health and Safety	5
	5.6 Learning & Development and Departmental Operational Training	5
	5.7 Elected Members	6
6.	Breach of Policy	6
7.	Arrangements at Schools	6
8.	Exemptions	6
9.	Supporting Documentation	7
10.	Ensuring Equality of Treatment	7

This document should be used in conjunction with the
[Corporate Health and Safety Policy](#)

1. Purpose

The purpose of the policy is to provide information on alcohol and substance misuse and how to manage it in the workplace. The Council has a duty of care to ensure that employees are aware of the risks of working under the influence of alcohol and substance misuse and that they need to refrain from doing so. It is therefore a key consideration for the Council, in terms of employee health and safety, sickness absence management, morale of employees and employee relations that alcohol and substance misuse in the workplace is managed effectively. This policy will assist Managers / Supervisors to recognise that alcohol and substance misuse can seriously impair an employees' ability to contribute fully to the needs of the Council and will aid in the recognition and management of alcohol and substance misuse in the workplace.

2. Scope of the Policy

This policy will apply to employees, casual workers and elected members of Carmarthenshire County Council, volunteers acting on our behalf, contractors, visitors, agency workers and members of public who are accessing or using premises owned or occupied by Carmarthenshire County Council.

3. Definitions

Alcohol and substance misuse are defined as the habitual or intermittent use of alcohol or any drug or other substance not prescribed which causes detriment to an individual's health, social functioning or work performance. It can often impair the safety of themselves or others and affect attendance, time keeping, efficiency or conduct. Misuse also includes the possession, use or supply of illegal drugs (controlled by the Misuses of Drugs Act, 1971).

Prescribed medication refers to any medicine legally prescribed to an individual by a registered medical practitioner and dispensed by an authorised pharmacy, including controlled drugs and prescribed medical cannabis. Prescribed medical cannabis may be issued for specific medical conditions and can be taken in various forms (for example oils, capsules or sprays). Employees must be able to provide evidence of a valid prescription and relevant information on dosage and potential side effects. Where prescribed medication may cause side effects that could impact safety, performance or decision-making, employees are required to inform their manager so that appropriate advice or reasonable adjustments can be considered. The Council's Smoke Free (Premises and Vehicles) Policy continues to apply at all times.

4. Statement

Carmarthenshire County Council enforces a zero tolerance to alcohol and substance misuse within the Authority.

Carmarthenshire County Council has a Duty of Care to its employees and will:

- Prohibit the use of alcohol substances by our employees, agency workers, contractors and volunteers during working hours including lunch times.
- Raise awareness amongst our employees of the dangers of alcohol and substance misuse and the potential adverse impact upon themselves, their relationships and the workplace when used inappropriately.
- Ensure all employees and managers are aware of the rules regarding the use of alcohol and substances at work or working whilst adversely affected by substances. This would include prescription medication, medically prescribed substances, and over the counter medication where effects of the medication can have an impact on safety sensitive and decision-making roles. Employees should inform their managers of any adverse effects of this type of medication, as adjustments may need to be accommodated.
- Promote the early identification and treatment of alcohol and substance related problems and encourage employees adversely affected to seek advice, support and treatment for themselves, or if concerned for a family member or friend to seek advice and support for others.
- Monitor employees where the use of alcohol and substances contribute to poor attendance and work performance, in accordance with the appropriate HR Policies.
- Provide adequate information and guidance to anyone implementing this policy, in particular line managers and supervisors, so that they may effectively identify employees with potential problems associated with substances and effectively deal with alcohol and substance misuse in the workplace.
- Establish clear guidelines for dealing with misconduct associated with the use and misuse of alcohol and substances, using our disciplinary procedures where appropriate, and reporting illegal activities to the police.
- Ensure all employees seeking help for alcohol and substance related problems are provided with confidential and sympathetic support, treatment and rehabilitation. Confidentiality will be maintained by all parties concerned.
- Discourage the unsafe use of alcohol and substances and the unhealthy use of alcohol by employees, by promoting awareness of a healthy lifestyle.

- Provide guidance and information on sensible drinking in the form of leaflets, health promotion and campaigns on a regular basis.

5. Responsibilities

5.1 Directors, Heads of Service and Senior Managers

Directors, Heads of Service and Senior Managers are responsible for:

- Providing overall leadership and accountability for the effective implementation of this Policy.
- Ensuring the Policy and supporting guidance are communicated, understood and applied consistently across their areas of responsibility.
- Ensuring all cases of alcohol and substance misuse are managed fairly, sensitively and in line with Council procedures.
- Commissioning additional support, advice or resources for managers where appropriate and practicable.
- Ensuring managers receive adequate training, guidance and supervision to fulfil their responsibilities under this Policy.

5.2 Line Managers and Supervisors

All Line Managers and Supervisors are responsible for:

- Managing alcohol and substance misuse issues in the workplace in accordance with this Policy and associated guidance.
- Recognising potential indicators of alcohol or substance misuse and responding appropriately, sensitively and consistently.
- Offering appropriate support and assistance to employees, including early intervention and referral to Occupational Health where required.
- Ensuring employees are aware of the standards expected under this Policy and the consequences of non-compliance.
- Managing attendance, conduct and performance issues linked to alcohol or substance misuse in line with relevant HR policies and procedures.
- Maintaining confidentiality and handling matters sensitively at all times.

5.3 All Employees, Casual Workers, Agency Workers, Contractors and Volunteers

All employees, casual workers, agency workers, contractors and volunteers have a responsibility to:

- Attend work fit for duty and not be under the influence of alcohol or substances during working hours, including lunch breaks.

- Comply with this Policy and all associated Council policies and procedures.
- Refrain from the possession, use, or supply of illegal drugs on Council premises or while undertaking Council business.
- Inform their manager where prescribed or over-the-counter medication may adversely affect their ability to work safely, particularly in safety sensitive or decision-making roles.
- Cooperate with reasonable management actions where alcohol or substance misuse is suspected or identified, including referral to Occupational Health where appropriate.
- Seek support at an early stage where alcohol or substance misuse may be affecting their health, wellbeing or work performance.

5.4 People, Digital and Policy

People, Digital and Policy are responsible for:

- Promoting this Policy and monitoring its effectiveness across the Council.
- Supporting a proactive approach to managing alcohol and substance misuse through the provision of timely professional advice.
- Coordinating access to Occupational Health, Health and Safety, Learning and Development and HR support as required.
- Providing accurate data, guidance and professional HR advice to support managers in the application of this Policy.

5.5 Occupational Health and Health and Safety

Occupational Health and Health and Safety will:

- Provide specialist advice and support to managers and employees in relation to alcohol and substance misuse.
- Support early identification, treatment, rehabilitation and reasonable workplace adjustments where appropriate.
- Contribute to health promotion activities related to alcohol and substance misuse.

5.6 Learning and Development and Departmental Operational Training

Learning and Development and Departmental Operational Training will:

- Contribute to training and awareness activities related to alcohol and substance misuse.
- Ensure training records are maintained for Managers and Employees on alcohol and substance misuse training.
- Implement suitable refresher training at defined intervals as required.

5.7 Elected Members

Elected Members have a personal responsibility to all staff and members of the public to uphold the values set out in this policy, promote good relations and challenge inappropriate behaviour where required. Elected Members are responsible for ensuring that they support positively, the principle of equality and diversity, in undertaking their public duties and follow the Code of Conduct for Elected Members and associated policies and procedures.

6. Breaches of the Policy

Failure to comply with this policy may be addressed through appropriate management action. For employees, this may include action under the Council's disciplinary procedures. For non-employees, this may include being asked to leave Council premises or termination of contracts or arrangements.

7. Arrangements at Schools

Governing Bodies of all schools are encouraged to adopt this policy to include school social events, with a recommendation that schools may wish to develop appropriate wording to include pupils or signpost to the appropriate policy or guidelines for pupils. School management teams must ensure that a suitable agreement is adopted outside normal school hours when the facilities may be hired to third parties.

8. Exemptions:

1. Alcohol and prescribed medical substances consumption will be permitted for residents in adult residential care and respite homes, in line with medical advice and documented in the resident's care plan.
2. Alcohol and prescribed medical substances consumption will be permitted for residents within flats and domiciliary areas of Sheltered Housing and Council Housing Premises and service users in social care establishments providing day care services to the elderly or vulnerable. Refer to Smoke Free (Premises and Vehicles) Policy for further guidance.

There should be suitable and sufficient risk assessments (including the effects of taken with other medication) in place for any residents/service users who consume alcohol and prescribed medical substances.

9. Supporting Documentation

Supporting information, guidance, and documentation will be available to assist with the management and implementation of this policy.

10. Ensuring Equality of Treatment

This policy must be applied consistently to all employees irrespective of race, colour, ethnic or national origins (including citizenship), language, disability, religion, belief or non-belief, age, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, parental or marital status, pregnancy or maternity.

If you have any equality and diversity concerns in relation to the application of this policy and procedure, please contact a member of the HR Team who will, if necessary, ensure the policy/procedure is reviewed accordingly.

If you require this information in an alternative format, please contact People, Digital and Policy on CEHR@carmarthenshire.gov.uk.