

Workplace Alcohol and Drugs Policy

1. Introduction

Tools with a Mission (TWAM) is committed to providing a safe, healthy and productive working environment for all employees, volunteers, contractors and visitors involved in its operation. This policy sets out the charity's aims in reducing and managing alcohol and drug problems in the workplace.

Alcohol and drug problems are prevalent in society and are associated with a wide variety of costs for both employers and employees/volunteers. These costs include ill-health sickness absence, reduced work performance and accidents. The consumption of alcohol and drugs has implications for health and safety at work since these substances impair coordination, judgement and decision making; as such this is a policy matter.

2. Policy Aims and Objectives Aim

To clearly state the charity's position on alcohol and drugs within the workplace.

Objectives

1. To ensure Tools with a Mission complies with appropriate legislation
2. To minimise the risks associated with alcohol and drugs in the workplace
3. To have clear rules regarding alcohol and drugs in the workplace
4. To encourage the early identification of employees and volunteers who may be experiencing alcohol or drug problems
5. To provide support for employees and volunteers experiencing alcohol and drug problems

3. Definitions

Alcohol problem

An alcohol problem is defined as any drinking, either intermittent or continual which interferes with a person's health and/or social functioning and/or work capability or conduct.

Drugs

Any drug, whether illegal, prescribed or over the counter or solvents such as glue, butane, etc. In the case of prescribed and over the counter drugs, their possession and use by the employee is acknowledged as legitimate.

Drug problem

The use of illegal drugs, the deliberate use of prescribed or over the counter drugs (when not for a medical condition) and the use of solvents, either intermittent or continual which interferes with a person's health and/or social functioning and/or work capability or conduct.

4. Legal

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 requires employers to protect the health, safety and welfare of their employees, volunteers and others who may be affected by their activities, as far as is reasonably practicable.

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 requires employers to carry out a risk assessment to identify hazards in the workplace and put measures in place to minimise these risks.

The Misuse of Drugs Act (1971) is the main legislation covering drugs and categorises them as classes A, B and C. These drugs are called controlled substances and class A drugs are considered to be the most harmful under this act. It is illegal for anyone, whether at work or not to produce, supply or be in possession of illegal drugs. Employers may be liable if they knowingly allow dispensing, manufacturing, possession, using or selling on their premises.

5. Policy Rules

The charity requires all employees and volunteers while working for Tools with a Mission, whether on the premises or performing their paid work or volunteer role, away from the premises to be free from the effects of alcohol and drugs*. It is not acceptable to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs at work or consume alcohol or drugs during hours of work- this includes paid and unpaid breaks.

Employees or volunteers found in possession of illegal drugs or using illegal drugs whilst at work will normally be reported to the police.

In some cases the legitimate use of prescribed drugs can affect a person's ability to do their job. In such instances employees and volunteers should inform their Line Manager, Refurbishment Centre Manager, or in the case of remote working, e.g: Volunteer collectors the Office Manager in the Ipswich Head Office.

* As per definition in section 3

6. Education

Tools with a Mission is committed to promoting healthy lifestyles to employees and volunteers and will make available information on the current health guidance in relation to safe and sensible drinking and the risks associated with using drugs. This information will be disseminated by means of written material.

This policy will be made available to all staff and volunteers via the TWAM website and monthly volunteer enews. New paid staff will be made aware of this policy at induction and will receive a copy in their Staff Handbook.

7. Implementation of the Policy

Identification of a problem

Alcohol and drug problems may become apparent through a number of means, for example the following (particularly in combination) may result in a problem being suspected:

1. Persistent short term absence Unauthorised absence
2. Poor time keeping
3. Reduced work performance
4. Poor working relationships
5. Deterioration in appearance

However it must be remembered that these factors can have a number of other causes. Employees and volunteers experiencing alcohol or drug problems may first become apparent to their colleagues. If a member of staff suspects an alcohol or drug problem in a colleague they should either:

Encourage the person to seek help from support agencies:
www.alcohol-focus-scotland.org.uk/local-services

Report the matter to line manager, Refurbishment Centre Manager or Ipswich Office Manager (particularly if the person is involved in a safety critical job).

Misconduct

This policy is primarily concerned with ongoing alcohol and drugs problems which are classed as capability issues, i.e. where the problem impacts on the person's ability to do their job.

One-off cases where the rules of this policy are breached, such as someone reporting for work clearly under the influence of alcohol or drugs or suffering from the effects of alcohol will be classed as a conduct issue and will be dealt with under the normal disciplinary procedures as outlined in the Staff and Volunteer hand books.

Very serious incidents such as violence at work whilst under the influence of alcohol or drugs or dealing illegal drugs at work will be deemed serious misconduct justifying summary dismissal.

In some instances of misconduct where the employee or volunteer admits to having an alcohol or drug problem, disciplinary proceedings may be held in abeyance subject to successful outcome of treatment.

In instances of serious misconduct where the employee or volunteer subsequently admits to having an alcohol or drug problem, the support route and the disciplinary route may be implemented in tandem.

Voluntary Referral for Support

Employees or volunteers who suspect or know they have a drug or alcohol problem are encouraged to seek support at an early stage. Employees or volunteers may or may not wish to inform their line manager, Refurbishment Centre Manager or Ipswich Office Manager in such instances.

Referral by Management

Employees or volunteers suspected of having an alcohol or drug problem will be encouraged to seek support by their line manager, Refurbishment Centre Manager or Ipswich Office Manager, where the problem has become apparent through deterioration in work performance. If the employee or volunteer cannot demonstrate satisfactory completion of a programme of support and an improvement in work performance disciplinary action will be taken.

Employees will be given the opportunity of attending treatment within work time. Alternatively if employees require to be absent from duty normal sick pay arrangements will apply.

Confidentiality

Tools with a Mission aims to ensure that the confidentiality of all employees and volunteers experiencing alcohol or drug problems is maintained.

Information regarding individual cases will not be divulged to third parties unless the safety of the person concerned or others would be compromised by not doing so.

Equal Opportunities

This policy will apply equally to all staff and volunteers regardless of grade, experience or role within the charity.

Relapse

Tools with a Mission acknowledges that relapse is common with alcohol and drug problems. Employees and volunteers will normally be supported through two relapses after treatment. Subsequent relapses will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the needs of the charity's activities. Employees and volunteers should be aware that the disciplinary route might be followed after subsequent relapses.

Return to Work

Following treatment Tools with a Mission will endeavour to ensure the employee or volunteers returns to their existing job. If the employee or volunteer is unable to fulfil those duties the charity will consider alternative duties. Promotional prospects for employees will be unaffected following treatment.



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8. Monitoring and Review

The Chief Executive and Refurbishment Centre and Office Managers are responsible for monitoring how this policy works in practice. The Board of Trustees will be responsible for reviewing this policy every 12 months.

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Sources of advice and support

Drug support

Talk to Frank

w: www.talktofrank.com
e: frank@talktofrank.com
t: 0300 1236600

Alcohol support

Drinkline

t: 0300 123 1110

Alcoholics Anonymous

w: www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk
e: help@aamail.org
t: 0800 9177 650

Drug and Alcohol Support

Turning Point

www.turning-point.co.uk