



Cloch Housing Association

Alcohol and Substance Misuse Policy

Policy Name	Alcohol and Substance Misuse
Policy Category	Corporate
Policy Number	007
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This Review	02/06/2022
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Equalities Impact Assessment Required	No
Link to other policies	Conditions of Service, Code of Conduct, Data Protection Policy
Consultation	No
Need for Procedure	No

INTRODUCTION

This policy has been devised to assist Cloch Housing Association in the management of alcohol and substance misuse problems affecting the working environment. Cloch Housing Association has a duty to provide high standards of customer care at all times and it is acknowledged that alcohol and substance misuse is likely to have an adverse effect on this.

This policy will set out Cloch Housing Association's standards and expectations in relation to alcohol and substance abuse and the level of support that will be given when problems arise.

This policy applies to all staff (permanent and temporary or agency) and Board, as well as volunteers and contractors/consultants when they are working on behalf of Cloch.

POLICY AIMS:

- Clarify Cloch Housing Association's position on drinking and/or substance abuse at work.
- Explain Cloch Housing Association's position on illegal activity concerning substance abuse and/or alcohol
- Provide guidance and boundaries on appropriate assistance and support to employees with issues relating to alcohol or substance misuse.
- Adhere to the legal obligations of Cloch Housing Association as set out under Health & Safety legislation.
- Clarify the circumstances in which disciplinary procedures will be instigated.
- Provide guidance for managers to manage alcohol and substance misuse issues.
- Clarify the distinction between dependent and non-dependent misuse of alcohol or substances.

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy the following definitions apply:

Alcohol Abuse: where a person drinks in a way that is harmful, or they are dependent on alcohol (www.nhs.uk)

Substance Abuse: Intoxication by/or regular excessive consumption of and/or dependence on psychoactive substances, leading to social, psychological, physical or legal problems. It includes problematic use of both legal and illegal drugs (including alcohol when used in combination with other substances) www.nice.org.uk

Disciplinary Procedures

In circumstances where Cloch Housing Association's disciplinary procedures are instigated in relation to this policy, the outcome may include dismissal.

Legal Framework

- Health & Safety at Work Act 1974
- Misuse of Drugs Act 1971

Health & Safety

Cloch Housing Association recognises its duty under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 to ensure as far as is reasonably practical the physical and psychological health and safety of all employees. If it is felt that an individual poses a risk to the health and safety of themselves or anyone else as a result of alcohol or substances, immediate action will be taken to remove the individual from the environment, most likely by sending the individual home. If it is not safe for the individual to make their own way home alternative travel arrangements must be made.

All employees have a responsibility to ensure the health and safety of others is not put at risk. If an employee has reason to believe that a colleague is misusing alcohol or drugs they must inform their Line Manager, the Head of Corporate Services or Director immediately.

Illegal Activity

Cloch Housing Association respects an individual's right to a private life, however Cloch Housing Association works within the community with a purpose of improving the lives of those who live there. As a result Cloch Housing Association will not tolerate any instances of illegal activity concerning drugs or substances. Any employee found to be involved or connected to illegal activity will be managed under Cloch Housing Association's disciplinary procedure which will likely result in dismissal.

Alcohol and the Workplace

The consumption of alcohol is not normally permitted. However, at special events where the employee is not driving, and only with the approval of the Board, alcohol may be permitted.

Driving at Work

Drinking alcohol or taking substances can affect people in different ways. As a result, Cloch Housing Association takes the view that the only safe level of alcohol is no alcohol. Should an employee drink alcohol or take a substance (legal or illegal) which impairs their ability to drive and then undertake any occupational driving this will be deemed as breach of conduct and will be dealt with under our Disciplinary Policy. This will also be reported to the police.

Before any driving at work takes place a dynamic risk assessment should be conducted. This should be completed by the driver and should include any alcohol or substance consumption. This is particularly relevant 'the morning after the night before'. If an employee is in any doubt as to whether they are safe to drive they should not do so.

If an employee suspects another staff member has consumed alcohol or substances or they have reason to believe the person may not be safe to drive the morning after, they have a responsibility to report this immediately to a manager. The manager will deal with the situation appropriately which will include informing the police. Should malicious allegations be made this will be treated very seriously and will be subject to formal disciplinary action.

Managing Alcohol Abuse

Cloch Housing Association will manage alcohol misuse depending on its nature. Alcohol misuse will be dealt with under the following categories:

- 1) Alcohol overindulgence
- 2) Alcohol dependence

Where an issue arises concerning alcohol overindulgence that results in socially unacceptable or dangerous behaviour, but which is not related to a physical or psychological dependence, this will be treated as a conduct issue and will be dealt with under Cloch Housing Association's disciplinary procedures.

Where an issue arises concerning alcohol dependency and interferes with an employee's work, this will initially be considered as an ill-health issue and managed in accordance with the appropriate procedures. However, where there is no improvement, support is not accepted, programme not completed or no dependence is diagnosed, Cloch Housing Association will instigate the disciplinary procedure.

Managing Substance Abuse

Legal Substances

Where an issue arises concerning the recreational use or over indulgence in legally obtained legal substances which results in socially unacceptable or dangerous behaviour. This will be treated as a conduct issue and will be dealt with under the organisations disciplinary procedures.

Where an issue arises concerning legal substance dependency which has been obtained legally and interferes with an employee's work, this will initially be managed as an ill-health issue and managed in accordance with the appropriate procedures. However, where there is no improvement, support is not accepted, programme completed or no dependence is diagnosed Cloch Housing Association will instigate the disciplinary procedure.

- **Illegal Substance Misuse**
Cloch Housing Association will not tolerate the consumption or possession of illegal drugs in any circumstances. This will always be considered to represent gross misconduct.
- **Illegally Obtained Legal Substances**
Cloch Housing Association will not tolerate illegal activity concerning legal substances. Any employee who is suspected of being involved in any such activity will be dealt with in accordance with Cloch Housing Association's disciplinary procedures as gross misconduct.

General Illegal Activity

Any employee suspected to be involved in illegal activity concerning substances will also be reported to the police.

Policy Involvement

In circumstances where the police are involved in an investigation concerning any employee, Cloch Housing Association will continue with their own investigation and act on this accordingly regardless.

Dependency

In circumstances where an employee is suspected of having an alcohol or legal substance dependency Cloch Housing Association will provide reasonable support. In the first instance the Line Manager and/or Director of Cloch Housing Association will have a meeting with the employee and make a management referral to the counselling service at Westfield Health. The Line Manager and/or Director will then have follow up meetings on an appropriate and regular timescale to determine the progress the individual is making.

Where there are performance issues relating to the dependence appropriate performance plans will be put in place in accordance with Cloch Housing Association's under performance procedures as detailed in the disciplinary procedures. Where the improvement is not adequate or support via the Westfield's counselling service is not adhered to, normal disciplinary procedures will be instigated which may result in dismissal.

Confidentiality & General Data Protection Regulations

Employees with alcohol or substance misuse problems who are referred for support, whether voluntarily or mandatory, will be dealt with in the strictest confidence.

This information will be handled in line with Cloch's obligations under the current data protection regulations and our own Data Protection Policy (No 67). Information regarding how your data will be stored can be obtained by contacting the Head of Corporate Services.

SUPPORTING AGENCIES for Alcohol & Drugs Misuse

Supporting Agencies

If you require immediate help on an alcohol related issue please contact:

Inverclyde HSCP Alcohol Services (also known as Inverclyde Integrated Alcohol Service)

Tel: 01475 715353

The Wellpark Centre, 30 Regent Street, Greenock, PA15 4PB

Provides confidential help and advice on alcohol

Alcoholics Anonymous

0800 9177 650

Various meetings/places through Inverclyde

Greenock Recovery Alcohol Support Group (GRASP)

graspgroup@yahoo.com

Tel: 07766 692 045

Alcohol Concern

alcoholchange.org.uk/

Moving On Inverclyde (drug support)

Kingston House

3 Jamaica Street

Greenock

01475 735200

Contact@movingoninverclyde.co.uk

Glasgow Council on Alcohol – www.thegca.org.uk

Tel: 0141 353 1800

2nd Floor, 14 N Claremont Street, Glasgow, G3 7LE

Provides confidential help and advice on alcohol

National Drugs Helpline Tel: 0300 123 6600

Turning Point Scotland Tel: 0800 652 3757